**The Covenant Sign**August 28, 2022 | Romans 4 | Pastor Roger Williams

**The covenant sign represents something real, outside us,   
and maintained by God himself.**

**Romans 4**

**11**He (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, **12**and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

  
The seal was simply the visible pledge of God that when the conditions of his covenant were met, the blessings he promised would apply. -Dr. Bryan Chapell

**Colossians 3**

**9**For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, **10**and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. **11**In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, **12**having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

Formerly circumcision, and now baptism:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Are Initiatory rites | Gen 17:10-11; Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38-39: 8:12-13 |
| Point to an inward reality | Romans 2:28-29; Col 2:11-12, Phil 3:3 |
| Picture the death of the old | Romans 6:3-7; Col 2:11-12 |
| Connect to repentance | Jer 4:4; 9:25, Lev 26:40-41; Acts 2:38 |
| Connect to regeneration | Romans 2:28-29; Titus 3:5 |
| Connect to justification by faith | Romans 4:11-12; Col 2:11-14 |
| Connect to a cleansed heart | Dt 10:16; 30:6, Is 52:!; Acts 22:16; Titus 3:5-7 |
| Connect to union with God | Gen 17:7; Ex 19:5-6; Dt 7:6; Heb 8:10 |
| Indicate citizenship in Israel | Gen 17:4; Gal 3:26-29; Eph 2:12-13; 4:5 |
| Indicate separation from the world | Ex 12:48; 2 Cor 6:14-18; Eph 2:12 |
| Can lead to blessing or warning | Rom 2:25; 1 Cor 10:1-12; 11:28-30 |

**What is baptism?**  Baptism is (as circumcision was) the official sign of righteousness by faith being the way of life with God in the world AND it is God’s “official promise” that then the condition of faith is met, all the blessings of the covenant follow.

**Galatians 3**

**7**Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham…

…**25**But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, **26**for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. **27**For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. **28**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. **29**And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

**Why New City is in a movement that still includes children in the covenant and applies the covenant sign to them:**

**Genesis 17**

**22**When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. **23**Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him.

**Psalm 103**

**17**But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him,  
    and his righteousness to children's children,  
**18**to those who keep his covenant  
    and remember to do his commandments.  
**19**The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,  
    and his kingdom rules over all.

**Acts 2**

**37**Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” **38**And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39**For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

**1 Corinthians 7**

**13**If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. **14**For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

“The argument in a nutshell is simply this: God established his Church in the days of Abraham and put children into it. They must remain there until He puts them out. He has nowhere put them out. They are still then members of His church and as such entitled to its ordinances. Among these ordinances is baptism, which standing in similar place in the New Dispensation to circumcision in the Old, is like it to be given to children.” *The Works of Benjamin B. Warfield*, Vol. IX, p.408.

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