

# Romans 12 – Confusion of Circumcision: New Life

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Romans 2:25-29

## Prologue: Error of Judaism–Law

- Paul discussed the central error of Judaism, which they viewed as their doctrinal core – The Law of Moses
  - The Law, ceremonial and civil aspects of the Mosaic Law, made Judah a theocracy
  - Ten Words laid the foundation for the Mosaic Law as it does for all human laws: written on all people's hearts
  - Keeping ceremonial/civil laws does not make one righteous as all violated the Ten Words: Born in sin

## Prologue: Jew's Ignorance of Law

- Jews continue to double down on their salvation being tied to their knowledge of the Law (Mt 23:13)
  - They claimed to know the will of God though rebuked by God's then captivity advertising their disobedience (Mt 2:1-4)
  - Jews believed that what they approved from the Law, God approved, which placed them above goyim (Mt 23:35-39)
  - Herein is piety: Promoting your beliefs, your morality rather than humbling one's self learning God's truth

## Prologue: Jews Gatekeepers to God

- Paul's use of Messianic prophecy to the Jews shows they saw themselves as chosen sons of gods (1:42,149)
  - Jesus said they make proselytes twice as deserving of hell as themselves since they rejected God's Son (Mt 23:13-15)
- Paul's destroys their claims of goodness in the Law with one statement: Did they teach themselves? No! {Do as I say; not as I do!}

## Two Component Identification

- People must grasp two components to understand how to define the Jews
  - Jews as a *nation* began when they left Egypt; the Law was the basis of their theocracy (Exodus)
  - Jews as a *people* began much earlier with Abram and the covenant of circumcision (Gen 17:9-10)
  - Paul proved the Jews violated their own law; now he will discuss how the Jews misappropriated circumcision

## What Was Circumcision?

- Circumcision not a new custom; it had been practiced by various cultures before given by God to Abram
  - Circumcision was the *sign* of the covenant God made with Abram to be a father of many nations (Abraham)
  - Removal of the penial foreskin eight days after birth
  - Mark in the flesh that rejected the flesh: New Covenant
  - Rejecting circumcision rejected God's grace - Lost

## Jews Glorified *Fleshly* Circumcision

- Jews came to view circumcision as the covenant rather than as a metaphor for the covenant – People of God
  - Emphasis given to the penis – *Fleshly* appetites (1Co 12:21-26)
  - Male dominated Jewish society (Ge 3:16)
  - Interpreted promises of God via *fleshly*, worldly Israel (Ro 8:6; 1Jo 2:15-16)
  - Jews looked for a conquering Messiah to enslave the *goyim* – Coming Antichrist will be their Messiah (Re 11:6, 13:3-10, 17)

## Why Circumcision?

- God made *fleshly* man, God is omniscient; thus, He designed man, circumcision, pointing to *New Covenant*
  - Satan, form of a dragon {worm}, projected power even hiding his weaknesses {Sin} – Penis: Satanic metaphor (De 3:1-7; Lk 14:13-20; Re 12:9)
  - Only penial foreskin can be safely removed; extra skin
  - Penis major function: *fleshly* reproduction (1Co 1:29)
  - *Fleshly* emphasis of Satan/Jews glorified the *flesh* (1Co 1:29)

## Significance of Number Eight

- Bible uses the number eight to introduce the concept of *new beginning* to include *resurrection* {*New Body*}
  - Eighth day heralds a *new start*; creation completed (Ge 2:1-3)
  - Eighth day begins *new week*; Sabbath is rest for *flesh*
  - Eight persons in the Ark; *new start* for mankind (1Pe 3:18-20)
  - Male child was to be circumcised on eighth day (Ge 17:12-13)
  - Christ resurrection eight days after presenting Himself as the sin sacrifice and Paschal Lamb: *New Covenant*

## Significance of Circumcision

- Physical circumcision merely a *sign*, metaphor, for the coming *New Covenant* embedded in the *Abrahamic Covenant* (Ge 15:4-6; 17:1-14)
  - Bloody flesh removed and thrown away (Ex 4:24-26; 2Co 5:17)
  - Christ died in His flesh and made alive in Spirit with a new body; we also in due time (1Co 15:42-49; 1Pe 3:18-22)
  - Circumcision-salvation metaphor: Died to sin raised in new life; baptism completes the metaphor (Col 2:9-14; 1Pe 3:21-4:2)

