

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

DOCTRINE OF CIRCUMCISION

Definition.

Circumcision consists in cutting away the foreskin of the male phallus using a flint knife for the operation, Exo 4:25; Jos 5:2. The ritual was related to Abraham's supergrace sexual prosperity and represented his adjustment to the justice of God. Abraham was 99 years old and sexually dead, Heb 11:11-12; Rom 4:17-19 and it signified his advance to spiritual maturity.

Circumcision not only revived his sexual ability, but was the moment when God established the new race of the Jew. Circumcision was to be the ritual to commemorate the establishment of the new racial species. Before circumcision, Abraham was Semitic, an Akkadian, therefore circumcision represents the ultimate expression of spiritual self-esteem from metabolized doctrine in the advance to spiritual maturity. It memorialized greater blessings in escrow conveyed at spiritual maturity and the subsequent glorification of God in their distribution. Every time a circumcised Jew would urinate, it was a reminder of the importance of salvation by grace, of spirituality by grace, and of the dynamics of Bible doctrine in every dispensation and generation of history. Circumcision memorializes the new race on earth, the perfect plan, and the glory of God and was the ritual sign that Abraham had passed momentum testing and had now become a winner. As a result he was given a physical election.

There is no spiritual merit in circumcision, it was the expression of Abraham's metabolized doctrine at the point of maturity. It is related to the genetic creation of the new racial species. As a ritual, circumcision has no meaning to the Jew who rejects Christ as Savior, for ritual without reality is meaningless. The Jewish race was initially perpetuated down to the fourth generation through regeneration.

The Origin and Significance of Circumcision. Gen 17:1-14.

In Gen 17, Abraham has recovered from the evil of Gen 16, and has reached the highest point of maturity under the faith-rest plan of God. In Gen 17:5-6, he has been promised sexual prosperity as a part of his escrow blessings. But the problem is that he has qualified for blessing, but is sexually dead, Rom 4:17-21; Heb 11:11-12. Moreover, he has adjusted to the justice of God in time completely, therefore, divine justice is free to call on any other characteristic of God's essence

and provide what is needed to revive his sexual capabilities. A miracle is no problem when justice is free to operate. Justice fulfills justice and at the point of his circumcision Abraham became a new race with the power of procreation for the perpetuation of that new race. He has a new set of genes for Isaac. Ishmael's circumcision had no significance in relation to the covenant, Gen 17:25. This was a case of ritual without reality.

The reality of the ritual of circumcision is a picture of Abraham's dynamic faith function, the doctrinal rationale of the mature believer, Rom 4:16-21. He demonstrated the dynamics of maturity under the faith-rest plan of God and spiritual self-esteem. This adjustment to the justice of God fulfilled the principle that justice demands justice. Therefore, justice fulfills justice as impotence becomes sexual power and a member of the semitic race becomes a Jew. Abraham is the father of the Jewish race, while Moses is the father of the Jewish nation. Circumcision does not pertain to the Jews' national origin but to their racial origin. Circumcision became the ritual sign not of a spiritual thing, but of a physical thing, the new racial species. The Mosaic Law became the sign of the first client nation in history, therefore, there is a relationship between the ritual of circumcision and the Mosaic Law. Circumcision is racial origin and the Mosaic Law is national origin. Circumcision is the ultimate expression of positive volition to Bible doctrine producing spiritual momentum leading to maturity and blessing from the justice of God. Grace blessing is always related to Bible doctrine in the soul. So to mature Abraham, the Word of God provided a far greater reality than the discouraging status quo of being sexually dead. The conclusion from the origin of circumcision is found in Gen 17:9-11. Circumcision is the memorial sign between God and Jews. Only with Bible doctrine in the soul is circumcision meaningful.

Historical Circumcision.

Circumcision was practiced among many ancient peoples, such as the Egyptians, Africans, natives of the South Seas, North Americans, and Arabians. It was used to fulfill one or more of the following purposes:

1. As a sanitary function for the Egyptians.
2. As a tribal mark for the Africans.
3. As a rite to celebrate the "coming of age."
4. As a substitute for human sacrifice by removing a portion of the anatomy as a vicarious sacrifice.
5. As a sacramental offering to idols to gain the help of the gods in the perpetuation of a tribe, family, or race.

These were used to obscure the true meaning of circumcision.

Circumcision and the Law,

Rom 2:25, *So on the one hand, circumcision is beneficial if you accomplish the purpose of the Law, but if, on the other hand, you are a rejecter [transgressor] of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.*

Circumcision is related to the Mosaic Law in two ways:

1. In an establishment sense, it is a dedication of the male's phallus to his right woman. It emphasizes the fact that national stability is founded on the principle of the right man/right woman relationship.
2. As a spiritual principle, circumcision portrays the function of adjustment to the justice of God, so that the justice of God is free to bless.

