

THEME: Sanctification of the Believer

INTRO: There is a naturalistic/holistic worldview that is a cross between the hippie movement of the 1960's and the medical fields of our day. While it is quite beyond the scope of today's lesson to draw a full historical picture, (*That's a whole topic in and of itself*) it will suffice to say that there is a strong 'eastern philosophy' that inspires and permeates the naturalistic/holistic medical movement of our modern day 'Alternative medicines'.

You may have heard of a 'fork' or 'sub-culture' of this medical movement known as 'NATURAL-MINDED MOMMIES' (*aka 'Crunchy Moms'*). This group share everything from the usual essential oil advice, healthy diets, exercises, and organic evangelism... to the more questionable topics, such as the mother consuming the placenta, uncovered nursing, and **selective circumcision**.

To say the least, the Scriptures plainly warn us about receiving leavened bread (*dogmatical doctrines of the scribes and pharisees*) and while these groups may be well meaning, there is no getting around the matter that ANYONE clean on the outside, and corrupt on the inside, is simply a well-meaning pharisee needing Jesus to be their Way, Truth, and Life.

You DID know that Jesus didn't come to show us the way... He IS the way, and no man gets to the father but by Him. He is the door. He is the light.

LESSON:**1.) THE 'RECENT RESCIND' INTO NON-CIRCUMCISION**

With modern secular culture thumbing its nose to 'years of repressive Christian authoritarianism', the steady stream of 'bold, new, brave stands' seems progressively increasing:

- Alternative Lifestyles (co-habitation) (1970's 1980's)
- No-fault divorce (1980's & 1990's)
- Love-Makes-a-Family (2000's)
- Gender fluidity (2010's)
- My body, my rights (2000's)
- Abortion (1990's)
- Euthanasia (1990's & 2000's)
- Marriage equality (Gay marriage) (2000's)

and now... Selective Circumcision. (*Since this would only apply to males, they must mean 'Elective Circumcision.'*)

The truth is, Circumcision of males has traditionally been optional in American hospitals. But recently articles have begun flowing from the "crunchy movement" proudly and authoritatively urging American families to reconsider having their children circumcised.

Consider the following from babygaga.com:

"Let's be clear first that being crunchy isn't all-inclusive. To be a crunchy mom doesn't mean that mom needs to harvest her own food in the jungle, never eat fast food, and only use homeopathic medicine. Anyone who says that is being sanctimonious, not crunchy.

However, there are a few things out there that crunchy moms just don't do, and circumcision is one of them. One cannot call themselves natural in any way, shape or form if they intend to remove part of their child's natural anatomy for appearance's sake.

Yes, I said for appearance's sake. It's official now. It's not just an opinion. Circumcision is a cosmetic procedure. Even the insurance companies — many of which now refuse to pay for the procedure — now refer to it as such. So, moms who are having baby boys, research! This outdated procedure was started as a means of curbing masturbation; it's never had medical roots. It is not cleaner, or safer. In fact, 117 babies die each year from circumcision. How many die from remaining intact? Zero."

Firstly, Death isn't caused by circumcision. These deaths are more likely caused by hemorrhaging and infections likely due to "Abnormally low Vitamin K levels found in ALL babies." (Yes, if it is found in all babies, one might wonder why it is even considered 'abnormally low' by the medical industry.) This is why nearly every hospital gives Vitamin K booster shots after birth to boost up the levels and promote healthy clotting prior to circumcision. As my wife and I can testify, if you wait til (8) days later to have your child circumcised, you are outside the 'birth window' and will have to pay out of pocket for the procedure, as it will then be considered 'optional' by insurance companies.

But the viewpoint that it is purely 'cosmetic' is an interesting one.

If corn flakes and circumcision were meant to curb masturbation, whoever did their research should have been fired! Popular conspiracy theories like this were may well have been started by the same types of people who believe that if you turn your furnace up higher, it will get hotter quicker. (By the way, that doesn't work that way. Your thermostat only determines how LONG your furnace runs. It has only one speed, one heating setting (on/off). Don't believe me? Go look on the side of your furnace. There's a manual 'on/off' switch that you would have to be constantly flipping if you didn't have a thermostat on the wall to do it for you. Ask your furnace repair man.)

mamanatural.com answers the concern that "Intact kids could get teased in the locker room":

*"On the other hand, a little teasing (which we all experience for one reason or another) seems inconsequential compared to the **shame, anger, and sense of loss** that some circumcised men feel as adults knowing that their body was modified without their consent."*

Who regulated circumcision to 'cosmetic surgery'? Is this really like giving your child a tattoo?

2.) THE CASE FOR CIRCUMCISION

At the turn of the new Millennium, the American Academy of Pediatrics began easing up on their classification of 'Circumcision' as a RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE, and in the next decade, hospital circumcisions were (Ahem!) cut in half.

