

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ABRAHAM

*The Circumcision Gospel*

*A Biblical Rationale for Infant Baptism*

*Sermon #1 Galatians 3:1-29*

*Sermon #2 Genesis 17:1-27*

*Preached at Palmetto Hills Presbyterian Church, Sunday, October 9, 2005*

## SCRIPTURE TEXT

*Genesis 17:1-27 When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless,"<sup>2</sup> that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."<sup>3</sup> Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him,<sup>4</sup> "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations."<sup>5</sup> No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.<sup>6</sup> I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.<sup>7</sup> And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you."<sup>8</sup> And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God."<sup>9</sup> And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations."<sup>10</sup> This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised.<sup>11</sup> You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you."<sup>12</sup> He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring,<sup>13</sup> both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant."<sup>14</sup> Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."<sup>15</sup> And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name."<sup>16</sup> I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her."<sup>17</sup> Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?"<sup>18</sup> And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!"<sup>19</sup> God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him."<sup>20</sup> As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation."<sup>21</sup> But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year."<sup>22</sup> When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham."<sup>23</sup> Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day,*

as God had said to him.<sup>24</sup> Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.<sup>25</sup> And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.<sup>26</sup> That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised.<sup>27</sup> And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

# SERMON OUTLINE

## I. ALL MEN THAT ARE SAVED, THEY ARE SAVED BY FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE. (GAL. 3)

EXHIBIT A: GALATIANS

EXHIBIT B: ABRAHAM

EXHIBIT C: MOSES AND THE ISRAELITES

## II. ALL MEN THAT ARE SAVED BY FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE, THEY ARE MEMBERS OF THE ABRAHAMIC-CHRISTOCENTRIC COVENANT. (GAL. 3)

A. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT WAS ESTABLISHED AS AN ETERNAL COVENANT.

B. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT CONTINUES AS AN ETERNAL, UNBREAKABLE COVENANT FOR IT CANNOT BE REVOKED OR ALTERED?

C. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT WAS MADE BETWEEN GOD, ABRAHAM AND JESUS CHRIST.

D. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT WAS ALWAYS TO INCLUDE ANY WITH FAITH AND EXCLUDES ALL THOSE WITHOUT FAITH.

## III. ALL MEN THAT WERE SAVED MEMBERS OF THE ABRAHAMIC-CHRISTOCENTRIC COVENANT WERE COMMANDED TO RECEIVE THE OT SIGN. (GEN. 17)

A. CIRCUMCISION WAS THAT OT SIGN OF THE ABRAHAMIC-CHRISTOCENTRIC COVENANT.

B. CIRCUMCISION SYMBOLIZED THE INIQUITY OF MAN.

C. CIRCUMCISION SYMBOLIZED THE INIQUITY OF CHILDREN.

D. CIRCUMCISION SYMBOLIZED THE IMPOTENCY TO CLEANSE HIMSELF.

E. CIRCUMCISION SYMBOLIZED THE PERMANENT CLEANSING OF THE SOUL BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

F. CIRCUMCISION SHOWED FORTH THE VISIBLE COVENANT COMMUNITY, BODY OF BELIEVERS, OR OT CHURCH.

G. CIRCUMCISION WAS FOR BELIEVERS AND FOR THEIR CHILDREN WHO HAD NOT YET BELIEVED.

H. CIRCUMCISION NEVER GUARANTEED MEMBERSHIP IN THE INVISIBLE COVENANT COMMUNITY OR INVISIBLE CHURCH.

## IV. ALL MEN THAT ARE SAVED MEMBERS OF THE ABRAHAMIC-CHRISTOCENTRIC COVENANT ARE COMMANDED TO RECEIVE THE NT SIGN. (NEXT WEEK)

# INTRODUCTION

We are in the midst of a three-week study on salvation, faith, the Abrahamic Covenant and baptism.

In all, there are four major points to this study.

The first two points were covered last week as we spent the entirety of our time walking through Galatians chapter three.

## I. ALL MEN THAT ARE SAVED, THEY ARE SAVED BY FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE. (GAL. 3)

Paul began by reminding the Galatian church of the doctrine he preached amongst them.

Paul then encouraged them to remember their own experience.

He pointed out how their lives were transformed by grace through faith and not at all by works.

Then Paul brought before them the example of Abraham, the man of faith, as presented by Moses in the book of Genesis.

Paul quotes from Genesis 15:6.

He says in effect, "You were saved just like Abraham who believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness."

Then Paul brings to mind Moses, the Israelites, and all who considered themselves to be found under the law.

Paul makes it clear that no one stands righteous when being examined by God and his law.

I quote from Gal. 3:10, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."

He continues in verse 11, "Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for the righteous shall live by faith."

The testimony of Paul and the rest of the biblical authors are one and the same; they are consistent.

All men that are saved are saved by grace alone ... through faith alone ... because of Christ alone.

This includes Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses.

This includes Eve, Tamar, Rahab and Ruth.

All who find their way to heaven, all the saints, Jews and Gentiles alike, they are all saved in the exact same manner.

