

## Complete in Christ

- A. **COL 2:9-11** sets forth great benefits that are the result of one being IN Christ.
- B. “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (v. 9).
1. It pleased God that all fulness should dwell in Christ. **COL 1:19.**
  2. The elect all receive of this fulness. **JOH 1:16.**
  3. The great work of the gospel is to bring saints knowledgeably and practically to this fulness. **EPH 3:16-19; 4:11-13.**
- C. Since all fulness dwells in Christ, it stands to reason that if one is in Christ, he is complete. v. 10.
1. Mind that being a complete person is only possible in Christ. Evolution, education, sports, art, worldly success, social engineering, etc. will never truly make “the complete man.”
    - a. Man was made in the holy image of God (**GEN 1:27**), but lost that through sin.
    - b. God designed to restore that image for His elect in Christ.  
**ROM 8:29 c/w HEB 1:3.**
  2. complete: Having all its parts or members; comprising the full number or amount; embracing all the requisite items, details, topics, etc.; entire, full. Of persons: Fully equipped or endowed; perfect, accomplished, consummate.
    - a. We are only complete (fully equipped) in Christ.
    - b. Without Him we are unequipped for anything. **JOH 15:5.**
  3. Being in Christ means we have what we sorely lacked and most needed. **1CO 1:30.**
  4. That our being complete is owing to our being in Christ rather than our being personally flawless is a comfort to believers. **ROM 7:24-25.**
  5. Our being complete in Christ is being complete in the One Who “...is the head of all principality and power.”
    - a. God took us all the way to the top for our completion. **EPH 1:19-21.**
    - b. Christ's sovereignty over all forbids the forces of darkness against which we struggle (**EPH 6:12**) from ever having a claim against us because of our infirmity.  
**ROM 8:33-34; JOH 10:27-28.**
- D. Jesus Christ not only *completes* that which is lacking in us; He also *removes* that in us which must be taken away: “...the body of the sins of the flesh” (v. 11).
1. Mind the significance of the preposition, “in” here. This text is describing a circumcision the elect have representatively IN Christ.
  2. Physical circumcision involved cutting off the flesh of the male's foreskin.
  3. Uncircumcision represents unfitness, uncleanness and sin.  
**EXO 6:30; LEV 19:23; 26:40-41; ISA 52:1; EZE 44:7; ACT 7:51.**
    - a. The foreskin symbolized the body of the sins of the flesh.
    - b. The fulfillment of the symbol of circumcision is the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh *by the circumcision of Christ.*
    - c. Physical circumcision took away *skin*; the circumcision of Christ took away *sin*.  
**1JO 3:5; JOH 1:29.**
  4. Our sin was *put off* by means of the *cutting off* (circumcision) of Christ on the cross when He was made sin for us. **ISA 53:8; ROM 6:6; HEB 9:26.**
    - a. Christ was cut off from the land of the living.
    - b. Christ was cut off from the Father. **MAT 27:46.**
  5. Physical circumcision was made with hands and thus involved the works of man.
    - a. This circumcision in **COL 2:11** is *made without hands* in that the works of man are not involved in effecting it.
    - b. It is true that *wicked hands* slew Christ (**ACT 2:23**), but our inclusion in the justice and merits of His cutting off is entirely *without hands*. Sinners do not “have a

