

## Sermon Discussion - 9 July 2023

Read Genesis 17:9-14

### **Getting Started** *Sharing from personal experience*

This section of the Bible recognises the significance of covenant signs. Covenants were often accompanied by signs and symbols of remembrance. We have seen this before in Genesis 9:13 and the covenant with Noah. That was marked by the sign of the rainbow.

Contemplate the role of physical signs in your relationship with God. What are some ways God has used physical symbols of remembrance to deepen your faith and obedience?

### **Observation** *Discovering the context*

In the ancient world, the right to name something or someone indicated rule or ownership. God demonstrated ownership of Abraham's life by changing his name and requiring circumcision. Look up these passages on name changes (Isaiah 62:2; 65:15; Revelation 2:17).

- What do they tell you about people under the new covenant?
- What does God's ownership of a believer's life look like today? How does God display ownership of your life?

### **Interpretation** *Discovering the meaning*

1. In Genesis 17:9-14, God establishes circumcision as a sign of the covenant with Abraham and his descendants. What do you think is the significance of using circumcision as a physical sign? How does it demonstrate commitment and faith?
2. Circumcision was to be performed on male infants when they were eight days old. Why do you think God chose this particular age for circumcision? What might be the symbolic or practical reasons behind this timing?
3. In this passage, God emphasises that failure to be circumcised results in being cut off from the covenant community. How does this concept of being cut off relate to the importance of obedience and faithfulness in maintaining a relationship with God?
4. Abraham's obedience in circumcising himself, his son Ishmael, and all the males in his household demonstrated his faithfulness to God. What lessons can we learn from Abraham's response to God's command? How does his example inspire us to obey God's instructions in our own lives?
5. Circumcision served as a reminder of God's covenant throughout generations. What are some practical ways we can incorporate reminders of God's promises and faithfulness in our lives today?

**Application** *Putting knowledge into practice*

- Reflect on the sacrificial love of Christ and the new sign of the covenant (communion) where believers partake in remembrance of His sacrifice. How does this act of worship remind us of God’s faithfulness?
  
- Try memorising Genesis 17:9...  
*And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.*
  
- How has God blessed you and answered prayer this week?