







SCRIPTURE

¹⁸a heart that devises wicked schemes,
feet that are quick to rush into evil,
¹⁹a false witness who pours out lies
and a **person who stirs up conflict in
the community.**

Proverbs 6:16-19 (NIV)

God has called us to be people
who **reconcile.**

SCRIPTURE

¹¹Therefore, remember that formerly
you who are Gentiles by birth and
called "**uncircumcised**" by those who
call themselves "**the circumcision**"
(which is done in the body by human
hands)—

Ephesians 2:11-18 (NIV)

They are dividing over circumcision. Why?

What is circumcision?
And why is it important?

EPHESIANS

Circumcision is...

1. A **physical sign** of the covenant to make Abraham fruitful, the father of many nations. (Gen. 17:1-14)

X-ref

¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. ²Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

— Genesis 17:1-11

X-ref

³Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, ⁴“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. ⁵No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.

— Genesis 17:1-11

X-ref

⁶I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. ⁷I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.

— Genesis 17:1-11

X-ref

⁸The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.” ⁹Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come.

— Genesis 17:1-11

X-ref

¹⁰This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.

— Genesis 17:1-11

EPHESIANS

Circumcision is...

2. A **visible sign** that you are a people who belong to God.
(Gen. 17:12-14)



X-ref

¹²For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring.

— Genesis 17:12-14

X-ref

¹³Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant.

— Genesis 17:12-14

X-ref

¹⁴Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

— Genesis 17:12-14

Circumcision is a BIG ask:
JOKE: Priest, Minister, Rabbi & the Bear

Application:
**Be clearly and visibly marked as
God's people in our thoughts,
words and actions.**

SCRIPTURE

"Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "**uncircumcised**" by those who call themselves "**the circumcision**" (which is done in the body by human hands)—

Ephesians 2:11-18 (NIV)

**Why is the whole conversation about
circumcision important? Why does Paul have
to address it?**

**Because it was creating discord and division
and damaging relationships.
Remember Proverbs 6.**

Once you were **not a people**, but now
you **are the people of God**; once you
had **not received mercy**, but now you
have **received mercy**.

— 1 Peter 2:10

SCRIPTURE

¹²remember that **at that time** you were
(1) separate from Christ, **(2)** excluded
from citizenship in Israel and **(3)**
foreigners to the covenants of the
promise, **(4)** without hope and **(5)**
without God in the world.

Ephesians 2:11-18 (NIV)

Relationships break when we forget what brings us together.

EPHESIANS

Behaviors that destroy relationships

Gottman's 4 Horsemen

1. Criticism
2. Contempt
3. Defensiveness
4. Stonewalling

SCRIPTURE

¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who **once were far away** have **been brought near** by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:11-18 (NIV)

Circumcision is...

3. A spiritual **picture** of removing what separates us from God. (Rom. 4:9-12)

²⁸A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. ²⁹No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and **circumcision is circumcision of the heart**, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God.

Romans 2:28-29 (NIV)

⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

— Genesis 3:7

'Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head.'

— 1 Corinthians 11:4

**How do we gain access to the covenant as Gentiles?
The covenant of faith. (Romans 4:11-12)**

**Covenant of Fruitfulness VS
The Covenant of Faith**

X-ref

Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before!

— Romans 4:9-12

X-ref

And he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.

— Romans 4:9-12

X-ref

And he is then also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

— Romans 4:9-12

SCRIPTURE

¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations.

Ephesians 2:11-18 (NIV)

X-ref

³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

— Romans 8:38-39

**We are both coming to God through Abraham:
one by one covenant made in the flesh.
The other through the covenant made by
faith.**

How do we heal our relationships?

4. Committed to a new start (v. 15)

5. Acknowledge that we both have work to do. (v. 17)

6. We are equal before God (v. 18)

God has called us to be reconcilers.
