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| **Circumcision is That of the Heart**  **< Romans 2:17-29 >  "Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, 'Do not commit adultery,' do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? For 'the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,' as it is written. For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."**  **We must be circumcised in the heart**  *"Circumcision is that of the heart."* We are saved when we believe with the heart. We must be saved in the heart. God says, *"Circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not from men, but from God" (Romans 2:29).* We must have the remission of sin in our hearts. If we don't have the forgiveness of sin in our hearts, it is invalid. Man has an "inner self and an outer self," and every one must receive the remission of sin inwardly.  The Apostle Paul says to Jews, *"Circumcision is that of the heart."* Then what did the Jews circumcise? They circumcised a part of the flesh. However, the Apostle Paul says, *"Circumcision is that of the heart."* Jews circumcised outwardly, but Paul says that circumcision is that of the heart. God tells us in our hearts when we become His children.  Paul does not talk about the outward circumcision, but the circumcision and the remission of sin in the heart. So when he says, *"For what if some did not believe?" (Romans 3:3)* He means, "If some did not believe in the heart." He does not talk about outwardly believing, but says, "Believe in the heart." We must know what the Apostle Paul means and what the remission of sin is. We must also learn how to obtain the remission of sin in our hearts though God's word.  *"For what if some did not believe?"* means "For what if Jews did not believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior, even though they are Abraham's descendants by the flesh? " Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Shall the fact that God blotted out all our sins including the sins of Abraham's descendants become invalid? Never. Paul says that even the Jews, who are the descendants of Abraham by the flesh, can be saved when they believe that Jesus Christ is the Savior, the Son of God, who took away the sins of the world through His baptism and crucifixion. He also says that the salvation and grace of God through Jesus Christ cannot become invalid.  Romans 3:3-4 states, *"For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: 'That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged.'"* The Lord promised with His word and sanctified believers by accomplishing His promise by Himself. God wants to show His righteousness and to justify those who have faith in Jesus through His word by accomplishing what He promised when He is judged. Even we, who have the remission of sin in our hearts, also want to be judged by His word and want to overcome with His word when we are judged.  **The Apostle Paul tells about the outer and inner self**  Paul talks about his "outer and inner self." We also have an outer self and inner self, which are the flesh and the spirit. We are the same as him. Now Paul deals with the issue.  Romans 3:5 states, *"But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say?"* Paul does not mean that his outer self is clean. His flesh is dirty and continues sinning until he dies. This includes all the people in the world. However, if God had saved those people, wouldn't it demonstrate His righteousness? Wouldn't God be righteous if He had saved human beings, though their outer selves are infirm? So Paul says, *"Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.) Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?" (Romans 3:5-6)* Paul explains that we are not saved just because our outer selves are clean.  We have outer and inner selves. However, Paul deals with the realm of the heart saying, "For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Circumcision is that of the heart." It is not true faith if we become a righteous person once and then a sinner the next day by establishing our faith on the basis of our outer self who sins and has infirmities.  **Outer man always sins until he dies**  The Apostle Paul did not place his hopes on his outer self. Those whose sins are blotted out also have outer and inner selves. How do they feel when they see their outer selves? They cannot help being disappointed. Let us see our outer selves. Sometimes we are good, but sometimes we are simply abominable. But the Bible says that our outer selves were crucified with Jesus Christ. Our outer selves died, and Jesus Christ forgave all the sins of our outer selves.  We who are saved are frequently disappointed with our outer selves when we look at our outer selves. We seem to be hopeful when our outer selves do well, but become disappointed when they don't meet our expectations. We tend to think that our faiths are wrecked when we are disappointed with our external selves. However, this is not right. Our outer selves were already crucified with Christ. Those who have the remission of sins also go on sinning through their physical bodies. But isn't that a sin? Yes it is, but it is a dead sin. It's dead because the sins were taken to the Cross with the Lord. The sin that the outer flesh commits is not a serious problem, however it is a serious matter that our hearts are not right in front of the Lord.  **We must believe in God with the heart**  More iniquities are revealed to the righteous just after receiving the remission of sin. Therefore, God's salvation would become imperfect if we set our basis of salvation upon our outer men who cannot but sin every moment. Our faiths would deviate from the faith in God, which Abraham had, if we set our faiths on the basis of the deeds of the outer flesh.  The Apostle Paul says, *"Circumcision is that of the heart."* We become sanctified and righteous by believing in the heart, not according to the deeds of the outer men. Sanctification does not depend on whether our outer men do as God says or not. Do you understand this? The problem is that we have both the outer and inner selves and they coincide. Therefore, we sometimes tend to place more weight on the outer man. We become confident if our outer selves do well, but disappointed if they don't. Paul says this is not the right faith.  *"Circumcision is that of the heart."* What is the real truth? How do we know and believe with the heart? In Matthew 16, Jesus asked Peter, "Who do you say that I am?" Then Peter confessed his faith, saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter believed like that with the heart. Jesus said, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven." Jesus said Peter's faith was right.  