There is no other name under heaven by which men can be saved.

Jesus Christ is the only way, truth and life. No one comes to the Father except through him.

## II. ALL MEN THAT ARE SAVED BY FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE, THEY ARE MEMBERS OF THE ABRAHAMIC-CHRISTOCENTRIC COVENANT. (GAL. 3)

Yes, the Abrahamic Covenant is old – it was established some 3800 years ago, but while it is old, it is not dead, gone, or ended.

The Abrahamic covenant, when it was sovereignly initiated, it was declared to be an unending, unbreakable covenant.

And as we saw last week in Galatians 3, it cannot be ended, altered, changed or revoked – for God cannot lie nor change.

Then we spent a good deal of time outlining the parties of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Paul makes it most clear in Galatians 3 that the covenant was made between God, Abraham and Jesus Christ.

We don't have time to redevelop that point this morning, but there is no way around this interpretation.

It was Jesus Christ epitomized the fulfillment of the promise not Isaac.

And it is men and women of faith, those found in Jesus Christ, who are heirs of the covenant, and not ethnic, national Israel.

Galatians 3:7 Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.

Galatians 3:8 {God} ... preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."

Galatians 3:14 In Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles ....

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek ... slave nor free ... male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Scripture mandates the following statement: The Abrahamic Covenant was fundamentally between God, Abraham, Christ, and all who are found with faith in Christ.

We ended by commenting that when our children sing, "Father Abraham has many sons", they are more right in their theology than they may yet understand.

The Abrahamic Covenant was established as an eternal covenant.

The Abrahamic Covenant continues as an eternal, unbreakable covenant for it cannot be revoked or altered?

The Abrahamic Covenant was made between God, Abraham and Jesus Christ.

The Abrahamic Covenant was always to include any with faith and excludes all those without faith.

## TRANSITION

Now we get to the third major point in our study of salvation, faith, the Abrahamic Covenant and baptism.

God commanded Abraham to do something fairly odd and dramatic.

# III. ALL MEN THAT WERE SAVED MEMBERS OF THE ABRAHAMIC-CHRISTOCENTRIC COVENANT WERE COMMANDED TO RECEIVE THE OT SIGN. (GEN. 17)

## A. CIRCUMCISION WAS THAT OT SIGN OF THE ABRAHAMIC-CHRISTOCENTRIC COVENANT.

As I said before, God commanded Abraham to do something fairly odd and dramatic.

In one sense, this could be a fairly humorous story, as long as you are not one of the men mentioned in this chapter.

### ABRAM MIGHT HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED THE ETERNAL OPTIMISTS BY SOME

Similar to the military general who was trying to keep a positive spin on the situation.

His men were in a valley and they were surrounded on every side.

That is when he yelled, out, "Men were surrounded by the enemy. Don't let one of them get away."

But there is a fine line between an optimist and an idiot.

There is a fine line between faith and foolishness.

And I'm sure that many thought Abram had crossed that line after this family convocation on this hot Palestinian afternoon.

Let's rehearse the family convocation called by Abram on that hot Palestinian afternoon.

### ABRAM SUMMONS THE WHOLE FAMILY AND ALL THE SERVANTS FOR A 4:00 MEETING.

You can almost hear people buzzing as they try to figure out the purpose of this special convocation.

What does the old patriarch wish to speak to us about?

It must be fairly important.

Has something happened to Lot again?

Or ... could it be that Abram is ready to publicly proclaim his last will and testament?

Is Abram about ready to pass the birthright and blessing on to Ishmael?

**ABRAM THEN BEGINS SPEAKING.**

Thank you for coming.

Umm ... This morning, I met and spoke with Yahweh, God of the universe.

AT THIS POINT, SOME IN THE AUDIENCE UNCOMFORTABLY HELD THEIR BREATH; OTHERS MIGHT HAVE ROLLED THEIR EYES.

You see, a little history might be helpful.

The 1<sup>st</sup> time Abram met with God, his family had to pick up, leave their well-established home, and move to a desert region. <sup>(12)</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> time, Abram took 314 of his servants and went to war to rescue Lot against five kings and their armies. <sup>(14)</sup>

The 3<sup>rd</sup> time, he had a strange vision of animals cut in half and God in the midst of them promising Abram another son. <sup>(15)</sup>

And this hasn't happened yet.

So ... what is Abram getting ready to say now?

**ABRAM CONTINUED.**

God gave me a special message and here it is: He has again promised that I will have another son.

Yes, I will have another son, and Sarai will be the birth-mother.

**THE CROWD BREATHES A LITTLE DEEPER NOW.**

Shew ... this one is not going to cost us too much.

At least we don't have to pack up and head to a not-yet-disclosed region of the world.

**BUT RELIEF THEN TURNS TO PITY.**

Doesn't he know how old he is?

He is ninety-nine, and in just a few months he'll reach the century mark.

Poor Abram, he's been chasing this dream for 33 years.

No one, absolutely no one has children at this late stage of life.

And poor Sarai ... how long will Abram keep presenting to her these unrealistic expectations.

She has been barren for life.

