

# Understanding the Circumcision

This chapter taken from the book *When Faith Came* by Franklin Whittenburg © 1998-2006

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***But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you (Romans 8:9).***

***That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again (John 3:6,7).***

I wanted to include this event in my testimony because this is a very real experience! I have experienced the Holy Spirit enter into my body between two ribs and went straight to my heart and performed this operation. What I experienced came from outside my body and entered in, which means that what I experienced was not finally coming in contact with some “inner god”. As the Bible plainly teaches, I was not born with a “spark of divinity”.

***That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (Ephesians 2:12).***

This event was not like receiving a revelation of spiritual wisdom and knowledge, but a real physical experience. The whole event took place in the chest area. I thought I might be having a heart attack, except for the presence of an intense joy. I don't think I have ever heard of a preacher talk about this event, but it was one of the most amazing things I have ever experienced. It was only after this experience that I became aware of a totally new spiritual world that I was previously blinded to. It wasn't until later though that I understood the significance of this event called “Circumcision”, which I will try to explain in detail here.

The Bible speaks of crossing over to a new world, a new birth and a new creation. No longer in the “flesh”, but in the “Spirit”, no longer “in Adam”, but “in Christ”. This transformation event that the Bible is talking about is called Circumcision. It is the term the Bible uses for removal of the flesh. The term used for transforming the natural body into the spiritual body is called the “Quickening” (Romans 8:11).

To understand circumcision you have to understand the source of the flesh that is being circumcised (removed). The natural man is made up of two types of flesh: The flesh of the heart, and the flesh of the physical body. The Jews and many other religions still to this day circumcise the flesh of the physical body as a seal of righteousness, but I want to focus on another circumcision that has to do with the heart. It is the circumcision of the heart that translates you into the spiritual world.

***For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God (Romans 2:28,29). (Matthew 22:37)***

***And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live (Deuteronomy 30:6).***

The Bible says in Deuteronomy 30:6, that it is only by “circumcision of the heart” that we can even keep God’s greatest commandment. The reality of this event that I experienced on the road in my car is what caused me to love and worship God, because to love Him, I had to have something of substance to love. True love to me is not loving or worshiping the idea of God, but God Himself. In fact I could never truly worship God unless the flesh of the heart had been removed by circumcision, and I was translated into the realm of the spirit.

***For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:3)***

***But the hour cometh, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23,24).***

Since the Christian is “in the Spirit”, I want to address spiritual worship briefly. When Jesus found me, I didn’t have my “garment of praise: on, but I was at the lowest point in my life. At the weakest point of my life was where I found His strength and presence, not during my highest point of praise and worship like is being taught in many churches today as they try to rebuild the Old Testament temple complete with Davidic praise and worship. I actually heard one preacher say that we need to be like Queen Esther and find out just what the king likes us to wear to come in his presence. In fact, just by looking on the Internet for “cell churches”, the first page of churches I looked at had a church with this statement listed describing it as “a cell church focused on pursuing the presence of God through worship, praise, discipleship, preaching, and servant evangelism”! This now seems to be the general way that most Protestant denominations have reverted to in their “Christian” walk to seek God’s presence. This type of “Christianity” teaches techniques for the “seeker” to practice the presence of God.

What I have found out is the only thing that God requires for you to come into His presence, is if your are clothed in His righteousness that was given you as a free gift for your faith in Jesus Christ His Son! In my experience, my praise and worship became a result of being in His presence, and not something that had to be done to get into His presence. The Bible plainly teaches that we can come BOLDLY to the throne of grace during the time of our greatest need, not when we are at our highest point of praise and worship.

***For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:15,16).***

What I hear being preached in some churches today is praise and worship to unlock the presence of God. This doctrine is taken from the book of Psalms.

***Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name (Psalms 100:1-4)***

This was the acceptable Old Testament way of entering the temple courts. In the New Testament, I have found another way, other than praise and worship, into God's presence that I don't believe many churches today know about from what I hear being preached on TV and on the radio. I believe that all the main denominations that are out there today have totally missed this and seem totally blinded to this simple truth. Feel free to share it with anyone you know that are in these denominations that might have a problem with getting in to God's presence with "praise and worship". This may shock many in religion today, but it works without praise and worship and it will get you into the holiest (God's presence). It has worked for me and I believe if you try it, you can even learn to live in God's presence! Here it is:

***Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10:19-22).***

***But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ (Ephesians 2:13).***

In my experience, it is the blood of Jesus alone that has gotten me into God's presence. I want to clarify something here. When a Christian talks about being in God's presence in this world, they are referring to direct access to the throne of God through the Holy Spirit because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to open that door of fellowship.

***For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father (Ephesians 2:18).***

***And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ (Galatians 4:6,7).***

*Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: (Hebrews 9:6-8).*

*And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles (Acts 14:27).*

In my experience also, I have never found a veil between God and me that I have to go behind to enter into the “holiest”. I have found a dress code though that God does require before you can come into His presence. I have heard it preached that we must wear the “garment of praise” to get into God’s presence. God may have required the “garment of praise” from everybody else, but all God has ever required me to put on, was the robe of His righteousness that was a free gift for faith in Jesus Christ. His robe of righteousness that I wear was given me so I don’t see my nakedness or shame. Because of this robe of righteousness, I no longer look at me as naked and shameful and neither does God! Through the blood of Jesus, my fellowship with God has been eternally restored! Because of the sacrifice of Jesus to cleanse all of God’s creation with His blood, God already looks at me as spotless.

*And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: (Colossians 1:20-22).*

*I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see (Revelation 3:18).*

*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool (Isaiah 1:18).*

The gift of righteousness given to me is not for God’s benefit, but for mine. I understand that my righteousness is as filthy rags and cannot be cleaned, so I exchanged it for His righteousness that cannot get dirty! This is very different than what is being taught in many religions today.

Since this flesh removal operation (Circumcision) takes place inside the body, in the heart, I am curious how cell / small groups are trained to pull this off in their “equipping” process. Why is circumcision so important? Because it is a covenant and the seal of righteousness that God had ordained. The Word of God declares the covenant, but the

Spirit of God seals the covenant. All of the promises of Abraham hang on this one covenant.

***Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: (Romans 4:7-14).***

The Jewish priest of the Old Testament did not understand that the true seal of circumcision God gave Abraham was in the circumcising of the heart, in the spirit, from the very beginning. They would instead take and circumcise the physical body of the male children as a sign of righteousness. In the New Testament, it is our High Priest Jesus Christ that circumcises the heart of the born again believer as a seal that they are righteous by faith.

***Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: (Romans 15:8).***

Since New Testament circumcision is an operation that Jesus does in the heart, women are also able to partake of this covenant also, and they can be heirs of the promises of Abraham. This is why the Bible says in Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, etc. The Old Testament dealt with human beings (born of the flesh), the New Testament deals with spiritual beings (born of the Spirit). This event of circumcision also marks the beginning of your eternal spiritual journey as a new creation.

***And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; (Colossians 2:10-13).***

What I have seen also in the church today is the practice of taking a new believer that has just been born again and trying to plug them into some ministry. If any pastors end up reading this then please give the new believers time to rest and heal and enjoy the liberty

and freedom in Jesus before trying to place them into some ministry. Even in the Old Testament, the people were allowed to rest and heal after the circumcision before they journeyed any farther!

*Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD sware that he would not shew them the land, which the LORD sware unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey. And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you (Joshua 5:5-9).*

*If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day (John 7:23)?*

*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matthew 11:28,29).*

*Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works (Hebrews 4:1-4).*

The new believer has just had the reproach of the world (Egypt) rolled off them. Let them rest and heal and not immediately usher them into a ministry. God will call them to a ministry when He is ready (Galatians 4:1,2).