Abraham had no son. God led him with His word and promised that He would give him a son and that he would be a father of many nations. He also said that God would be God to him and his descendants after him. God told Abraham, his family and his descendants to be circumcised as a sign of the covenant between God and Abraham. "The scars of cutting a part of the flesh is the covenant that I am God to you," said God. Abraham believed the covenant with his heart. He believed that God would be God to him and bless his heart. He also believed that God would be God to his descendants after him. He believed in God Himself.  **We are made righteous by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit with the heart**  We are made righteous by believing with our hearts that God is our God, our Savior. We are saved by believing with our hearts. We are not saved by anything else. We have become righteous by believing with our hearts that God is our God and He blotted out all our sins with the baptism of Jesus and His death on the Cross. Believing with our hearts saves us. So the Bible says, *"For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10).*  What we must make clear at this time is that we are made righteous by believing with our hearts, and not by virtuous deeds of our flesh. We would not become righteous if Jesus attached a condition to our outer selves, saying, "I will blot out all your sins, but under one condition. You can be my child if you avoid sinning. You cannot be my child if you fail to do so."  We are made righteous by believing with our hearts. Could we have been made righteous if God had attached conditions to our outer man? Do you believe that God saved you by taking away your sins through His baptism in the Jordan River, being crucified and judged in your place? How do you believe this? Don't you believe with your heart? Could you have been saved perfectly if God had said, "I will forgive your small infirmities but will not forgive the big ones. I will make your deliverance invalid if you fail to keep this condition"?  **We must separate outer man from inner man**  Our flesh, the outer man, is always weak and cannot reach the righteousness of God by itself. We are made righteous by believing with the heart in front of God because He promised to save those who believe with their hearts. Seeing our faith that we admit what God did and that Jesus took away and blotted out all our sins with the heart, God makes us His righteous children. It is the covenant of God, and He saved us by fulfilling His promise.  God says that when He sees faith in our hearts, we are His people. We must separate our outer man from our inner man. Nobody in the world would receive the remission of sin if we set our benchmark of salvation on our deeds of the outer flesh. *"Circumcision is that of the heart."* We are saved by believing in Jesus Christ with our hearts. Do you understand this? *"For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:10).*The Apostle Paul apparently separates the outer man from the inner man.  Our outer man is worse than dog shit. It's worthless. We don't need to use Abraham as an example. Look at yourself. See your worthless flesh. The flesh resorts to trickery in trying to obtain a high social position and to live in affluence. Doesn't the flesh always do nothing but seek its own interest? The flesh would be judged more than twelve times a day if it were judged on how it thinks and acts. The flesh is against God.  Fortunately, God does not care about our outer man, but He take notice of only our inner man. He saves us when He sees us really believe that Jesus is the Savior with our hearts. He tells us that He saved us from all our sins.  **We can never be saved by our own thoughts**  Let us look into our own thoughts. We think we can believe merely with our thoughts. We can believe with the thoughts of the flesh, thinking, 'I was saved because God saved me.' However, we cannot be saved by our thoughts. The carnal mind changes all the time and always does evil. Is this true? Thoughts of the carnal mind want to do this and that according to its lusts.  Let's suppose someone put his/her faith on the basis of his/her thoughts. He/she can have confidence in his/her salvation while his/her present thought agree with his/her former thought, that is, 'Jesus took away all our sins in the Jordan River.' However, because thoughts of the flesh are not stable, he/she cannot have confidence in His salvation any more, once a slight bit of doubt invades his/her feeble thought on salvation. The wrongly built faith based on fleshly thought will fall down at a stroke of a doubt.  We cannot truly believe in Him and the truth if we lay the basis of our faith on our own thoughts. Such a faith is like a house built on the sand, *"And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall" (Matthew 7:27).*  Therefore, the faith of a person who believes with thoughts is far from the faith based on God's word. God said, *"That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged" (Romans 3:4).* Our salvation should be based on His word. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and God is the Word. The Word came to the earth in the likeness of men. Jesus saved us and was taken up after His 33 years of lifetime on the earth and led His Apostles to write the word of promise, which is the accomplishment of the Old Testament that He also told to His servants before. God wrote what He said and did in the Bible. God appears in and with the Word, speaks with the Word and saved us with the Word.    We cannot have the perfect remission of sin with our own thoughts, while not believing in God's word, thinking, 'I seem to be saved sometimes, but I cannot believe the salvation of the Lord sometimes.' We cannot be saved with thoughts because our thoughts always change and they are not always true.  Therefore, the Apostle Paul says that circumcision is that of the heart and we believe His righteousness with the heart. When our heart believes in His word, the heart apparently testifies that God promised this in the Old Testament and accomplished His covenant. He saved us like this in the New Testament by His word. We are saved and become God's children by believing in His words with our hearts.  **We are saved from our sins by believing the gospel of the water and the Spirit with the heart**  We are saved by faith because the heart can admit God, but our thoughts of carnal mind may not admit Him. We become God's children by believing with our hearts, not by the deeds or thoughts of our outer man. It is clear that we become God's children by believing in His word with our hearts. Do you believe with your heart? Are you circumcised in the heart? Do you believe in your heart that Jesus is your Savior? The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself. Do you have the witness of the word that Jesus perfectly saved you, not the witness of personal experience? Do you have the word of God in your heart? Do you have the word that gave you the remission of sins? To have true faith is to be saved by faith.  