Enough Abe ... it is one thing for you to keep fantasizing about this ... but why torment Sarai any longer?

**BUT ABRAM IS NOT FINISHED YET ... HE CONTINUES.**

And family, friends ... in addition ... I ask for you to no longer call me Abram.

**THE CROWD THEN REASONS, "WELL, AT LEAST THIS MAKES SENSE."**



It's been hard to call him "Exalted Great Father" all these years.

Especially when he has only one son, and this through an Egyptian slave.

He was hardly the grand father.

I wonder what he wishes to be called? "What shall we call you sir" someone said.

## **ABRAM SPEAKS**

You are now to call me Abraham ... meaning, "Father of a multitude."

In addition, you are to call my wife Sarai by another name.

Her name shall be Sarah, for from her princes and kings shall come forth.

## **WELL NOW, TO SOME, THE SITUATION IS ALMOST BECOMING PATHETIC.**

Perhaps you could hear coughing in the crowd as one servant tried to conceal his laughter.

But this is the rare reaction.

Most are just astonished, confused, and full of pity for the aging patriarch.

Oh how they love Abraham.

Oh how they hate to see him continuously hurt by chasing after this dream.

And poor Sarah, what is she to think.

## **BUT, OUT OF LOVE, HONOR AND RESPECT, THEY WILL OBEY AND ALLOW HIM TO CONTINUE ON WITHOUT BURSTING HIS BUBBLE.**

After all, what difference does it make to us? (PAUSE)

## **ABRAM SPEAKS, "OH ... AND THERE'S ONE MORE THING."**

I have been commanded by God to be circumcised and I will do so today.

And ... Ishmael ... my 13 year old son, he is to be circumcised as well ... today.

And ... You ... my servants ... you are to be circumcised also ... all of you ... today.

No one is to be left out. Not one is to fail in this regard. There will be no hall passes, sick passes, or exemption cards.

Rejoice with me brothers ... isn't this good news ... come, follow me to yonder tent.

## **WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?**

Can't you imagine what a new believer is thinking as he reads this passage?

What are you to learn from this chapter?

What possible good can be gleamed from spending a Sunday morning sermon focusing on circumcision?

### **IF YOU ARE A PASTOR'S WIFE, YOU ARE CONSUMED WITH ONE QUESTION RIGHT NOW.**

How is my husband going to preach on circumcision without embarrassing himself and me?

She is right now a woman of prayer -- praying that her husband has tact and does not say something indecent or too crass.

### **TO A LIBERAL, THERE IS NOTHING GOOD THAT CAN BE GLEAMED FROM THIS PASSAGE.**

To the liberal, this is just one more example of ancient superstitions that made their way into the biblical text.

### **TO A DISPENSATIONALIST, THERE IS SOME HISTORICAL AND HEALTH INTERESTS HERE, BUT THAT IS IT.**

The Dispensationalist sees this first and foremost as simply an ethnic mark of the nation of Israel. It is a branding of sorts.

Many other Dispensationalists consider circumcision as just a part of God's healthcare plan.

They say, "Isn't it interesting to see how God cared for the physical health of his children?"

Apparently, there is some practical, medicinal, hygiene-related reasons for circumcision on the 8<sup>th</sup> day.

But in this sign, God is communicating much more than simply, "You are an Israelite" and "I want you to be healthy."

Israel is still a nation today, and God's word clearly says that "Circumcision no longer holds any value."

And God cared about the health of Abram before now, and He cares for Christians today, and yet circumcision is not prescribed.

Yes, this sign is much more than an ethnic statement or holistic medicine.

### **SO, WHAT IS GOING ON?**

This sign has very little to do with natural health-care.

This sign has very little to do with natural heritage.

Circumcision was a religious sacrament.

And all sacraments were and are to be visible sermons.

Circumcision was primarily spiritual in its meaning.

This sign has everything to do with the spiritual covenant between God, Abraham, Jesus, and all who with faith in Him.

And so, this chapter regarding circumcision is important and cannot be minimized, skipped over or neglected.

Let's now look at the spiritual significance of this odd covenantal sign.

Let's hear the Circumcision Gospel.

## B. CIRCUMCISION SYMBOLIZED THE INIQUITY OF MAN.

### ABRAHAM UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS SIGN SYMBOLIZED THE INIQUITY OF MAN.

Did you notice the first words of God to Abraham in this chapter, "Walk before me and be blameless or perfect."

But Abraham knew that he was not blameless or perfect.

In just the previous chapter, chapter 16, Abraham has just had a major lapse in faith and obedience.

Instead of trusting God's Word, instead of waiting on God's good timing, Abraham took matters into his own hands.

Abraham listened to Sarah and had an extra-marital affair with Hagar in order to birth a son.

Yes, Abraham is often faithful.

But Abraham often proves himself to be faithless as well.

Abraham is not blameless or perfect.

It is no coincidence that chapter 17 follows immediately after chapter 16.

Through this sign, God is preaching a visible sermon telling Abraham that he is loved, but that he is unclean as well.

So Abraham is required to have a surgery that cut off, removed and discarded a dirty piece of flesh.

