

Introduction Why Circumcision?

Outward sign confirming external reality.

“Circumcision was a mark on the body of the Jewish nation ordered by God on the day that He made His covenant of grace with Abraham. Like a gold wedding ring on the finger of a bride which permits and observer to know from a distance that she belongs to someone else, so circumcision was a physical mark that could identify the people of God immediately.”

Donald Grey Barnhouse

Outward sign revealing internal need.

Circumcision was always meant to signify the need for a spiritual circumcision of the heart.

Deuteronomy 10:16 “So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.

Deuteronomy 30:6 “Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

I. The truth about the perceived value of circumcision. 2:25

A. Last bastian of false hope is now torn down.

B. Ancient Jewish teaching on circumcision.

The rabbis taught that no circumcised man will see hell.

One Jewish writing is quoted as saying, Circumcision saves from hell.

Another reads, “God swore to Abraham that no one who is circumcised will be sent to hell.”

Still another, “Abraham sits before the gate of hell and does not allow that any circumcised Israelite should enter there.”

C. The value that is being sought. Justification

“Whenever true religion declines, the disposition to lay undo stress on external rites is stressed.

The Jews when they lost their spirituality supposed that circumcision had the power to save them.” Charles Hodge.

II. Paul’s hypothetical analogy highlights the true value of circumcision. 2:26–27

No one ever keeps the Law unto justification. Romans 3:10–18, 23.

A Circumcision has no saving value. It is worthless when it comes to justification.

B. Circumcision cannot commend one to God but it can condemn one before God.

Galatians 5:2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. **3** And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law.

C. Circumcision has teaching value.

III. God desires the inward working of His spirit. 2:28–29

A. Inner reality of a relationship with Him

Jeremiah 9:23–26

Galatians 5:2–3,6,14; 6:15

B. Inner reality of His work in the heart.

Psalm 51:6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: And in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Matthew 5:8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

C. Inner reality of delight in the word.

Jeremiah 6:9 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall throughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets. **10** To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

D. Inner reality of delight in God’s praise

“If I have the smile of the world, and the frown of God, it will profit me nothing in the day of judgment. But if I have the smile of God, it matters not then and it matters not now what the world of men may think of me.” Donald Grey Barnhouse

Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

Circumcision and Baptism. Romans 6:1–11

Both do not convey saving grace or make one right with God.

Both convey the need for spiritual change.

One conveys the need for spiritual change in future tense.

One conveys the need for spiritual change in past tense.

Christians are humble. **Philippians 2:5–8**

Christians are content. **1 Timothy 6:6; Philippians 4:6–7**

Christians are happy prayerful and grateful people. **1 Thessalonians 5:16–18**

Christians are other worldly Romans 12:1-2; I John 2:15