

Text: Romans 4

Subject: The Rite of Circumcision and Justification

1. To the Jews, the following are of paramount importance

- a) Abraham
- b) Circumcision
- c) The Law of Moses

2. Paul had to deal with these sensitive issues

- a) The first century Church was primarily made up of Jews when it first began
- b) The earlier history of the Church saw many Jews turning to Faith in the Lord Jesus

3. Many problems arose

- a) The Pharisees mounted an effort to insist that Circumcision was necessary
- b) They further argued that all believers must keep the Law of Moses
- c) This issue was dealt with by a special Jerusalem Council Acts 15

4. The Conclusion of the Council

- a) Circumcision was not to be forced upon male Gentile members
- b) The keeping of the Laws of Moses would not apply to Gentiles
- c) Justification does not come from the keeping of the law Acts 15

5. An official Letter was written by the Apostles and Elders

- a) To all churches
- b) Especially to the Gentile believers
- c) They were called “brethren”
- d) There was no distinction between Jews and Gentiles where Salvation was concerned

- e) This strengthened and encouraged all Churches in Judea, Samaria, Syria, and Asia Minor
- f) But Rome was not affected by all that had happened in these regions

PAUL HAD TO TAKE UP THIS ISSUE OF CIRCUMCISION

⁹ Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

¹⁰ How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.

¹¹ And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also,

¹² and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.

Romans 4:9-12

1. He raised an important question

- a) Was Abraham circumcised before Justification was given?
- b) The answer was clear and plain
- c) Abraham was justified BEFORE the sign of circumcision

2. The sign of Circumcision

- a) This was “the seal of the righteousness of the faith” Abraham had
- b) Justification was given while Abraham was yet uncircumcised

3. Ramifications

- a) Abraham is the father of all who believe Romans 4:11
 - i) Even though they are uncircumcised
 - ii) This is of great importance to note
- b) Abraham is the father of circumcision Romans 4:12

- i) This is a reference to the Jews
- ii) Paul had already defined the true “Jew” Romans 2:29
- iii) The true Jew is one inwardly not outwardly
- iv) He now declares that the true Jew is one who walks in the faith of
Abraham Romans 4:12

OUR CHALLENGE

1. To understand the Doctrine of Justification better

- a) We are declared righteous
- b) We stand before God with all our sins forgiven

2. To appreciate

- a) We do not have to keep the laws of Moses for Justification
- b) There are many deep and precious truths to appreciate as we delve deeper into the doctrine of Justification