### MOSES UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS SIGN SYMBOLIZED THE INIQUITY OF MAN.

Lev 26 40-42 But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in their treachery that they committed against me, and also in walking contrary to me, so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies - if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they make amends for their iniquity, then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham ....

Deuteronomy 10:16 Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer.

Deuteronomy 30:6 The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

### JOSHUA UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS SIGN SYMBOLIZED THE INIQUITY OF MAN.

Joshua 5 2-9 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel a second time." So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth. ... When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. And the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." And so the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day.

### JEREMIAH UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS SIGN SYMBOLIZED THE INIQUITY OF MAN.

Jeremiah 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, circumcise your hearts, you men of Judah and people of Jerusalem,  
or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done ....

## C. CIRCUMCISION SYMBOLIZED THE INIQUITY OF CHILDREN.

Let me ask you a couple fairly sensitive questions.

Why not the ear lobe or the left pinky toe?

This would not have been Abraham's choice.

No, God Himself selected the surgical section to have surgery and I don't think it was arbitrary.

Why the male reproductive organ? Here is the logic:

Man was created and gifted with the ability and given the command to reproduce worshipers.

In Genesis it is very clear that man was placed on the earth to reproduce godly image-bearers.

Man was commanded to reproduce worshipers.

But what did our first man produce?

Man, instead of reproducing righteous worshipers, man manufactured rebellious sinners.

Adam started this downward spiral.

But it didn't take long for all other men to follow Adam's lead.

And you and I are no different.

The more man reproduces, the more rebellious God-haters are produced.

It is through physical procreation that the sin nature is passed from one generation to the next.

Whatever is born of natural man is polluted.

This is every father's gift to his children.

Exodus 20:5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,

So God required Abraham to be circumcised showing that Abraham was full of iniquity.

And God required Abraham to be circumcised showing that all of Abraham's descendants would be full of iniquity as well.

#### D. CIRCUMCISION SYMBOLIZED THE IMPOTENCY TO CLEANSE HIMSELF.

It was dangerous and virtually impossible for one to circumcise himself.

Men would hardly circumcise themselves ... someone else had to help.

And this is the point ... circumcision shows helplessness

Abraham was unable to be righteous, holy and blameless.

Abraham was unable to bring forth a righteous, natural seed.

Abraham was spiritually impotent and in need of help from another.

Jeremiah 6:10 To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ears are uncircumcised, they cannot listen; behold, the word of the LORD is to them an object of scorn; they take no pleasure in it.

Circumcision showed the need of man and the work of someone else.

## E. CIRCUMCISION SYMBOLIZED THE PERMANENT CLEANSING OF THE SOUL BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Circumcision signified the need for spiritual cleansing for all men.

Circumcision showed the inability of men to help themselves.

Circumcision showed the need for a helper and an interceder.

Circumcision then preached the Gospel of salvation, the purging of filth and the purification of guilt.

Circumcision showed the spiritual surgery of the Holy Spirit.

Deut 30:6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

Joshua 5 2-9 At that time the LORD said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel a second time." So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth. ... When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. And the LORD said to Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." And so the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day.

Circumcision pictured what is spoken of in Ezekiel.

Ezek 36:26-27 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Colossians 2:11-12 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

Circumcision showed permanence

Man, once cleansed, is eternally marked.

Vs. 13 My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant.

The mark was irreversible.

It was meant to eternally symbolize the covenant made between God and the individual.

Circumcision never signified the work of man because man was impotent and unable to help himself.

Circumcision signified the love of God and the work of the Holy Spirit.



## F. CIRCUMCISION SHOWED FORTH THE VISIBLE COVENANT COMMUNITY, BODY OF BELIEVERS, OR OT CHURCH.

### CIRCUMCISION IDENTIFIED THOSE IN THE COVENANT COMMUNITY.

Circumcision showed identity.

Anyone, regardless of their national heritage, could be circumcised and included in the Abrahamic covenant.

Israel could always include non-Abrahamic Gentiles.

It brought strangers into the brotherhood. "Fellowship"

Slaves were to be circumcised showing the different mode of slavery in the Old Testament.

The owners were to be pastors and spiritual fathers to all those under his charge.

Some cultures have treated these servants as possessions, but Israel was to treat them as children.

Romans 2:28-29 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

Circumcision signifies the separation from the world and the inclusion in the covenant community.

Circumcision was a sign of salvation and also a sign that gave identity to the visible, earthly, gathered, covenant family.

Circumcision defined those in the church body.

### CIRCUMCISION IDENTIFIED THOSE IN THE TEMPLE.

Ezekiel 44:9 This is what the Sovereign LORD says: No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and flesh is to enter my sanctuary, not even the foreigners who live among the Israelites.

### CIRCUMCISION IDENTIFIED THOSE WHO COULD PARTAKE OF THE CEREMONIAL MEAL.

Exodus 12:48 An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it.

## LACK OF CIRCUMCISION IDENTIFIED THOSE WHO WERE PERILOUSLY CLOSE TO EXPERIENCING THE WRATH OF GOD.

Uncircumcision defined those outside the covenant grace of God.

