

True Worshipers

By Steve Pruitt

Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.

1 Corinthians 7:19-20 NKJV

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old God commanded him to be circumcised as a sign of his covenant with Abraham. Abraham circumcised all the males in his household and from generation to generation Jews have continued this rite.

Circumcision was so important to God that he sought to kill Moses as Moses journeyed to Egypt because he had not circumcised his sons. Circumcision was equally important to the Jews. Anyone who was not circumcised was considered unclean. This assertion became a point of contention when the Gentiles were converted to Christ.

Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem by the brethren at Antioch to seek the counsel of the apostles on the matter of Gentile circumcision. The council's decision was that the Gentile's were under no obligation to be circumcised and keep the law.

In his writings Paul defines the meaning of true circumcision. He says that true circumcision is not made with hands but the putting off from the body the sins of the flesh. In Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is important but a new creation.

Many of the Jews based the confidence of their salvation (and ultimately their worship) in circumcision. Circumcision became their idol. Sadly today, many in the church base their salvation (and ultimately their worship) in religious activities.

However, true worshipers put no confidence in what can be accomplished in the flesh, but only what can be accomplished by the Spirit of God and being obedient so his word. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life have been cut away from their hearts. Their glory and exultation is in Christ Jesus and not religious activity.

The Apostle Paul wrote, *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.* (Galatians 5:6 NKJV) Jesus told his disciples that the work of God was to believe in the one whom he sent. So, the starting place of true worship is not in religious activity but a believing faith in Jesus Christ which leads to keeping his commandments.

Is there something in your life that you have exalted above Christ? Has religious activity replaced an intimate relationship with Jesus? Ask the Father to reveal to you if there is something in your life that has replaced him as the center of your worship.

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Scriptures for meditation:

- Psalm 65:5
- Proverbs 3:26
- Philippians 3:4-11