

“The Circumcision of Christ”

Col. 2:11,12

COL 2:11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

1. “and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands”

- a. They had at conversion, when they were buried with Christ in baptism, experienced spiritual circumcision.
- b. He was not speaking of physical circumcision that was required for all Jewish males on the 8th day after birth. (Gen. 17:11, 12).
- c. Christ was circumcised on the 8th day. (Lk. 2:21). See Paul (Phil. 3:5).
- d. Faithful Jewish males were circumcised with physical circumcision, and with spiritual circumcision. (Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jere. 4:4).

DEU 10:16 "Circumcise then your heart, and stiffen your neck no more.

DEU 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, in order that you may live.

JER 4:4 "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord And remove the foreskins of your heart, Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Lest My wrath go forth like fire And burn with none to quench it, Because of the evil of your deeds."

- e. Under the Law physical circumcision was required, but it counted as nothing without the circumcision of the heart.
- f. Paul emphasized under the new covenant that physical circumcision counted for nothing spiritually. (Gal. 5:6).

GAL 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

- g. What counted was spiritual circumcision. (Rom. 2:28, 29).

ROM 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.

ROM 2:29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

- 1) Spiritual circumcision [Christ’s circumcision] is for both males and females.
- 2) It is the cutting away of sin from the heart - not the cutting away of literal flesh.
- h. Those obeying Christ are also “sprinkled with His blood” at baptism. (1 Pet. 1:2).

1PE 1:2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, **that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood:** May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure.

2. “in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” - Their circumcision was not by man’s hands, that is, by a surgical operation by human hands.

- a. They did not need a circumcision of the flesh.
- b. They had been set free from the slavery to sin by spiritual circumcision and the sprinkling of Christ's blood.

COL 2:12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

1. "having been buried with Him in baptism" - Baptism is presented as a burial. The one coming to Christ dies to sin as a way of life, and is buried in baptism as a proof that a death has occurred.
 - a. The word "baptism" means "immersion."
 - 1) The verb form is "baptizo" [bahp tee zoh] - meaning "to dip, plunge, immerse."
 - 2) The noun form of the word "baptisma" [bahp tis mah] means "immersion."
 - b. They had been immersed in the waters of baptism. See Jn. 3:23; Acts 8:36, 38, 39; Acts 10:47; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26; 1 Pet. 3:20, 21.

JOH 3:23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and they were coming and were being baptized.

ACT 8:36 And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?"

ACT 8:38 And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; and he baptized him.

ACT 8:39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing.

ACT 10:47 "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?"

1CO 6:11 And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.

EPH 5:26 that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

1PE 3:20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

1PE 3:21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

- c. Paul wrote similar words to Colossians 2:12 in Romans. (Rom. 6:3,4).

ROM 6:3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?

ROM 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

- d. Colossians chapter 3 further teaches they had been immersed. (Col. 3:1).

COL 3:1 **If then you have been raised up with Christ**, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

2. "in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God"
 - a. This is again a reference to their coming forth from the waters of baptism.

- b. This was an action of faith. It is by faith that one accepts Christ, turns from his sins, confesses Christ as God's Son, and is immersed [buried] in the waters of baptism.
 - c. This spiritual resurrection, arising to walk in the newness of life, was accomplished through their faith in the Omnipotent God of heaven.
3. "who raised Him from the dead"
- a. God raised His Son from the dead.
 - b. He did this by the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 1:4; 8:11; 1 Pet. 3:18).

ROM 1:4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

ROM 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

1PE 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; It can be translated "by the Spirit." KJV, NKJV See Rom. 1:4; 8:11. Gr. has "in spirit" that can be rendered "in or by [the] Spirit" or "in [the] spirit." It seems best rendered "by [the] Spirit" in view of Romans 1:4 and Romans 8:11. The Spirit of Christ [the Holy Spirit] was in Noah.

- 1) It was the Holy Spirit who raised the physical body of Jesus from the tomb.
- 2) The Holy Spirit will also give life to our mortal bodies.
- 3) Our mortal bodies will be changed into immortal, incorruptible bodies.
- 4) This will occur at the resurrection at the end of time. (Jn. 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15:49-53).

JOH 5:28 "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, JOH 5:29 and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

1CO 15:49 And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

1CO 15:50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

1CO 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

1CO 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

1CO 15:53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

The Triumph of Christ Over His Enemies

2:13-15

COL 2:13 And when you [Gentiles] were [spiritually] dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

1. "And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh"
 - a. Like those at Ephesus, they had been "dead" in their trespasses. (Eph. 2:1, 2).