Gen 17:14 Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."

Throughout the OT, "Uncircumcision" was used to describe those who were evil and pagan in God's sight.

It described those who denied the true religion and made sacrifice to and worshiped false gods.

Samson calls out and begs for God's relief and rescue from the "hands of the uncircumcised." (Judges 15:18)

David asked his fellow Israelites, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

Imagine then how shocking it was for those in Israel to hear Jeremiah calling them "The Uncircumcised."

Jeremiah 9:25-26 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will punish all who are circumcised only in the flesh -- Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, Moab and all who live in the desert in distant places. For all these nations are really uncircumcised, and even the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart."

Stephen followed Jeremiah's model in his speech to the Council.

Acts 7:51 You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!

Anyone not circumcised, and outside the covenant community, were immediately subject to the wrath of God.

It is God-originated. It is God-authored. It is God-contrived.

All who rejected the sign are to be excommunicated

The command is accompanied by a most severe punishment.

Ex 4 24-26 At a lodging place on the way the LORD met him and sought to put him to death. Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it and said, "Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me!" So he let him alone. It was then that she said, "A bridegroom of blood," because of the circumcision.

## G. CIRCUMCISION WAS FOR BELIEVERS AND FOR THEIR CHILDREN WHO HAD NOT YET BELIEVED.

### THOSE WITH FAITH WERE CIRCUMCISED.

Abraham's circumcision did not save him.

Romans 4 9-11a Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness.<sup>10</sup> How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised.<sup>11</sup> He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised ....

Abraham had faith, and then he was circumcised. (Gen. 15:6)

God said, "This is a sign between me and you."

It signified a cognitive relationship between a man and his God.

This sign testified to a relationship that has been birthed.

Calvin said of baptism and circumcision, they are "marks of profession, by which we openly swear allegiance to God, binding ourselves in fealty to him."

I guess it is accurate to say that Abraham practiced "Believer's circumcision."

### THOSE WITHOUT FAITH WERE CIRCUMCISED.

The God who sovereignly ordered the covenant, ordained the sign, ordered the recipients of his sign.

God ordered Abraham to circumcise his children.

At this point, many would object.

Wait God, we can't circumcise the children, they don't yet believe.

Wait God, we can't circumcise the children, they might think this guarantees their eternal salvation.

Wait God, we can't circumcise the children, it might lead to a false assurance.

Wait God, we can't circumcise the children, this is a special event and they won't remember it.

But God made it very clear.

In the Abrahamic Covenant, children yet without faith were to receive the sign.

And it may help to remember, the sign primarily shows forth the work of God and not the faith of man.

Man who brings forth sinful children is responsible to work towards the salvation of his children.

Infants were to be circumcised by another on the 8<sup>th</sup> day.

## WHY THE 8<sup>TH</sup> DAY?

Could it possibly be the case that God creates all things on days 1-5.

God creates men on day 6.

God rests on day 7. And God is here picturing re-creation or re-birth on the 8<sup>th</sup> day ... or the Lord's Day?

## H. CIRCUMCISION NEVER GUARANTEED MEMBERSHIP IN THE INVISIBLE COVENANT COMMUNITY OR INVISIBLE CHURCH.

The sign is not the reality.

Many received the external sign and the external inclusion without the internal reality.

Romans 2:28-29 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code.

Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

There was the visible Abrahamic community, and the invisible Abrahamic community.

Consider the differences between Isaac and Ishmael ... Solomon and Absalom ... Moses and Korah

Not all of Israel are Israel.

There were many visible participants in the earthly Abrahamic Covenant that were not real participants in the eternal Abrahamic Covenant.

# OTHER WORK

The Gospel According to Abraham – Part 6

Circumcision is the covenant sign of God given to explain salvation and identify those who believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jesus Christ.

Genesis 17

Introduction

We are in the midst of a three week study on salvation, the Abrahamic covenant and baptism.

There are four major points to this study.

The first two points were covered last week in our study of Galatians 3.

1. All men that are saved are saved by faith alone in Christ alone.

Adam was saved in this manner.

Noah was saved in this manner.

Abraham and Moses were saved in this manner.

Ruth and Rahab were saved in this same way.

So to were all the Old Testament saints, Jews and Gentiles alike.

Jesus Christ is the only way, truth and life.

There is no other name under heaven by which men can be saved.

No one comes to the Father except through him.

2. All men that are saved are members of the Abrahamic-Christocentric Covenant.

The Abrahamic covenant was established 3800 years ago.

The Abrahamic covenant was established by God as an eternal and unbreakable covenant.

The Abrahamic covenant was fundamentally between God, Abraham and Christ – and all who are found with faith in Christ.

We ended by commenting that when our children sing, “Father Abraham has many sons”, they are more right in their theology than they may yet understand.

3. All men that were saved members of the Abrahamic-Christocentric Covenant should receive the OT mark.

This will be the focus of our study this morning.

God commanded Abraham to do something fairly odd and dramatic.

Let's read about it in Genesis 17.