We receive the remission of sins by believing in God's word with our hearts. However, we are frequently disappointed when we look at the weaknesses of our outer man. And then we are apt to retreat from out faith in God. One who does not fully understand the truth is under an illusion. Most Christians set the benchmark of their faith on their deeds. That's a great mistake. We must not measure our faiths on our own thoughts. We should not set the basis of our faith on out flesh because the flesh is useless. The Old Testament and the New Testament tell us that one is made righteous when he/she believes in God's word with the heart. We are not saved from sins by thoughts or deeds, but only by faith. We cannot be saved by the deeds of the flesh. Whether we sin or do good deeds has nothing to do with God and His glory.  Therefore, true faith means to be saved by believing the truth of salvation of God's word with the heart. Our faiths are wrong when our hearts are wrong and our faiths are right when our hearts are right. Right behavior comes from right faith. Wrong behavior may come out because the heart is weak. But the important thing is that God looks at the heart. God looks at the heart and investigates it. God looks whether the heart is right or not. God looks whether we really believe with the heart or not. Do you understand? Do you know that God looks at our hearts? God looks on whether we believe in Jesus Christ with our hearts when He looks at our hearts. Do you believe with your heart?  God observes whether we believe with the heart or not when He looks upon us. He looks in our hearts. We must check up our hearts in God's presence. Circumcision is that of the heart. Do you believe with the heart? God looks at the heart. He looks at whether we really believe with our hearts or not. He looks at whether we really know the truth and whether we want to pursue it or not. He looks at whether we have faith in our hearts or not and whether we want to follow Him and believe in His word.  **There is a religious body that puts a great importance on the exact time of being born again**  It is important to have an exact knowledge of what Jesus Christ did and believe it with the heart. There is a religious body that tells the brothers and sisters in our church that they are not saved. I feel pity for the souls in that religious body. I want to let them understand me and teach them the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Are your sins blotted out? -Amen.- Do you believe it with the heart?  But there are some people who say that our faiths are not right. They say that we must not believe the word as it is written and believe only what is proved with science. They say that is perfect salvation and perfect faith. They say that a born again person should know exactly time he/she was born again (hour, date, month). When brother Hwang to meet with one of them, the person asked brother Hwang when he was born again, so brother Hwang answered that he did not know the exact date and hour, but that he was born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, sometime last year. Then he said that brother Hwang was not saved.  Of course, we can say the exact hour and date and month and year if we trace back to when we were born again. We can even say whether it was A.M or P.M; or the morning, afternoon, lunchtime or suppertime. However, salvation depends on believing with the heart. It doesn't matter if you can't remember the exact time.  **Circumcision is that of the heart**  The Lord took all our sins onto Him at the Jordan River and was crucified in our place to be judged for the sins. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. He took away all the sins of our outer and inner man. Our spirits rose again from the dead and now we can follow the Lord as He pleases, even though some people may viciously tell us that we are not saved.  What does the Bible say about the outer man? More and more infirmities seem to be revealed after we receive the remission of sin. All of our infirmities have not been revealed yet; more insufficiencies will be revealed. However, we are saved if we believe in our hearts that God is our God and that Jesus took away all our sins in the Jordan River through His baptism and was crucified.  We cannot be compared with people who put an importance on the date when they were born again and believe only what is proved by science. Clearly, they are not saved. We believe with our hearts to become righteous. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is our Savior? -Amen.- Faith begins from that point and the Lord leads our hearts from that time. The Lord says that we are His righteous children and our faiths are true. He blesses our hearts and wants us to follow Him with our hearts by faith. God leads us and blesses us when we walk with Him through the faith in our hearts.   |  | | --- | | **Want to know more about the book of Romans?**Please click the banner below to get your free book on the book of Romans. | | [Bible study on Romans](http://bjnewlife.org/english/printedbook/printbook_edition.php?bid=65) |   *"Circumcision is that of the heart."* We were saved by believing with our hearts. Many people on the earth say that believing the gospel with their hearts saved them. However, they actually add their deeds to the faith. They regard the deeds of the outer man as essential condition of their faith. They say that having faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit cannot lead them to salvation because they mix believing with the heart and their own virtuous deeds.  As a result, they are more concerned with how well the outer man does and how often they offered the prayers of repentance. They are far from salvation even though they think they are saved from their sins.  **God looks on the heart**  We believe to become righteous in our hearts. It is purely separated from the outer flesh and has noting to do with our deeds. Salvation itself has no relation with our deeds. Are you refreshed after learning that all your sins have been blotted out? Do you want to serve the Lord with joy? Do you preach the gospel with joy? Do you want to engage yourself in His beautiful mission? The heart becomes grateful and joyful because God approves our faiths when we believe with our hearts. Therefore, the heart is very important before God.  [Back](javascript:history.go(-1)) |
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