EPH 2:1 And **you were dead** in your trespasses and sins,

EPH 2:2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

- 1) They had been in a state of condemnation. See also Rom. 3:10, 11, 23
- 2) Like those at Ephesus, they had been without hope - doomed to hell. (Eph. 2:12).
- b. This was because of their own sins - not the sins of others. See Ezek. 18:20.
2. "He made you alive together with Him" - God raised you to share the blessings of His atonement.
 - a. He raised you to live a forgiven life in service to the Lord.
 - b. He raised you to leave darkness and to walk in the light. (Col. 1:13; Eph. 5:8; 1 Jn. 1:7).
3. "having forgiven us **all** our transgressions"
 - a. The Lord had forgiven them of "all" their "transgressions."
 - b. The Lord does not partially forgive, but He fully and completely forgives those who in faith and repentance are baptized for the remission of their sins. (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
 - c. The Christian continues to have forgiveness through the blood of Christ by walking in the light and confessing his sins. (1 Jn. 1:7, 9).

COL 2:14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

1. "having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us"
 - "cheirographon" [kay **rah** grah fahn] is a compound word from "cheir" [**kayr**] meaning "hand" and "grapho" [**grah** foh] meaning "writing."
 - The word can be translated "handwriting." It was often used to refer to a legal document or bond, a certificate of debt or bond.
 - The "handwriting" was against them because they had violated its ordinances.
 - It, the Law of Moses, was against the Jews who had accepted it. (Exod. 24:3; Deut. 27:14-26).

EXO 24:3 Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "**All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do!**"

DEU 27:14 "The Levites shall then answer and say to all the men of Israel with a loud voice,

DEU 27:15 'Cursed is the man who makes an idol or a molten image, an abomination to the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen.'

DEU 27:16 'Cursed is he who dishonors his father or mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

DEU 27:17 'Cursed is he who moves his neighbor's boundary mark.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

DEU 27:18 'Cursed is he who misleads a blind person on the road.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

DEU 27:19 'Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

DEU 27:20 ' Cursed is he who lies with his father's wife, because he has uncovered his father's skirt.' And all the people shall say,' Amen.'

DEU 27:21 ' Cursed is he who lies with any animal.' And all the people shall say,' Amen.'

DEU 27:22 ' Cursed is he who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or of his mother.' And all the people shall say,' Amen.'

DEU 27:23 ' Cursed is he who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people shall say,' Amen.'

DEU 27:24 ' Cursed is he who strikes his neighbor in secret.' And all the people shall say,' Amen.'

DEU 27:25 ' Cursed is he who accepts a bribe to strike down an innocent person.' And all the people shall say,' Amen.'

DEU 27:26 ' Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them.' And all the people shall say,' Amen.'

- Gentiles had also given moral acceptance to God’s law written on their hearts. (Rom. 2:14-16).

ROM 2:14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, “instinctively” is from “phusis” [foo sis] meaning “nature.” NIV. See also Eph. 2:4.

ROM 2:15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,

ROM 2:16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

- a. He here is speaking of the law of Moses and God’s moral laws accepted by Gentiles.
- b. Gentiles had not accepted all of God’s moral law, but they broke the ones they had accepted.
- c. This law of Moses was given to the Jews at Mount Sinai. (Deut. 5:1-3).

DEU 5:1 Then Moses summoned all Israel, and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I am speaking today in your hearing, that you may learn them and observe them carefully.

DEU 5:2 "The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb.

DEU 5:3 "The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, with all those of us alive here today.

- d. The law of Moses was a good law. (Rom. 7:12).

ROM 7:12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

- e. Though the law of Moses was good, it could not save. (Gal. 2:16).

GAL 2:16 nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.

- f. It was “hostile” or “contrary” to both Jews and Gentiles. (Col. 2:14). None could keep it. Jews could not perfectly keep the law and Gentiles who adopted some of the laws could not perfectly keep them.
- g. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins. (Heb. 10:3,4).

HEB 10:3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year.

HEB 10:4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

- h. Those under the law stood condemned without the shedding of Christ’s blood on the cross. (Heb. 9:22).

HEB 9:22 And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

- I. Those who did not live under the law of Moses also stood condemned without the shedding of Christ's blood on the cross.
2. "and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross"
 - a. Jesus took away the law of Moses and its condemnation.
 - b. He "nailed it to the cross" when He was "nailed to a cross."

ACT 2:23 this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

COL 2:15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

1. "When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities" - This occurred at His resurrection.
 - a. This may be a reference to Ephesians 6:12.

EPH 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

- b. This may also be a reference to earthly rulers who were not able to stop God's plan of redemption.
 - c. No one, not even the devil, was able to stop the plan of God to save man through the shedding of His Son's blood.
 - d. Jesus "triumphed over them" by His vicarious death for the sins of man and His resurrection.
2. "He made a public display of them" at the cross and at His resurrection
 - a. It looked like Jesus had been defeated, but this was far from true.
 - b. Jesus made atonement for mankind, that is, all who will trust in Him and His atoning blood.
 - c. Before the cross man had no hope of salvation apart from the sacrifice of Christ.
 - d. Now all can be saved through obedience to Christ. (Heb. 5:9).
3. "having triumphed over them through Him" - "them" refers to all enemies - men or wicked forces of evil.

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