**Circumcision Is Nothing,**

**And Uncircumcision Is Nothing,**

**But**

I Cor 7:19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

Gal 5:6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Gal 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

**Circumcision Doesn’t Matter Anymore**

I Cor 7:19 **Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing**, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

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Gal 6:15 For **in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision**, but a new creature.

One can have their infant boys circumcised or choose not to; either way is fine with God under New Testament law.

**What Does Circumcision Represent?**

Circumcision does not represent water baptism. Meaning - baptism is not New Testament circumcision.

Col 2:11-13 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision **made without hands**, in **putting off the body of the sins** of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

NT circumcision is something done “without hands” - so it cannot be baptism because baptism is done with hands.

NT circumcision is the putting/cutting off our sins – see the play on words? So NT circumcision (forgiveness) occurs when one is baptized according to Col 2:11-13, but it is not baptism. That is an important distinction to make.

If baptism is New Testament circumcision, then:

* we should baptize infants (contradicts Acts 8:35-37)
* we should only baptize boys (not females)
* and we must baptized them at 8 days old

**Circumcision (In Our Three Passages)**

**Represents The Whole Old Testament Law**

The Acts 15 debate was about:

* verse 1 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, **Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.**
* Verse 6 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, **saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.**

Paul discusses this same problem in Galatians 5:

* Verse 2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that **if ye be circumcised**, Christ shall profit you nothing.
* Verse 4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, **whosoever of you are justified by the law**; ye are fallen from grace.

**We Don’t Have To Keep The Old Testament**

So our three passages are in effect saying it doesn’t matter if we keep the law of Moses, like …

Heb 7:12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

This is an all or nothing argument; if part of the law changed then the whole thing must have changed. Kind of like if you “change” the oil in your car. You don’t put any of the old oil back in, do you? Neither should we bind any part of the old law today.

Gal 3:24-25 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

We are no longer under “the law” – not just part of the law, but any of the law.

**But What Does Avail?**

Gal 5:6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; **but faith which worketh by love**.

Faith is necessary to salvation:

* faith in God - Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
* belief in Christ (Jews and Muslims believe in the God of Abraham but not that Jesus is God’s son) - John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
* belief in Jesus’ resurrection (some, even professors at seminaries, believe in Jesus but not in His resurrection) - Rom 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

**Faith By Itself Is Not Enough**

Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.

James 2:24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Compare that to - Wherefore, that we are justified by faith, only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort. (Article IX in The Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church)

Rom 10:13-14 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

Paul clearly believed on the road to Damascus, but was still in his sins three days later:

* Acts 9:3-6 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.
* Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

**Faith Has To Work Out Of Love**

I Cor 13:1-3 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Our obedience has to be done out of love for God, and our helping of others must be done out of love for them.

For example:

* not done to be seen of men – Matt 23:5a But all their works they do for to be seen of men
* not to be done out of envy – James 3:14-18

I Cor 7:19 Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.

If this shows Old Testament works have nothing to do with our salvation (and all agree it does), then it would show New Testament works do have something to do with our salvation.

Other texts - **Obedience is Necessary To Salvation**:

* Heb 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;
* Matt 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven
* II Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.
* II Thess 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
* I Peter 1:22a Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth …
* Rev 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Gal 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but **a new creature**.

“new creature” is the same analogy as Born Again

A parallel is being made to our first physical birth. We are born without wrinkles and scars, and we are starting a new physical life. With the spiritual birth we are made clean from spiritual wrinkles and scars (sin) by the blood of Christ, and we start a new spiritual life.

Born again involves being born of water (baptism)

* John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
* John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Our sins are forgiven when we are baptized, but baptism does us no good unless we repent first. Repentance means we commit to quit serving sin and start serving righteousness. And God expects us to following through on that commitment after we are baptized. That’s the point of Romans 6 …

1-4 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are **dead to sin**, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were **baptized** into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should **walk in newness of life**.

17-18 But God be thanked, that ye **were the servants of sin**, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye **became the servants of righteousness**.