The ritual of circumcision connotes man's relationship with God as well as with his right woman. The ritual indicated that Abraham had maximum Bible doctrine in the soul, and was therefore qualified for blessing. Circumcision is the sign of Bible doctrine in the soul. The Law provided happiness for people who live by establishment principles, but the meaning of circumcision is significant only to the believer.

The Jew who failed to fulfill the client nation principle, beginning with faith in Christ, spirituality, missionary activity; this Jew's circumcision was really uncircumcision. The Jewish unbeliever was a new racial species without regeneration. Therefore, he distorted circumcision into a system of arrogance, from which came racial prejudice, Rom 2:28-29, ***For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly [circumcision], neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh [the ritual]; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly [ritual with reality] and circumcision is that which is of the heart by means of the Spirit [Holy Spirit] not the Law, and his praise is not from men but from God [reality of escrow blessings].***

Messages Regarding Lack of True Circumcision and Uncircumcision.

The meaning of circumcision is maximum Bible doctrine in the soul. The fifth cycle of discipline means no Bible doctrine in the soul, therefore lack of circumcision of the soul. This becomes ritual without reality. This is the tragedy of being the physical seed of Abraham without being the spiritual seed of Abraham.

Jer 6:10, *To whom shall I communicate doctrine? To whom shall I give a warning that they will listen? Behold, their ears are uncircumcised. They will not*

listen. Behold, the word of the Lord has become a reproach to them. They have no delight in it.

Jeremiah warned the people of the coming of the fifth cycle of discipline from the Chaldeans, but the people's ears were "uncircumcised"; that is, they would not listen to Bible teaching. Doctrine in the soul makes you alert to coming national disaster. The people had no delight in Bible doctrine. They had the ritual but no Bible doctrine to provide the reality. Reality is more important than ritual, Jer 9:25, ***"Behold, the days are coming, decrees the Lord, that I will punish all who are circumcised and yet uncircumcised."***

The Jews failed to recognize the two seeds of Abraham. With his physical seed and the new racial species came the fantastic opportunity of client nation Israel under four Jewish nations. But being a new racial species, with circumcision as the sign, is absolutely meaningless without regeneration. They were not following the pattern of the spiritual seed of Abraham: ***"Abraham believed in the Lord, and it was credited to his account for righteousness."***

Abraham is the pattern for Old Testament salvation, Gen 15:6; Rom 4:3; Gal 3:6. Throughout their history, the Jews failed, because while they were given physical superiority in the Old Testament through the new racial species, they had no advantages from it because they rejected Jesus Christ as the God of Israel:

ADONAI ELOHENU, ADONAI ECHAD.

Deu 10:16, Moses said, ***"Therefore circumcise your right lobe and resist no more."*** You circumcise your right lobe by the daily perception and metabolization of Bible doctrine. Moses was the greatest public speaker who ever lived (just as Paul was the greatest Bible teacher who ever lived). Moses was an eloquent, public speaking genius. In spite of all his areas of genius, beauty, strength, and all his doctrine, the Jews in his generation were bored by doctrine! So Moses cries out, "Resist no more!" Negative volition toward doctrine is ritual without reality. Paul as Saul of Tarsus was watching Stephen being stoned to death. As the rocks began to crush him, Stephen shouted in Acts 7:51, ***"You men! You are stiff-necked and uncircumcised of heart and ears! And you are always resisting the Holy Spirit. You are doing just as your fathers [ancestors] did."***

In every generation there was someone who caught on to the idea that being a new racial species was meaningless. It only fed arrogance unless there was the countermeasure in the soul, that of Bible doctrine to produce enforced and genuine humility leading to virtue-love.

So what does it mean to "resist the Holy Spirit?" Under the law of volitional responsibility, whatever you sow to the flesh you're going to reap from the flesh (Gal 6:7). Whenever you make bad decisions from a position of weakness; when

your priorities are wrong; when your lusts supersede your love for the Lord, you will suffer.

The Jews resisted the ministry of the Holy Spirit; first, at the point of common and efficacious grace, and secondly, at the point of the communication of doctrine; both the demonstration of God's fantastic grace. All you can do is listen and believe; God the Holy Spirit must do all the rest.

Stephen looked back on the entire history of Israel's failure when he said "just as your fathers did." For 2000 years, the Jews had the greatest opportunities in the Old Testament and they blew it! Jer 4:4, ***Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and remove the foreskins of your heart [right lobe], you men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My wrath go forth like a fire and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.***

In other words, Jeremiah said, "Don't go negative toward doctrine, because if you do, you will have a soul full of foreskins!" Although the earth will never be destroyed by nuclear weapons, parts of it can be through the fault of negative believers.