By 2008, the World Health Organization reasoned that GLOBALLY, nearly a 3rd of all men were circumcised. Why? Many doctors believed that the foreskin could contain up to 10k nerve endings and thus, potentially reduced the enjoyment of intercourse. (*Which explains why Christian families are so much bigger!?*) Honestly, who is studying this? Is this something that you can really do 'before and after' research on? Do you take surveys? (Q: *Did you have a great time? Could it have been better?*) **This is purely SUBJECTIVE ASSUMPTION.**

It is hard to dismiss circumcision as just ‘cosmetic’ surgery when:

- Evidence clearly shows that circumcision prevents Urinary Tract Infections by eliminating crevices for bacteria to hide and multiply, and maintaining an easier area to clean.
- Evidence also leans heavily on penile cancer being **VERY common** to ‘intact men’ while being **VERY rare** among the circumcised. Simply saying, “Well, just live cleaner, avoid contracting HIV/HPV, avoid smoking, and use other precautions and that’s practically the same as being circumcised” seems to be more in line with idealism than reality.

3.) THE BIBLE’S VIEW ON CIRCUMCISION (MALES)

ILL – David’s bride price of 200 foreskins for Michael, Saul’s daughter. While I believe that Saul was looking to get David killed off in battle, there is a particular reason the ‘foreskin’ is mentioned. It served as a unique ‘proof of purchase’ for warriors. (*Unlike scalps, you could be 100% sure that these were adult male humans that were killed in battle.*) And you could tell they were of the uncircumcised philistines!

- Covenant of Abraham (also **Acts 7:8**)

Genesis 17

11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

- It was symbolic of sanctification

John 7

22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

- It appears to be fairly exclusive to God’s people

Joshua 5

2 At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.

4 And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt.

- The wisdom of the 8th day law (*Vitamin K @ highest levels at any time in your life on the 8th day after birth*) – **Luke 1:59**
- Early church elders tried to make this a prerequisite for salvation (*Partaking in the promise of Abraham and still being uncircumcised caused no small stir among the apostles and early church.*) - **Acts 7:8, Acts 15, Philippians 3:5, Leviticus 12:3 (law)**

4.) MALES WEREN'T THE ONLY THING CIRCUMCISED

A. FRUIT COULD BE CIRCUMCISED! ?!?!? - Not quite what you were thinking, was it? *How can fruit be circumcised?*

Leviticus 19

23 And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years shall it be **as uncircumcised unto you**: it shall not be eaten of.

24 But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy to praise the LORD withal. (*Tithe fruit*)

25 And in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase thereof: I am the LORD your God.

What made the fruit circumcised or uncircumcised? Well, maybe you already knew that fruit won't grow on wood less than three years old. The wood must be 3-10 years before a fruit tree will be able to form fruit. (Reproduction)

QUOTE: “*The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is NOW.*” - Nursery Proverb

The Hebrews had a word for the fruit born in the first (3) years of the bearing life of a fruit tree....

ORLAH – The forbidden fruit.

If you are a Hebrew shopping for fruit, you do not go to Walmart and just grab... Harvested fruit goes to co-ops before being shipped in large quantities! You look for Kosher fruit... Certified to be ORLAH-Free.

NOTE: By pruning (cutting) and cultivating fruit trees for the first few years, you are re-directing that energy and nutrients to the growth of roots and branches. In turn, the tree is able to bear MORE fruit without risk of damage or breaking. Forming fruits were removed to avoid anyone transgressing this commandment in error.

B. GOD IS LOOKING FOR THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART. - A circumcised heart is the mark of a Christian. When God is free to remove the excess and unneeded things that so readily surround and envelope our hearts, not only is it so much easier to keep clean, but it also helps reduce the risk of developing bitterness and pride.

Jeremiah 4

4 **Circumcise** yourselves to the LORD, and **take away the foreskins of your heart**, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

Context is the stubborn idolatry of the Hebrews!!! The host of things worshiped in the place of God, along side of God, or above God!

Deuteronomy 30

6 And the LORD thy God will **circumcise thine heart**, and the heart of thy

seed, to love the LORD thy God with **all thine heart**, and with **all thy soul**, that thou mayest live.

Deuteronomy 10

16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more **stiffnecked**.

The foreskin of sin is thick upon sinful man, and when we are born again, we must become circumcised in our hearts.

Acts 7

51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

Angry at someone at work. Why curse when you can shout this and REALLY get people's attention!?!?

Colossians 2

11 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:

CLOSING:

Let me close by pointing something out. I don't believe it is any coincidence that fruit trees were to be spared for (3) years... the (4)th year being a tithe to God.

Does anyone know how long Jesus Christ, the Messiah, walked upon this earth, teaching His disciples before leaving them? (3) years.

... Do you remember what happened after Christ ascended? He left them with the Holy Spirit who would guide and teach them in all things.

John 15

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

The fruit of the Spirit can only be born out in the life of a Christian with a circumcised heart.

Call me crazy, but check out what the Apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 1:

Galatians 1

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

18 Then **after three years** I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

People are like trees in some aspects, (*or maybe trees are like people in some aspects. :-P*) in that it is vital that you first grow and mature, and then the fruit will just come.