- hand” in their redemption. **EPH 1:5-7.**
6. Physical circumcision involved the shedding of blood even as also did the putting away of sin by the circumcision of Christ. **COL 1:14.**
  7. Unlike physical circumcision which had to be repeated in each generation, the circumcision of Christ was a one-time cutting-off for all His posterity. **ROM 6:10; HEB 10:10-12.**
  8. Once the symbol was fulfilled, there was no further need for physical circumcision as a religious ordinance. **1CO 7:18-19; GAL 6:15.**
- E. This is a circumcision which included Gentiles.
1. The rite of physical circumcision was a token of the everlasting covenant that God made with Abraham and his seed. **GEN 17:7-11.**
  2. This covenant had a physical fulfillment to Abraham's physical seed conditioned on their obedience and they received the sign of circumcision in their flesh.
  3. The Jewish nation which descended from Abraham became known as “the circumcision” because of this rite performed in their flesh. **EPH 2:11.**
    - a. By contrast the Gentiles were called “the uncircumcision.”
    - b. Yet Paul is writing to *the uncircumcised* and calling them *circumcised*.
  4. This covenant also had a spiritual fulfillment which included the promise of eternal life to the seed of Abraham which is Christ, and all those IN Him. **GAL 3:16, 28-29.**
  5. All who belong to Christ are included in this seed to Whom the promises were made. **GAL 3:29 c/w JOH 6:39; EPH 1:3-4.**
  6. These are such as have the body of their sins taken away through the circumcision of Christ which accomplished their redemption, be they Jew or Gentile. **EPH 1:7.**
- F. One must be IN Christ to have a part in this circumcision (the putting away of the body of sins).
1. On this side of glory, there are four ways that one may be in Christ: by election, legally, vitally, and practically.
  2. One may be in Christ by election in Him before the foundation of the world (**EPH 1:4; 2TI 1:9**). This puts one in Christ as the seed to whom the promises were made.
  3. Those chosen in Christ are those who are *legally* in Christ in that Christ represented them before the law.
    - a. Christ became a man in things that *pertained* (belonged, concerned or related) to God to make reconciliation for man's sin (**HEB 2:14-17**). He took upon Himself the task of restoring our friendship and favor with God that was alienated by our sin.
    - b. He was made sin for us by taking all of our sin upon Himself. **2CO 5:21.**
    - c. Through representing us before the law and satisfying its claims against us for our sins, we legally become dead to the law for the law views us as crucified with Him. **ROM 7:4; GAL 2:19-20; 3:13.**
  4. This is how we are *circumcised IN Christ*. As legally represented in Christ, our body of sins is put off by the cutting off of Christ.
  5. This took place legally for the elect at the crucifixion where Christ was made sin for them and accordingly cut off or circumcised for their sins.
- G. There is also a spiritual circumcision performed by God in the hearts of the elect in addition to, and as a result of their legal circumcision in Christ. **ROM 2:14-15, 26-29.**
1. This is an inward circumcision of the heart where the reigning power of sin is cut out and we are enabled to love and obey God.
  2. By the mercy of regeneration, our old “stony heart” is “cut out” and we are given a new heart. **EZE 36:26-27; JER 31:33.**
  3. This circumcision is also made without hands. **TIT 3:5.**
  4. This takes place when we are quickened and become “in Christ” *vitally*. We are made alive

- spiritually in our inward parts, new creatures. **COL 2:13; EPH 2:1, 5, 10.**
5. Those who thus receive this circumcision in their hearts as opposed to their flesh become the true Jews and the true circumcision even if they are Gentiles and uncircumcised in the flesh. **ROM 2:28-29; PHIL 3:3.**
  6. Many Jews came to believe that they were saved by the symbol rather than the fulfillment of the symbol and sought to impose it upon the Gentile believers along with the rudiments of the world. **ACT 15:5-11.**
  7. Circumcision in the flesh never saved anyone from their sin. If it had such power, then Joshua was one powerful evangelist! **JOS 5:2-3.**
    - a. Fleshly circumcision merely set forth in symbol how sin would be put away and eternal salvation secured.
    - b. In fact, if you were circumcised in the flesh as a saving religious sacrament, rather than saving you, it made you a debtor to the whole law and if you broke that law your circumcision was counted for uncircumcision!  
**GAL 5:3; ROM 2:25; JER 9:25-26.**
    - c. These Colossian Gentiles were IN the seed of Abraham (Christ) and partook of His circumcision Who also circumcised them inwardly. They didn't need the one made with hands. c/w **GAL 6:15.**