Deu 30:6, Moses said, ***Moreover, the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, in order that you may live*** [survive as a client nation to God].”

Moses guaranteed, as a part of the Word of God, that there would be doctrine for every Jewish generation.

b. "Your seed" referred to the new racial species; yet always there was the need to become regenerate. To survive as a client nation requires a pivot, which in the Old Testament required both the ritual and the reality of circumcision through the advance to spiritual maturity.

To avoid racial prejudice and the arrogance it feeds, the Jew of the Old Testament had to be circumcised in his heart, which included salvation through faith in Christ and spiritual growth through metabolized doctrine, resulting in both the giant step to spiritual self-esteem and the victory step to spiritual maturity under the ritual plan of God.

This is why it says in Rom 9:6, ***"All Israel is not Israel."*** "All Israel" is the Jew who is a part of the new racial species. But all Israel is "not Israel," because you're not true Israel until your heart is circumcised, i.e., regenerated.

There's no advantage to being the new racial species apart from regeneration. Therefore, in Old Testament times, a regenerate Gentile was far better off than a Jewish unbeliever as new racial species. Therefore, the importance of the circumcision of the heart.

Circumcision and the Near Death of Moses, Ex 4:24-26.

Moses was on his way to Egypt and Jehovah (Jesus Christ appearing as a man) attacked Moses to attempt to kill him. Moses told his wife to circumcise his youngest son and God didn't want him to be sloppy with regard to the ritual. His wife circumcised his son before the Theophany could kill Moses, and this saved his life. Moses is about to enter Egypt without the circumcision of his youngest son. This meant a failure to fulfill Gen 17:11. You can't serve the Lord without obedience, this had put him under the sin unto death. In the case of Moses it was a failure to perpetuate the true concept of circumcision; to perpetuate the relationship between the new race of the Jews and the new nation about to be born. A new nation couldn't be born where there is rejection of the rite of circumcision. This was important because there had to be circumcision to observe the Passover which was coming.

Moses had failed to adjust to the justice of God, which would free the Jews from slavery and form a nation from a race. Failure to adjust to the justice of God in the matter of circumcision caused the supreme court judge, Jesus Christ, to bring justice to Moses in the form of the sin unto death. Moses was delivered from death by his wife's circumcision of his youngest son. However, to save the life of her husband, she circumcised the youngest son and threw the bloody foreskin at the feet of the dying Moses with comment that he was a bloody groom, that is, she had redeemed the life of her husband as a new groom through blood. She had to purchase the life of her husband by the shedding of the blood of her son in the rite of circumcision. Therefore, as far as she was concerned, he was a new groom. She rejected him as being her husband any longer. She despised circumcision.

Just as Sarah received a new groom by the circumcision of Abraham, so Moses' wife received Moses. [And promptly rejected him.] Moses' wife understood the meaning of circumcision, but rejected the doctrine. She resisted the doctrine and this resulted in Moses being put under the sin unto death. Moses was responsible, because he did what his wife wanted instead of what God wanted. Moses lost his wife (she left him), but she wasn't his right woman. His wife is an illustration of Acts 7:51 "uncircumcised in heart and ears" means reversionism. Moses was saved by her instant action, but lost her and later God provided his right woman.

The National Concept of Circumcision.

Circumcision was a memorial token to the adjustment to the justice of God in the nation of Israel, just as in the race of the Jews. This is why no Jew could partake of the Passover without first being circumcised. Ex 12:48. The nation of Israel

was placed under the fifth cycle of discipline for lack of circumcision of soul, but not the ritual, the reality. Jer 6:10, 9:25-26. Circumcision was used to designate both racial and national Jews. Gal 2:8; Col 4:11; Eph 2:11; Tit 1:10.

The Doctrinal Principles of Circumcision.

Circumcision is the ritual for the adjustment to the justice of God through maximum Bible doctrine resident in the soul. Abraham's circumcision was the maturity adjustment to the justice of God, freeing God's justice to bless him. There are three adjustments to the justice of God involved in the reality of circumcision; this is true of both Jews and Gentiles (which is why Paul told the Galatians to remain uncircumcised).

- Salvation through faith in Christ.
- Rebound to stay in fellowship.
- Maturity adjustment to the Justice of God through the victory step.

