

# "The True Circumcision"

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That is what the New Birth is all about...the old sinful nature is 'circumcised', and the 'new nature', which is righteous is imparted. Remember, the new birth is the birth of the new creation in the spirit of man. You cannot understand true, spiritual circumcision and its affects/effectiveness unless you acknowledge 1 Thessalonians 5:23: *I pray God your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord.* It is the spirit of man who is reborn. Not the mind, not the emotions, not the will and not the body.

True Circumcision is our topic, but first we will look back at its history in scripture.



The physical act of circumcision was given as a sign of the Abrahamic Covenant, Genesis 17:10-11: *This is My Covenant which ye shall keep between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.*

We see the spiritual application of the word in Deuteronomy 10:16 & 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4:

Deut. 10:16: *Circumcise therefore the foreskin OF YOUR HEART and be no more stiffnecked;* 30:6: *And the Lord thy God will circumcise THINE HEART, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with al thy soul, that thou mayest live.*

Jeremiah 4:4: *Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins OF YOUR HEART.*

Paul is the only New Testament writer that speaks of a 'spiritual' circumcision. This truth is a part of the Gospel that was given to him by revelation, this is a truth that was hid in

God from the foundation of the world, but was made manifest with the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. Galatians 1:11&12: *But I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

In Romans, Paul sets forth the truth that physical circumcision performed in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, a ritual still performed in Jewish circles, will not profit the Jew if he does not keep all the Law. And of course, this automatically negates any justification in God's sight through natural circumcision, for no man can keep all the Law.

Paul then sets forth the New Testament reality: true circumcision is a circumcision of the heart....the cutting out of the Satanic nature when one is born of the Spirit. Please read carefully Paul's statement of who the 'true Jew' is....and think about it deeply.

Romans 2:25-29

*For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? 27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? 28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

Faith....in God's Provision for justification is God's requirement for salvation, whether a person is born in the flesh a Jew or a 'gentile'.

Romans 3:30

*Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.*

Romans 4:9-12

*Cometh **this blessedness** (of justification and the resulting circumcision of the heart) then upon the circumcision (natural born Jew) only, or upon the uncircumcision (gentile) also? for we say that **faith** was reckoned **to Abraham** for **righteousness**.*

*10 How was it (righteousness) then reckoned (to Abraham) ? when he was in circumcision (as a result of him circumcising himself), or in uncircumcision (before he underwent the rite of circumcision)?*

*Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.*

**BEFORE CIRCUMCISION ABRAHAM IS ACCOUNTED RIGHTEOUS FOR HE 'BELIEVED THE LORD':**

*Genesis 15:4: And behold the word of the Lord came unto him (Abraham) saying, This (Eliezer of Damascus) shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And Abraham believed in the Lord and he counted it to him for righteousness.*

#### ABRAHAM RECEIVES THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT: CIRCUMCISION

*Genesis 17:9&10: And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.*

Paul's testimony to the same fact - circumcision given AFTER Abraham declared righteous THROUGH FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISE TO HIM:

Romans 4:11 And he (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe (Jew and gentile) , though they be not circumcised; that righteousness (through faith) might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision (natural born Jews) only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

Question: could the circumcision referred to in the above verse: 'the father of circumcision' to those who are not natural born Jews be speaking of the 'circumcision of the heart', that Paul referred to in Romans 2:29? I believe so.

Abraham, the father of the spiritually circumcised.....

Paul goes on in two of his other letters, stating that natural circumcision is 'nothing' ...what matters is keeping the Commandments of God and faith that works through love. And that natural circumcision avails nothing to justify a man before God, it is the New Creation in Christ that is justified in God's sight.

1 Corinthians 7:19

*Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.*

Galatians 5:6

*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.*

Galatians 6:15

*For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.*

Paul makes clear to the Ephesians that by the Jews the Gentiles were called the 'Uncircumcision':

Ephesians 2:11

Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands.

But in Christ, gentiles are now the 'true circumcision'. I say gentiles only here because Paul in these following letters was writing to gentile Christians, those who had experienced the 'circumcision of the heart' by believing the Gospel of Salvation resulting in a new spiritual birth.

Philippians 3:3

...for we are the *true circumcision*, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.

Please note in the following scripture the *circumcision of Christ*, a circumcision made without hands.

Colossians 2:9-11

*For in Him (Christ) dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye ARE CIRCUMCISED with the circumcision NOT MADE WITH HANDS (but with the Spirit), in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST (again Paul makes this statement).*

The 'circumcision' PERFORMED by Christ is done by the Spirit: *If any man (person) be in Christ he is a new creation, old things (the old moral and spiritual condition/spiritual death/the Satanic nature) has passed away and all things have become new, 2 Corinthians 5:17.*



This takes place at salvation, one is born of the Spirit/born from above. *That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you that you must be born again, John 3:6&7.*

Please read the highlighted parts as one sentence....Paul's focus is on what has happened in the spirit of man, not in the body:

Colossians 3:9-11

*Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man (sinful, condemned nature) with his deeds; and HAVE **PUT ON THE NEW MAN**, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: **Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.***

Take note of the following verses speaking of the Jews 'uncircumcised heart, ears, lips speaking of the uncircumcised in heart (Stephen was speaking before the council - Jewish spiritual leaders):

Acts 7:51

*Ye stiffnecked and **uncircumcised in heart and ears**, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your father did, so do ye.*

Deuteronomy 10:16

*Circumcise therefore the **foreskin of your heart**, and be no more stiffnecked.*

Leviticus 26:41

*And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies, if then their **uncircumcised hearts** be humbled and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity.....*

Exodus 6:12&30

*And Moses spake before the Lord, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who am of **uncircumcised lips**? (same, Vs. 30)*



Let us now refer to the Vine's Expository Dictionary for the word, 'circumcision'. We will be looking at the New Testament usage in the Greek:

Verb

- Peritemno: used literally (of the flesh) or figuratively of spiritual circumcision.
- Epispaomai: to draw over, to become uncircumcised, as if to efface Judaism, 1 Corinthians 7:18.

Nouns

- Peritome: a cutting round, circumcision  
Applied literally, also to the lips and the heart, and to the ear.

In the **economy of grace no account** is taken of **any ordinance performed on the flesh**; the old racial distinction is ignored in the preaching of the Gospel, **and faith is the sole condition upon which the favour of God in salvation is to be obtained.**

- Akrobustia: uncircumcision, used literally, for the Gentiles, of the moral condition in which the corrupt desires of the flesh still operate. (Paul said in Christ there was neither Jew nor Gentile, so this usage of the word, 'Gentile' is speaking of those Gentiles who were still not 'in Christ')



In summary, facts about 'true circumcision'

- makes a true Jew (Romans 2:29)
- is a circumcision of the heart (Romans 2:29)
- the circumcised in heart walk in the footsteps of THAT faith in which our father Abraham walked (Romans 4:11)
- the circumcised in heart are a new creation (Galatians 6:15)
- the new creation is the true circumcision, who worships God in the spirit, and puts no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:3)
- Jesus performs the 'circumcision of the heart, a circumcision made without hands - human; in this circumcision of the old nature by the Spirit of God, sin is no longer the ruling principle of a Christian (Colossians 2:11)
- being a new creation in Christ removes the racial and religious distinctions; Christ for the new creations is all and in all (Colossians 3:9-11)
- in the economy of grace no account is taken of any ordinance performed on the flesh; faith is the sole condition upon which the favour of God in salvation is to be obtained. (Vine's Dictionary)
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The New Creation produced by spiritual circumcision:



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