Text: Genesis 17:1-27

1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, 2 that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly."

3 Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, 4 "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. 8 And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God." 9 And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. 11 You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. 12 He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, 13 both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. 14 Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant." 15 And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her." 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" 18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" 19 God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. 20 As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation. 21 But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year." 22 When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. 23 Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him. 24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 26 That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. 27 And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

Introduction

Abram might have been considered the eternal optimists by some

Similar to the military general who was trying to keep a positive spin on the situation.

His men were in a valley and they were surrounded on every side.

That is when he yelled, out, "Men were surrounded by the enemy. Don't let one of them get away."

But there is a fine line between an optimist and an idiot.

There is a fine line between faith and foolishness.

And I'm sure that many thought Abram had crossed that line after this family convocation on this hot Palestinian afternoon.

Rehearsing the family convocation called by Abram

Crowd

The whole family and all the servants have been summoned.

You can almost hear people's brains buzzing as they try to figure out the purpose of this special convocation.

Is Abram about ready to proclaim his last will and testament?

Is Abram about ready to pass his blessing on to Ishmael?

Has something happened to Lot again?

Abram

I met with the God of the universe this morning.

Crowd

You can imagine the rolled eyes at this point.

Is this the same God that told Abram he would have numerous children?

This could be dangerous. Last time Abram had that look in his eye, he took 314 of us into battle against five kings.

Abram

He gave me a special message, and the content is this, "I will have yet another son."

Crowd

The rolling eyes turned into snickers at this point.

Doesn't he know how old he is?

He is ninety-nine.

In just a few months he will be one-hundred.

No one has children at this stage in life.

Abram

Abram cuts through the murmuring.

That is not all. I will have another son, and Sarai will be the mother.

Crowd

Well this takes the cake.

First he says he talks with God.

Second he says he will produce a child.

Third he says it will come through Sarah. She has been barren for life. She is without hope. She is ninety.

And this man is without his proper mental faculties.

Maybe he is becoming senile.

Maybe he's been drinking the nectar again behind the tent.

The rolled eyes that turned to snickering might have turned to pity now.

Poor Abram, he's been chasing this dream for 33 years.

Will he never give up?

Abram

Family, in addition I ask for you to no longer call me Abram.

Crowd

Well that's good. It was hard to call him "Exalted Great Father" when he had only one child and this child through an Egyptian slave.

He was hardly the grand father.

Abram

You are now to call me Abraham. This means, "Father of a multitude."

In addition, you are to my wife Sarah, for from her princes and kings shall come forth.

Crowd

At this point, to some it is almost becoming pathetic.

You can here coughing in the crowd as one servant tries to conceal his laughter.

Some are pitying the older man as he addresses his friends, family and servants.

But we love him and respect him.

We'll allow him to continue pursuing his dream without bursting his bubble.



After all, what difference does it make to us? (PAUSE)

Abram

There is one last thing.

I, along with Ishmael, and all my male relatives and servants gathered here today are to be circumcised. Now!

Not one is to fail in this regard. There are no hall passes, sick passes, or exemption cards.

Rejoice ... for the God who has promised me a son has commanded us to obey.

Rejoice ... for the God who has promised me land has commanded us to obey.

Come, follow me to yonder tent.

The stone knives have been sharpened, and the tables are ready.

Every man and boy gathered here today must participate.

Thus says the Lord.

What would be your thoughts as you stood there that afternoon?

Ready obedience?

Mockery and scorn?

Fear for yourself?

Fear for your loved one?

Confusion

Desire to go AWOL?

What are your thoughts as you have read this passage and heard it presented this morning?

Liberals

This is a waste of time to study this passage this morning.

All that we have here is an ancient cultic rite that has been spiritualized by spiritualists seeking to exercise control over people.

Maybe there is some merit to this study if you are a historian. But other than that, leave it alone.

Quit wasting your time.

Dispensationalists

This is some out-of-date bizarre plan that God had for the nation of Israel.

Since Israel rejected Christ as Messiah.

God has changed his purpose and the church has nothing whatsoever in common with Abraham, Isaac or Jacob.

Possibly Israel should still receive the sign of circumcision, but certainly the Gentile church can disregard its significance.

Hygienists

This passage is giving a hygiene-related command for the betterment of health within the Israelite community.

Pastor's Wife

The wife of the pastor is sitting here praying to God that her husband has tact and does not say something indecent, perverse, or too uncomfortable in this morning's sermon.

Pastor

I am convinced that for one to properly understand the Christian experience and the church, one must understand the significance of the practice of circumcision.

Circumcision is the covenant sign of God given to explain salvation and identify those who believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jesus Christ.

For this reason, circumcision is a vital topic and chapter seventeen of Genesis cannot be skipped over or neglected.

It is odd. It is sensitive. But it is Scripture and it is important.

Transition

There may have been some practical, medicinal, hygiene-related reasons, but these were secondary.

This sign was primarily spiritual and not medicinal or practical ... although the spiritual God is often the most practical.

God was concerned with health before Abraham, but he had not yet prescribed circumcision.