The ritual of circumcision then portrays the reality of the Jew's relationship with God. Therefore, circumcision might be compared to a dollar sign ("\$") - which is not real money, but stands for real money. Moses' deliverance from death by the circumcision of his youngest son was a rebound adjustment to the justice of God. No Jew was permitted to partake of the Passover without being circumcised, Ex 12:48. This portrays the salvation adjustment to the justice of God. So circumcision is used for all three adjustments to the justice of God. The Passover was a memorial of salvation and the beginning of the new nation for the believer's only. Therefore, the requirement of the ritual of salvation adjustment to the justice of God is circumcision (portrayed in the Passover). Race begins with circumcision. Nation begins with the Passover. Both are rituals and are combined when you get to the nation.

Jews are under three different plans of God in human history:

First, in the age of the Patriarchs, from Abraham to Moses, they were under the faith-rest plan of God.

Secondly, in the dispensation of Israel, Moses to Christ, they were under the ritual plan of God.

Thirdly, in the Church Age, Pentecost to Rapture, we are under the protocol plan of God.

In these three areas, circumcision means nothing without salvation, without fulfilling the pertinent plan of God. Therefore, the lack of circumcision was failure to adjust to the justice of God. This is why we have "the uncircumcised Philistine." 1 Sam 14:6, 17:26, 36, 31:4. They illustrate failure of the Jews to

adjustment to the justice of God at salvation.

Circumcision during the Church Age.

Circumcision as a ritual is no longer an issue in the Church Age, because client nation Israel no longer exists. Because the protocol plan of God has replaced the ritual plan of God, to which circumcision belongs, circumcision is not even a spiritual issue of any kind. It is simply a physiological option. Because circumcision is now practiced throughout the world, basically as a sanitary function, or as a tribal mark, or as a substitute for human sacrifice by removing a portion of the human anatomy as a vicarious sacrifice, or as a religious requirement of Jews, Arabs, and others - this is all circumcision means today.

The only issue today in this dispensation: Will the believer fulfill the protocol plan of God? 1 Cor 7:19, ***Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the mandates of God*** [is everything].”

Circumcision is not only non-beneficial spiritually, but is a source of legalism and a means of distracting the believer from the execution of the protocol plan of God; this is the subject of the entire book of Galatians. The Judaizers followed after Paul and persuaded his converts that you can't be saved by faith in Christ alone, but you must add circumcision. This is analogous to those who today believe in baptismal regeneration - there is no such thing, Gal 5:2-4, "***Behold, I Paul say to you, that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you*** [you have lost out in the protocol plan of God]. ***And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision that he is under obligation to keep the entire Law*** [in the wrong dispensation]. ***You have been severed from Christ*** [not in the protocol plan of God], ***you, who would be justified by the Law, you have drifted off course from grace.***"

During the Church Age, circumcision has been distorted into a system of legalism and apostasy. Some Jews taught salvation by circumcision, as in Acts 15:1, ***And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the believers, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."***

Gal 6:12-15, ***Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh*** [exhibitionists with circumcised phalluses] ***try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may avoid persecution because of the cross of Christ. For those who have been circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves. But they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your flesh. But may it never be that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new species.***

When believers get so involved in ritual for salvation or for spirituality, both being false, they are inevitably inconsistent ("do not even keep the Law themselves"), and their lives are a mess! The protocol plan of God replaced all ritual of the dispensation of Israel, including circumcision. Gal 5:6-9, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but doctrine working through virtue-love. You were running well; who cut in on you so that you did not obey the doctrine? This persuasion [false persuasion regarding circumcision], did it come from Him [God the Father] who elected you? A little leaven [circumcision distorted into a system of legalism] leavens the whole lump." Paul was nasty here, calling them "just one big circumcised Gaul! You didn't just circumcise your phallus; you're circumcised all over, dummy!"

The baptism of the Spirit at salvation and the resultant positional sanctification is the only circumcision of the Church Age, Col 2:11-14, ***And in Him*** [positional sanctification] ***you were circumcised with a circumcision made***

without hands, by the renunciation of the essence of the body [old sin nature] by the circumcision of Christ [retroactive positional truth], having been buried with Him by means of the baptism [of the Spirit], by which also you were raised up with Christ [current positional truth] through faith in the operational power of God who raised Him from the dead. And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven you all of your transgressions, having cancelled out the I.O.U. [note of indebtedness] consisting of decrees against us which was hostile to us. He has removed it permanently; He nailed it to His cross."

In other words, circumcision was the sign of the new racial species. But now, being entered into union with Christ, is the sign of the new spiritual species, *"circumcision made without hands."*

Therefore, circumcision has to be redefined for the Church Age, as it is in Phil 3:3, *For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Jesus Christ, and put no confidence in the flesh.*

Circumcision as a ritual in the ritual plan of God for the dispensation of Israel no longer exists. But for the sake of the Jews who understood, circumcision is now redefined in terms of the protocol plan of God: *"who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Jesus Christ, and put no confidence in the flesh."*

This is a beautiful way of describing spiritual self-esteem.