

Sept 10, 2017



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Lesson Leaders:

James Haymon
Jose Cisneros

Class Leaders:

Inreach: Pat Hester
Secretary: Mary Clark
Deacon: C M Hester

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
Paul said, "where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all" (Col 3:10-11). And above all, we are to "put on love, which is the bond of perfection" (Col 3:14).

POEM FOR THE WEEK:
It matters not what race or gender, Rich or poor, or great or small, The God who made us is not partial, He sent Christ to die for all.

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all
(Col 3:11 NKJV)
(from "Our Daily Bread", Feb 6, 2011)

Series: Covenants with God
UNIT: Signs of God's Covenant

NEXT WEEK
Sabbath Observance
(Exodus 31:12-18)

Circumcision **Gen 17:1-14**

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson teaches us to understand the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant and its sign of **Circumcision**. The study's aim is to make the distinction between physical circumcision and circumcision of the heart. The study's application is to give greater attention to what we are like inwardly rather than outwardly.
(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

I remember as a young pastor struggling with how to talk about circumcision from the pulpit as I expositied a text that mentioned it. After all, the act of circumcision concerns a part of the male body usually not discussed in such settings! That concern led to the following thought: Why did God design such a ritual, carried out by cutting right into the flesh? Why such an extreme measure? The Bible says that God's covenant with Abraham's seed would be in [their] flesh (Gen. 17:13). This shows us how serious God was about His covenants. That is what we must learn as we study this sign. God was and is very serious about the relationship He has with His people through His covenantal promises. And we should be serious about responding to His grace. Circumcision was a sign of God's covenant with Israel. Covenants must be made and received with seriousness. The Lord gave clear instructions concerning the circumcision of Abraham and all his people and posterity. He even gave the new names Abraham and Sarah in conjunction with it, teaching the couple that their lives had changed forever by entering into a covenant with Him (Gen. 17:5,15). So we see the seriousness of entering into a covenant with God. It changes everything. God's offer of salvation and an eternal relationship is to be taken seriously. Eternal salvation is no trifle. A relationship with God is not a small thing. For Abraham and his posterity, it was marked by cutting into their flesh. There is no way anyone could forget that. Let us always take God seriously—His grace, His offer of salvation, His commands, and His promises. Of course, the nature of circumcision in Old Testament times related to God's dealings with His people, Israel. The sign itself was pointing to something greater, including a chosen people, a special land, and a coming Messiah. We must see the total vision of what God promises in His covenant. The act of circumcision becomes somewhat pointless if it is divorced from all the teaching and meaning that went with it. For Israel, circumcision meant that they were God's people and the inheritors of His great saving purposes and messianic promises. His covenant had a large vision, which was conveyed as the ritual of circumcision was passed down and practiced. Marking human beings in the flesh ensured that this vision would be taught and remembered. As we look back on it now, we see this covenant vision even more clearly. There is a spiritual circumcision. The ultimate point had always been not a physical circumcision but a spiritual and inward circumcision (Deut. 30:6; Rom. 2:25-29). The spiritual circumcision of the Christian comes by faith in Christ (Rom. 3:31); it is accomplished without hands, resulting in the forgiveness of sins (Col. 2:11-13). The crucial thing to possess is spiritual circumcision. The fleshly ritual has no bearing on salvation. It was only a sign pointing to a greater, spiritual reality (Phil. 3:3). The inward circumcision through Christ is the ultimate reality. It too must be treated with seriousness.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

The Call into the Covenant (Gen 17:1-3)

Prerequisite of covenant is to walk blamelessly (1)

Blameless so we can minister to God (Ps 101:6)

Blameless by walking according to God's word (Ps 119:1-3)

Blameless by being considered good and righteous (Prov 2:20)

Blameless by guarding ways (Prov 13:6)

Blameless through God's choosing (Eph 1:4)

Blameless by doing everything without complaining and arguing (Phil 2:14-16)

Covenant parties are God and Abram (2)

A covenant between parties that is remembered forever (Ps 105:8-10)

A covenant between parties that is sealed by the promise and grace of God (Gal 3:17-18)

A covenant between parties that was promised by God swearing by Himself (Heb 6:13)

Response to covenant should be to accept with humility (3)

Humility that comes through the fear of God (Prov 15:33)

Humility that brings wealth, honor and life (Prov 22:4)

Humility because of being God's chosen (Col 3:12)

The Sign of the Covenant (Gen 17:4-6)

Promise of blessing (4)

God is faithful to His promises of blessings and does not violate His covenants (Ps 89:33-36)

God remembers His covenants and out of His great love blesses regardless of our rebellion (Ps 106:43-45)

God is faithful to His promises of blessings by continuing to redeem His people of the covenant (Ps 111:9)

God is faithful to His promises of blessings by upholding His people and making them a light to others (Isa 42:6)

God is faithful to His promises of blessings through Jesus' blood covenant (Matt 26:28)

Name Change (5)

God changed Jacob's name because of His perseverance (Gen 32:28)

God changed Solomon's name because He loved him (2 Sam 12:24-25)

God changed Peter's name because He had a rock-like purpose for him (John 1:40-42)

God will change the saved saints names because they overcame the world (Rev 2:17)

God's redemptive plan (6)

God's redemptive plan was manifested through Jesus being born in the flesh (Gal 4:3-6)

God's redemptive plan through Jesus giving of Himself for our redemption (Titus 2:11-14)

God's redemptive plan was foreknown and predestined (Rom 8:28-30)

God's redemptive plan is guaranteed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:11-14)

God's redemptive plan was confirmed by His promise and oath (Heb 6:17-19)

The Promise of the Covenant (Gen 17:7-8)

God's covenants and promises are eternal (7-8)

God's plans and purposes stand forever (Ps 33:11)

God remembers His covenants forever (Ps 105:8)

God has created a new covenant that is eternal (Heb 9:15)

The Mark of the Covenant (Gen 17: 9-14)

Mark of obedience (9-13)

Obedience because it delights God (1 Sam 15:22)

Obedience leads to righteousness (Rom 6:16)

Obedience leads to the praise of God by others (2 Cor 9:13)

Obedience keeps us remaining in God's love (John 15:10)

Obedience leads to the reward of blessings (Deut 28:1-6)

Obedience brings the reward of freedom (James 1:25)

Mark of disobedience (14)

Disobedience causes our actions to recoil on us (Ps 7:15-16)

Disobedience caused by bad choices (Prov 1:29-31)

Disobedience caused by stubbornness (Jer 9:13-14)

Disobedience violates God's covenant (Deut 17:2-5)

Disobedience dishonors God (Rom 2:23-24)