God is concerned with health after Christ, but he tells us that circumcision means nothing.

So what educational value did the practice of circumcision serve?

I. Circumcision is given to explain salvation

A. Man is spiritually unclean.

Moses understood this.

In Leviticus 26:41, Moses describes those who are wicked as people with "uncircumcised hearts."

Leviticus is written by the same man who writes of Abrahamic circumcision in Genesis.

Leviticus deals with people who have uncircumcised "hearts." (Spiritual Sign)

Leviticus deals with Israelites. People circumcised in the flesh, but that was not sufficient.

Judges understood this.

Samson calls out and begs for God's relief and rescue from the "hands of the uncircumcised." (Judges 15:18)

Kings understood this.

Remember David when he was on the battlefield before Goliath.

He asked his fellow Israelites, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

Prophets understood this.

Throughout the OT, "Uncircumcision" was used to describe those who were evil in God's sight, those who were wicked and pagan, those who sacrifice to and worshiped false gods.

Jeremiah calls the house of Israel "uncircumcised in heart."

Jeremiah 9:25-26 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will punish all who are circumcised only in the flesh -- Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, Moab and all who live in the desert in distant places. For all these nations are really uncircumcised, and even the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart."

New Testament Disciples understood this.

Stephen, in his speech to the council, continues this symbolism.

You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! (Acts 7:51)

Abram understood this.

God is showing Abram that he is unclean

Notice God's first words in our chapter this morning, "Walk before me and be blameless or perfect."

But Abraham is not perfect or blameless.

He is often faithful, but he is often faithless.

God has inspired Scripture and Moses has recorded or ignored events as God has desired.

It is no coincidence that chapter 17 follows immediately after chapter 16.

Abraham has just finished relying on the natural flesh in the previous verses regarding Hagar.

Now God was preaching a symbolic sermon to Abram, "You are unclean."

I thought Circumcision was just an ethnic badge

In a sense - It was an ethnic badge showing the world that this was one nation who understood their sinful condition before God.

In a sense – It was no ethnic badge at all, for anyone, regardless of their national heritage, could be circumcised and included in the Abrahamic covenant. (More on this to come.)

Some may say, "But what about Jesus?" "He was circumcised and he was not unclean."

Yes Jesus was circumcised. And yes Jesus was unclean and without sin.

But Jesus came down to associate with the sins of His people.

He was baptized for the remission of sins, but he had none.

He was crucified and forsaken by God on the cross though he did no wrong.

And He was circumcised though he had not sin.

Jesus Christ came to associate with the sins of His people ... and so Jesus Christ came preaching the message of circumcision.

So Here is the first meaning of circumcision

Men in their natural birth condition are born uncircumcised.

And all those who are born uncircumcised in the flesh, they are born uncircumcised in heart also.

Man, in his natural birth condition, he is spiritually gross and unclean.

This is the first lesson of circumcision: Circumcision shows that man is spiritually unclean.

Transition

Why not the ear lobe or the left pinky toe?

You must ask yourself, why the male reproductive organ?

It was done in that region of the body because the sign has to do with man's reproductive efforts.

B. Man Does Reproduce Spiritually Unclean Children

Adam Produced the Spiritually Unclean

In Genesis it is very clear that man was placed on the earth to reproduce godly image-bearers.

Man was created and gifted with the ability to reproduce worshipers.

Man was commanded to reproduce worshipers.

And what did our first man produce? Rebellious sinners.

But since Adam, the world just continues to get better and better ... right?

No, the state of man continues to decline because all we can naturally reproduce is rebellious God-haters.

And the more man reproduces, the more rebellious God-haters are produced.

It is through physical procreation that the sin nature is passed from one generation to the next.

Whatever is born of natural man is polluted.

This is the doctrine of total depravity and original sin.

We Produce the Spiritually Unclean

Through Adam we are all cursed.

Through mom and dad we are all cursed.

Through physical reproduction, we will pass on the curse to our children ... and their children ... and so on.

How's that for birth control.

Don't dare bring children into this world unless you are going to spend your life seeking to bring them to the Savior.

To be born once is not enough. Your child must be born again.

Abram Produced the Spiritually Unclean

It was the sinful Abram that was to birth the Isaac (picture of the Messiah)

And so this rite was to be done before the birth of the Promised One.

Here is the second meaning of circumcision:

Unsaved, sinful, depraved men can only bear unsaved, sinful, depraved children.

Transition

Before one can understand the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, one must see the bad news of their sin.

Before one can see the good news of circumcision, one must see the bad news of sin.

We have men who are natural sinners.

We have natural sinners reproducing themselves to become generations of natural sinners.

Now here comes the good news or the Gospel of Circumcision.

C. Man Should Have Spiritual Surgery

Circumcision shows helplessness

Circumcision is done by another

Infants were to be circumcised by another on the 8th day.

Men would hardly circumcise themselves.

Circumcision shows regeneration

This symbolizes the fact that circumcision is done by God.

Deuteronomy 30:6 The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

Circumcision must take place before or "so" that one may love God with all one's heart, and soul.