## Paul Discusses Jewish Circumcision

- Now that we understand circumcision as a *sign* or metaphor of salvation, Paul shows the *False Jews* linked circumcision and law to preserve their fleshly sin
  - Fleshly circumcision had value **only** if one kept the Law
  - Paul previously showed that the Jews flouted the Law though they bragged about keeping the Law (Ro 2:13-17)
  - Their fleshly circumcision was a sign of the old covenant; i.e., spiritually uncircumcised, lost (*False Jews*)

## Gentiles and Circumcision

- If-Then argument: If the Jews circumcision is made uncircumcision; then, the Gentiles uncircumcision is made circumcision when they keep the precepts of the Law; i.e., the Ten Words
  - Gentile *new covenant* salvation since living the moral law only possible with the indwelling Spirit (Col 2:11-14)
  - Thus, the flesh is of no consequence; it is the Spirit who energizes believers based on Christ's atonement (Col 2:6-15)

## With Whom is God Pleased?

### Jews

- Jews had both the Law and fleshly circumcision
- Jews relied on flesh to please God, not spirit and truth (Old Covenant) (Ro 4:21-24)
- Like those in the wilderness, most Jews died in their flesh apart from God (Ro 5:7-8)

### Gentiles

- Gentiles had neither law nor fleshly circumcision
- Saved Gentiles who lived the Law: spiritually circumcised (New Covenant)
- Gentiles who had no hope have received hope from God; not False Jews (Ro 4:1-5)

## What Makes a Jew?

- Paul defines *True Jews*, as opposed to the *False Jews* who sought religious piety via Law and circumcision
  - *True Jews* not based on fleshly signs but on the new covenant fulfilled in Messiah: JESUS (Ro 2:14-16)
  - *True Jews*, such as David, Paul, etc., are such because their circumcision is of the heart by the Spirit apart from the Law (Ro 5:15-17)

## There is No Division

- There is no division between the saved, both Jew and Gentile, because they are one in Christ (Ro 1:16)
  - Division is born of sin seeking to destroy the light (Jo 1:4-5, 1 Co 3:1-15)
  - *False Jews* open hostility to Christians, as to Christ, showed their knowledge of God as a source of empty (hebel) pride rather than humbling of self before God like Christ (Ro 2:14-16)

## Paul's Case

- True Jews have no issues with saved Gentiles because all are one in Christ, *new nature*, alluded to in fleshly circumcision on the eighth day (*New Beginnings*) (Ro 12:1-5)
- False Jews have problems because the Darkness always hates the Light which reveals the truth of the gospel dispelling the lie that God is the cause of all evil (Jo 1:3-9)

## What Paul Did Not Say

- Paul did not say that everyone who is saved, whether Jew or Gentile, becomes a Jew (Reformation Error)
  - This makes Gentiles (Church) recipient of the promises God gave to the Jews in the Old Testament
  - Basis of Replacement Theology: Explain why Jews did not receive God's promises though actually negates any promises God ever gives anyone at anytime (Ro 3:10)

## Epilogue: Circumcision a Sign

- Circumcision was not the covenant but a *sign* of the *new covenant* which would remove the flesh by the spirit, new body comes later (Co 5:17)
  - Every aspect of physical circumcision is immodest, empowering the negative aspects of the flesh and encouraging sinful desires opposed to God
  - Fleshly circumcision focused attention on remaining dead in sin, ignoring necessity of a changed heart (Ep 2:1-3)

## Epilogue: Living Moral Law

- Gentiles *proved* their salvation by living the Moral Law {Ten Words} though they did not have the fleshly circumcision nor the civil/ceremonial law (Isa 2:18-22)
- Change in nature produces changes in thoughts, words and behaviors; not out of necessity {Works} but from a mind renewed in Christ (Eph 4:20-30)
- The source of their renewed mind for both Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit (1Co 2:20)

## Epilogue: Jews Hated Gentiles

- The *False Jews* had no biblical basis for rejecting the salvation of Gentiles
- Cultural nomism demands adherence to outward presentations *proving* one's loyalty to the culture
- Demanding diversity is another means of demanding everyone be the same; i.e., against Christ's gospel
- Saved, simply by being saved, is an offense to the lost as it condemns them for their rejection of God's truth

## What's in Your Heart?

- This question is relevant today; has your heart been changed?
- This will be apparent in your very thoughts, words and deeds especially when apart from others
- This is the only true indication of salvation: *new nature*
- Many Christians and Christian organizations rely on outward forms; yet, like the Jews before them this will not protect them from the judgment of Christ (Mat 7:21-23)