

Colossians #9

The Circumcision Of Christ

Circumcision was the token of the covenant between God and Abraham and subsequently between Him and Israel. (Gen. 17:11) Failure to observe this rite would cut such a one off from Israel (Gen. 17:14). When Christ removed the first covenant, the requirement for physical circumcision also was removed. Thus we read: "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God." and "So then neither is circumcision anything or uncircumcision, but a new creature." (1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 6:15) Nevertheless, Colossians had been circumcised with "the circumcision of Christ:" a circumcision not made with hands (Col. 2:11). What is this "circumcision not made with hands"; this "circumcision of Christ"?

The heart is affected in the circumcision of Christ. Stephen called his soon-to-be murderers "uncircumcised in heart and ears", an implication they were what they were because their hearts had not been circumcised (Acts 7:51). The circumcision of Christ is the "putting off of the body of the flesh". They had been dead through their "trespasses and uncircumcision of your flesh" (Col. 2:13). In Paul's letter to the Ephesians he wrote "and ye did he made alive when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). "Uncircumcision of your flesh" and "sins" are synonymous in these two passages. Thus, the putting off of the body of the flesh in "the circumcision of Christ" is the cutting off of sin. In the circumcision of Christ there must be the cutting off of the love of sin. This is done in the heart. But there must also be the cutting off of the guilt of sin. This is done in baptism. Paul has told us in verse eleven that the body of sin has been done away and in verse twelve he tell us how this was done. "Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead". Baptism is an act of faith. It is submitted to because we believe in Jesus who commanded it. It is an act of faith because we believe that God cuts off our guilt of sins when we in penitent faith yield to baptism. Just as we believed God raised Christ from the dead, so we believe when we arise from baptism, our sins are forgiven, just as he promised--- thus "faith in the working of God" (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).

Verse thirteen follows in natural order "buried with him in baptism, raised through faith in the working of God. Verse thirteen is commentary and explanation of verse twelve "and you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make

alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses."

All must be circumcised with the circumcision of Christ to be part of the Covenant God made with Abraham's spiritual seed. In that circumcision WE must cut off our love of sin so that GOD might cut off the guilt of our sin in baptism. Have your been circumcised with the circumcision of Christ?

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