

In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Colossians 2:11-17. NKJ

The circumcision Paul wrote about here is made 'without hands' and is directly connected to the removal of sin. It is the "circumcision of Christ" which happens at baptism. Note that baptism is a burial and is likened to Christ's burial and resurrection. Neither sprinkling nor pouring is baptism.

From this burial in water one is raised with Christ. This is when the new life begins (Romans 6:3-5). Since the new life begins at this point we can understand that the new birth is through baptism (John 3:3-5). At baptism one is made alive and has been forgiven of trespasses, sins. Only God can tell us when He forgives sin, and through Paul He reminded the Colossians of this blessing. This blessing is given when a person believes, repents, confesses Jesus as the Son of God and is baptized (see also Acts 2:38; Romans 10:10). Salvation is not given before one fulfills these actions and is only given when one is baptized.

The 'handwriting against us' was the law given through Moses. It was nailed to the cross. That is, it was fulfilled through Jesus and was no longer the law of God to which any person was or is bound. At the cross Jesus mediated, put into force, the new covenant (Hebrews 9). Consider Paul's warning in Galatians 5:4 about going back to the law of Moses. The law which was nailed to the cross included the ten commandments, as Paul said in Romans 7:1-7. Nine of the ten commandments are included in the New covenant. The one not included is the commandment to observe the Sabbath. No one should be judged concerning Sabbaths as Paul noted in the text to the left.

As you read through the letter to the Colossians note the amazing blessings which are available to anyone through Jesus, the Son of God. Jesus said this path to the Father is only through Him (John 14:6). No other can provide the eternal home offered through Jesus.

This path to salvation is made available because Jesus paid the price of our redemption from sin (see 1 Peter 1:17-21). The plan for Jesus to provide this way to salvation was purposed by God before the world was created (Acts 2:22-24; Ephesians 3:10-11). This is the love of God in action!

As Paul warned, there are many false teachers in the world. Jesus described them as wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15-19). Do not follow the devouring wolves! Follow the Good Shepherd (John 10).