Side Note: Circumcision as a sign of the new birth (Needs more study)

Why the 8th day?

God knew in that society that to perform this activity on a newborn could be catastrophic but the 8th day has been proven most advantageous?

Could it possibly be the case that God creates all things on days 1-5. He creates men on day 6. He rests on day 7. And He is here picturing re-creation or re-birth on the 8th day? It might also be interesting to notice that Christ rose on what would be considered the 8th day. (8th day, the beginning of new life)

Circumcision shows repentance

Deuteronomy 10:16 Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer.

Jeremiah 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, circumcise your hearts, you men of Judah and people of Jerusalem, or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done-- burn with no one to quench it.

Circumcision shows Spiritual Cleanliness

The process of circumcision symbolized the spiritual cleansing that was absolutely necessary.

Man's heart is naturally corrupt and it must be uncorrupted.

The uncleanness needed to be taken away and it could indeed be taken away. (Not physically but spiritually)

Circumcision shows Permanence

Man, once cleansed, is eternally marked.

Vs. 13 My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant.

The mark was irreversible.

It was meant to eternally symbolize the covenant made between God and the individual.

The sign was eternal in its duration.

My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant (with you.)

Transition:

Conclusion of Circumcision as a sign of salvation, but it is also a sign that gives identity to the covenant family.

We learn about salvation through circumcision.

We also learn about the church through circumcision.

II. Circumcision is given to identify the covenant family

A. Family Made Up of those who Believe

## Believers' Circumcision

Circumcision is a sign for believers.

Men with faith are to receive the sign

God said, "This is a sign between me and you."

It signified a cognitive relationship between a man and his God.

This sign testified to a relationship that has been birthed.

You heard the Gospel, you believed, you had faith, then you walked the aisled and were circumcised.

## B. Family Made Up of those Yet to Believe

Children without faith are to receive the sign.

### Infant Circumcision

They were to be circumcised on the 8th day. There was no time for faith or repentance at this point.

This circumcision showed their need but also it showed the parent's faith that their child would come to God.

Children with the sign are to have faith.

The sign is not the reality.

There were many who received the sign but did not have the corresponding covenant relationship.

Parents who see the sign are to have faith

God loves the family.

Jeremiah 32:38-39 They will be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them singleness of heart and action, so that they will always fear me for their own good and the good of their children after them.

When one surveys the New Testament, nothing seems to have changed. Peter, preached in his first sermon, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

I Corinthians 7:14 For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

Acts 16:31 They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved-- you and your household."

Parents who see the sign are to have action

## C. Family Made Up of those from Every Nation

### Gentiles Circumcision

Circumcision was never the sign of ethnic Israel.

You were an Israelite and a Jew regardless of whether or not one was circumcised.

Israel could always include non-Abrahamic Gentiles.

Circumcision turned a Gentile into an Israelite.

Gentile slaves were included in the chosen people.

Any Israelite may participate in the highest privilege of Israel.

Slaves were to be circumcised showing the different mode of slavery in the Old Testament.

The owners were to be pastors and spiritual fathers to all those under his charge.

Some cultures have treated these servants as possessions, but Israel was to treat them as children.

It brought strangers into the brotherhood. "Fellowship"

Some will undoubtedly Ask me the question, "What about women?"

"I don't know a lot about women."

They seem to have been included under the umbrella of their man. (Father or Husband or Some Other Relative)

Sarai was blessed due to Abram's covenantal relationship with God.

Genesis 17:15-16 God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

#### D. Family That Excludes the Hardened Disobedient

Circumcision symbolized the inclusion of one into the covenant community.

One had to be circumcised in order to eat of the covenant meal.

Exodus 12:48 "An alien living among you who wants to celebrate the LORD's Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat of it.

All who reject the sign are to be excommunicated

It is God-originated. It is God-authored. It is God-contrived.

The command is accompanied by a most severe punishment.

Through this punishment God shows his great concern and love for men.

The punishment rebukes their negligence.

Failure to conform and obey meant failure to be included in the covenant community.



Covenant proclamation without covenant obedience is a farce.

Look at the seriousness of God ... the consequences of disobedience were seen in the near destruction of Moses in Ex. 4:24-26.

Ezekiel ?? This is what the Sovereign LORD says: No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and flesh is to enter my sanctuary, not even the foreigners who live among the Israelites.

To ignore the commands of God is an invitation to enjoy the judgments of God.

Conclusion

God's Sovereignty

He calls.

He commands.

He commands

He blesses.

He gives the sign.

Human Responsibility

Obey

Walk

Change Names

Take the Sign

Abraham Threw a Circumcision Shower

What a difficult "sale."

This work would include hundreds of people.

There is no seeker-driven or seeker-sensitive worship in Abraham's house.

Humbling, odd, shameful, tender

Abraham did so "on that very day." (vs. 23)

Be Baptized

Colossians 2:11-12 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

1. All men that are saved are saved by faith alone in Christ alone.

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This will be the focus of our study this morning.

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4. All men that are saved members of the Abrahamic-Christocentric Covenant should receive the NT mark.