

Colossians 2:11-12
"Circumcision & Baptism"

Intro: The faith-fueling book of Acts

-The first century world in the book of Acts: Transformed by God working by and with the gospel witness of Christ's little band of apostles.

-The spread of the early church: Seen despite the fact that the early church was severely persecuted.

-The single greatest threat to the church: Not opposition from the outside world but false teaching that creeps into the church.

-The gist of Paul's teaching in the second chapter of Colossians: "There is a world of difference between what the false teachers think that you need and what you already have in Christ."

* We must recognize that those who _____ the Lord Jesus Christ have the realities symbolized by Old Testament _____ and New Testament _____ because of their union with Him.

-Circumcision: The sign of the covenant that God made with Abraham.

-A key principle: The sign of the covenant is so closely related to the reality that it signifies that there are times when the sign is spoken of as if it was the reality that is signified (e.g. 'This is My body, which is for you.')

-Circumcision: A sign indicating there was a need for cleansing and a provision for cleansing from sin.

-Paul's teaching to the Galatians: "If you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you."

-Sacramentalism: The belief that salvation is dispensed by priests through the sacraments.

-The repentant, believing thief on the cross: Provides us with a reminder that baptism is not necessary for salvation.

-A.A. Hodge on what is symbolized in baptism: "Water baptism represents spiritual baptism. Therefore we are said to be baptized into Christ, into His death, into one body, to be buried with Him so as to walk with Him in newness of life - to put on Christ as a garment, to be planted together with Him. None of these have anything to do with the mode of baptism, because it is simply absurd to suppose that the same action at the same time symbolizes things so different as burial, putting on clothes, and planting trees."