

..."Yes, and Jesus was also **crucified**."

Jesus is reported to have mentioned circumcision only once:

Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel. Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath?"

John 7 21-23

What is interesting is that he contrasts circumcision with healing, emphasising that circumcision is an injury, as well as an example of zealous law-keeping.



Circumcision was a big issue for the early church, because it meant the difference between Christianity being just a sect of Judaism or a whole new religion - and because adult Greeks especially were unwilling to undergo a painful operation to join the new sect.

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."... And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, ... why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" ...And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, ..."I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, But that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood.... They wrote this letter... When they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. Acts 15:1...31

"...which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" suggests that Peter and some of his hearers had belonged to a branch of Judaism that had already abandoned circumcision for at least a generation.

For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision is counted as uncircumcision.

Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?

And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law?

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;

But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them [the Jews] were committed the oracles of God.

Romans 2:25 -3:2

Circumcision is referred to only as a symbol of Judaism. Paul is convinced that the oracles of God will still be committed to Christians from now on, though they are not physically circumcised.

Time after time, Paul argues that Christ fulfilled the law, making physical circumcision unnecessary for Christians:

Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.

I Corinthians 7:18-19

Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law... For in

Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

Galatians 5:1-6,

See also Romans 3:30-31, Galatians 6:12-13, and Colossians 2:11



The Gnostic Gospel of Thomas (Greek fragments and a complete Coptic text dating from the first or second century CE, of 114 sayings supposedly written by the apostle Thomas earlier than the New Testament) attributes a firm statement against circumcision to Jesus himself:

His disciples said to Him, "Is circumcision beneficial or not?"

He said to them, "If it were beneficial, their father would beget them already circumcised from their mother. Rather, the true circumcision in spirit has become completely profitable."

Thomas 53



Roman Catholicism

...the amputation of any part of the human body is never legal, except when the entire body cannot be saved from destruction by any other method.

- Pope Benedict XIV (1740-58)

De Synodo dioeciesana

... Except when performed for strictly therapeutic medical reasons, directly intended amputations, mutilations, and sterilizations performed on innocent persons are against the moral law.

- Catechism of the Catholic Church (Item 2297: Respect for bodily integrity)

The Book of Mormon also attributes the end of any need for circumcision directly to Jesus:

Listen to the words of Christ, your Redeemer, your Lord, and your God. Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore, little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them; and the law of circumcision is done away in me.

Moroni 8: 8

Doctrine and Covenants, Section 34 explains this further.



Christian Science teaches that all evil, including illness, is illusory, "error". One would think that prophylactic (preventative) medical treatments like circumcision would then be doubly anathema, since they encourage erroneous belief in sickness where none was before. Yet "The Church of Christ, Scientist has no official policy regarding circumcision. Members are encouraged to turn to the Bible and "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy (who discovered Christian Science) for guidance"

...(Dorothy Estes, Web Response Team)

"Science and Health" nowhere refers directly to circumcision, either as rite or prophylactic surgery. It does refer to rites in general:

First in the list of Christian duties [Jesus] taught his followers the healing power of Truth and Love. He attached no importance to dead ceremonies.

Science and Health p 31, line 12

Whatever materializes worship hinders man's spiritual growth and keeps him from demonst-rating his power over error.

Science and Health p 4, line 32

And what could "materialize worship" more than body modification? "Science and Health" refers to conventional medicine only in very general terms, always negatively:

One should never hold in mind the thought of disease, but should efface from thought all forms and types of disease, both for one's own sake and for that of the patient.

Science and Health p 396, line 1

Giving drugs to infants, noticing every symptom of flatulency, and constantly directing the mind to such signs, - that mind being laden with illusions about disease, health-laws, and death, - these actions convey mental images to children's budding thoughts, and often stamp them there, making it probable at any time that such ills may be reproduced in the very ailments feared.

Science and Health p 417, line 24

How much more so to operate surgically on a healthy baby?



This leaflet is based on the webpage www.circumstitions.com/Xy.html which links to many other related topics.

Christianity and circumcision



"He should be circumcised.
Jesus was ..."