

# CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART



## INTRODUCTION

Romans 2:28-29 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

## DISCUSSION

What is the difference of being circumcised outwardly verses inwardly?

## EXPLANATION

Read Ezekiel 11:19-20, Deuteronomy 30:6, Matthew 13:15

What does it mean that God needs to remove our heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh?

Why does God need to do this?

How can circumcision of our hearts enable us to hear God's leading better?

## APPLICATION

Why does it matter how we live?

What things is your heart calloused towards?

When was the last time God removed the calluses from your heart and you were able to see (and hear) better?

## MISSION

How has the callousness of men's heart been a detriment to God's Glory in the past?

What difference could softer hearts make in this world?

How do we draw the line between a proper stance on ungodliness and seeming calloused?

**Week 28**

Family & Group Discussion



# CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

Genesis 17:24

**Genesis 17**

Genesis 17:1-27

2 Corinthians 5:17

Romans 12:3

Proverbs 21:2

Proverbs 20:9

Jeremiah 17:9

Matthew 15:8

1 Corinthians 1:24

Matthew 13:54

Mark 6:2

Matthew 15:8

John 5:42

Acts 1:24; 15:8

Colossians 2:3

Ezekiel 11:19-20; 18:31

Jeremiah 24:7

Deuteronomy 30:6

Matthew 13:15

Deuteronomy 10:16

1 Corinthians 7:18-19

Galatians 5:6; 6:15

Jeremiah 4:4

Romans 2:28-29

**Week 28**

Notes & Scripture

[www.ourelement.org](http://www.ourelement.org)



# CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART

**Genesis 17:24** “Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin”

Some people understand the prescription of circumcision that God gives to Abraham as barbaric. Many people do not understand the intent of circumcision especially as it would relate to someone in the Hebrew culture, or anyone from the ancient near-east.

Circumcision is cutting off the foreskin of a males penis, it is a custom that still prevails among many peoples in different parts of the world today (Asia, Africa, America, and Australia). It was practiced not just among the Jewish people, but also among the Arabians, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and Egyptians (but not among the Babylonians, Assyrians, Canaanites, and Philistines). To all of these cultures it was considered a religious act.

God ordained that circumcision be performed on Abraham, on his posterity, and on foreigners joining themselves to the Hebrew nation (Gen 17:12). Every male child was to be circumcised on the eighth day. In later times, a Hebrew surgeon was called in and the child was also named at the ceremony.

According to the terms of the covenant symbolized by circumcision, the Lord undertook to be the God of Abraham and his descendants, and they were to belong to Him, worshiping and obeying only Him. The rite effected admission to the fellowship of the “covenant people” and secured for the individual, as a member of the nation, his share in the promises God made to the nation as a whole. Circumcision reminded the Israelites of God’s promises to them and of the duties they had assumed. The prophets often reminded them that the outward rite, to have any significance, must be accompanied by a “circumcision of the heart” (Lev 26:41; Deut 30:6; Jer 9:25-26; Ezek 44:7).

In the New Testament the Apostle Paul says circumcision means nothing if it is not accompanied by a spiritual change. In the early history of the Christian church, Judaizing Christians argued for the necessity of circumcising Gentiles who came into the church; Paul (Gal 5:2) and the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) insisted that the signs of the old covenant could not be forced on the children of the new covenant.

God identified himself to Abraham as “God Almighty” (*‘el shadday*). In so doing,

the author has removed all doubt regarding the faith of Abram at this stage in the narrative. Abram worshiped the “covenant God”, Yahweh (*yhwh*), but he knew him as “God Almighty.”

God’s part of the covenant consists of two promises:

- abundant descendants (vv. 4-6)
- eternal faithfulness (vv. 7-8).

As the narratives have already stressed, the descendants of Abraham, who belong to this covenant, will owe their existence to God alone: “*You will be a father of many nations.*” John 1:13 remind us that they will be “*children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.*”

- Abraham’s part in the covenant consisted of his obedience to the covenant.
- Sarah’s part in the covenant was to be the one through whom the offspring of Abraham was born.

The rite of circumcision was to foreshadow circumcision of the heart. When we truly believe we ARE circumcised. Like Abraham, we are sinners and God comes to us, forgives, loves us, and cleanses us. As a response we consecrate ourselves and future to Him, and our circumcision is done in our heart (the seat of our decision making).

*Jeremiah 4:4* reminds us *Circumcise yourselves to the Lord; remove the foreskin of your hearts...* God says circumcision of the heart is what matters.

Today we know that it does no good to have a sign on our bodies and yet not truly love God.

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## Newcomer Party

August 17th at 7pm

917 Anthony, Santa Maria - 93458

<http://goo.gl/b5Wol>

