

CUT TO THE HEART

Genesis 17

You make a plan. You think you know the plan, you work the plan, you visualize down to the last detail, but what if you are wrong? What if you're a little off?

It's not that Abram didn't have a plan, it was that he was deviating from what God had for him. Abram and Sarai had a plan- God now intervenes.

God doesn't change while we wait

We may think that God is far off or that His plans may have changed, or simply that we don't know what God is doing in a situation. That is normal. When God speaks a truth to you or about you it is set in stone.

We live in a world where nothing is sacred. People don't have reverence and awe over the things of God. We can learn from Abram here. What is he to do? He is called to obedience, relationship, and holiness. God cares about how you live your life. You can't just talk the talk, you must walk the walk.

God is the one who speaks over us and declares to us what truth is. To be the best human you can be, you need to live how you were created to be. The world is full of ways to dehumanize. But only through Christ can we be truly human.

What is this act of circumcision all about?

Nobody likes to cut away things in their lives that they think are core to who they are or what they want. Circumcision was a physical identifying marker with a people and with a covenant. The physical sign quickly became a source of pride for the people of Israel. Circumcision in the flesh became a symbol of the circumcision of the heart.

The sign must happen internally if it's going to have any saving significance. This is the greater spiritual reality which includes both a putting off and a putting on.

We are looking for a circumcision made without hands, something that God is doing without human involvement. That is salvation. That is what your soul is yearning for, you may not even know it, but your heart yearns for a right relationship with God.

Key Idea: You have a holy God to serve and pursue

Abraham Circumcision

Made with hands
Cutting of the foreskin
Physical Identifier through circumcision
Not merely an external ritual
Faith precedes the sign (Gen. 15:6)
Inheritance by relation to Abraham (Deut. 10:16)
On that very day

Christ Circumcision

Made without hands
Cutting of the heart
Spiritual identifier through faith
Not merely an external ritual
Faith precedes the sign
Inheritance by relation to Christ
On that very day

Application Questions:

What do you do as you wait for God? (Not what should you do) How does how your waiting reveal your heart?

What do you do when your plans don't seem to match what God is doing? (Not what should you do)

What happens in your heart when these things happen? How do you shepherd your own heart? How do you shepherd those in your sphere of influence?

If circumcision is a cutting away of the old way, what do you resist God cutting away from your life? Why is it so painful to die to self? See Deut. 10:12-22.

Why is it that this cutting away seems like a never-ending process? What commitments do we need to make to Christlikeness and the pursuit of holiness, both individually and as a Small Group?