

Having an Operation

- I. Introduction
 - a. The prospect of having major surgery is a scary one
 - i. Several of our members just had an operation
 - ii. Others are needing an operation
 - b. No one wants to undergo surgery,
 - i. But if you need it, you need it
 - ii. There are many operations that can save your life
 - iii. No other treatment will do
 - c. In Colossians 2:11-14 a spiritual operation is described
- II. Main thought: In this lesson, we will examine this surgical procedure, why it is needed, who the surgeon is, and what the expected outcome is for this operation.
 - a. If you have not have this operation, you need it
 - b. I hope that you will have this surgery performed as soon as possible
- III. Exposition
 - a. v. 11-14 – Christ’s spiritual operation
 - i. Three changes
 - 1. Circumcision resulting in the body of the flesh being removed
 - 2. Baptism resulting in being buried and raised with Christ
 - 3. Spiritual resurrection, resulting in forgiven sin and new life
 - ii. These changes all happened at the same time
 - 1. No one after the other
 - 2. They describe the transition from empty without Christ to complete in Christ in three different ways
 - b. Spiritual Circumcision
 - i. The Jews would circumcise their male children when they were eight days old
 - 1. This marked them as separate to God from other people
 - 2. Belonging to Him
 - 3. Removed from uncleanness
 - ii. In those days
 - 1. There was no modern anesthetic
 - 2. Any surgery was extremely painful
 - 3. Yet in addition to circumcision, many other types of surgery were performed in Paul’s day
 - 4. They had remarkable medical instruments
 - a. “Greek and Roman Surgical Instruments,” <http://www.indiana.edu/~ancmed/instr1.html>.
 - b. “Surgical Instruments from Ancient Rome,” http://www.hsl.virginia.edu/historical/artifacts/roman_surgical/.
 - iii. Paul says we have had a spiritual operation
 - 1. Made without hands

2. Jesus did it
 3. It removed the body of the flesh -> our sins
 4. Marks us as belonging to Him
- c. Baptism
- i. Jesus died, was buried and rose again
 - ii. Christians are buried with Jesus, and are raised up with Jesus
 - iii. How? In baptism
 - iv. Requires faith in God's work
 1. But since He raised Jesus that faith is justified
 2. He will do what He promises when we are baptized with Christ
- d. Spiritual Resurrection
- i. It is humanly impossible for a dead man to live again
 1. Yet that is what happened 2000 years ago when Jesus Christ came out of the grave
 2. That demonstrated His divine power
 3. He said, "I lay my life down and I take it up again"
 - ii. It is just as impossible for a man who is dead in sin to come back to life
 1. But that is what happens every time God forgives sins
 2. We start out dead in sin and spiritually uncircumcised
 - a. Our sins have killed us and separated us from God
 - b. Jesus has not yet performed that spiritual operation that restores life to the dead
 3. Then He makes us alive with Him
 - a. Outwardly, we are buried with Him and raised with Him in baptism
 - b. Inwardly, a circumcision not made with hands is taking place
 - c. We know it is happening because that is what He promises in His word and we have faith in the working of God
 4. Parallel passage (Rom. 6:3-6)
 5. The results of this operation
 - a. New life (v. 13)
 - b. Life from the dead (v. 13)
 - c. The removal of the body of the flesh/sin (v. 11)
 - d. Spiritual circumcision (v. 11)
 - e. The forgiveness of all of our trespasses (v. 13)
 - f. And (v. 14) the debt that stood against us is taken away and nailed to the cross
 - g. We are united with Christ (Rom 6:5)
 - h. We are in Christ (Rom. 6:3)
 - i. We are complete in Christ (Col. 2:10)
- e. The wrong operation?!

- i. In January 2010, in Peru a man had an infection in his foot that was not responding to treatment and was threatening to spread to his whole body
 1. If it was not removed he would die
 2. So they scheduled the operation
 3. They successfully removed his left foot
 4. But when he came out from under the anesthesia he was horrified to discover they had removed the wrong foot!
 5. He had lost his good left foot, and he still needed the right foot removed to save his life
- ii. The same thing happened to a man in Florida in 1995
 1. “Doctors amputate wrong foot of man in Peru - USATODAY.com,”
http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2010-01-25-Peru_N.htm.
 2. “Sarasota Herald-Tribune - Google News Archive Search,”
<http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=VCkhAAAAIBAJ&sjid=jHwEAAAIBAJ&pg=5040,617834&hl=en>.
- iii. Having the wrong operation is a tragedy and horrible mistake
 1. Very costly
 2. Causes great grief and inconvenience
 3. Life-long consequences
 4. Perhaps even the loss or shortening of life
- iv. Sometimes when a person desires to come to Christ they end up getting the wrong operation:
 1. Infant baptism
 - a. Faith required
 - b. Dead in their own trespasses, not Adam’s
 - c. It’s the wrong operation
 2. Sprinkling or pouring
 - a. Is not burial
 - b. It is not Bible baptism
 - c. It’s the wrong operation
 3. Baptism NOT for the remission of sins
 - a. Death -> Burial ->Resurrection
 - b. NOT Death -> New Life -> Burial
 - c. Being buried alive is not Bible baptism
 - d. It is the wrong operation
 4. Faith healing
 - a. Just have faith, no other action is necessary
 - i. Can faith alone, or prayer alone save?
 - ii. No where in the Bible does it say that
 - iii. James 2:21 says faith alone cannot save!
 - iv. No where in scripture is a person told to pray in order to be saved

- b. Some argue that faith alone is superior to baptism because if we are baptized we are trying to earn our salvation by our works
 - i. No, we are baptized because we have faith not in our own works, but in the working of God (v. 13)
 - ii. If we trust him and demonstrate that trust in baptism, he will perform the spiritual operation that will result in new spiritual life
 - iii. Suppose a man needs to have his foot removed to save his life
 - iv. He has no money to pay for the operation, but the surgeon agrees to do the surgery free of charge
 - v. Now suppose the man refuses anesthesia!
 - 1. There could be many reasons
 - a. Scared – perhaps a relative died in surgery
 - b. Other risk factors make it unwise
 - c. He doesn't trust the anesthesiologist
 - 2. He would never say, "I don't want anesthesia because if you put me under I would feel like I was trying to earn this operation rather than accepting it as a free gift."
 - 3. No, accepting a free gift means accepting whatever conditions the giver places on receiving that gift
 - vi. If the surgeon says the only way I'm going to do this operation is if we put you under
 - 1. The patient has to decide whether he really wants the operation or not
 - 2. Jesus is the surgeon
 - a. He says I can remove this diseased body of sin that is killing your soul
 - b. But we're going to have to put you under
 - c. If someone has told you that you have been raised to new life without having been buried with Christ
 - i. You have had the wrong operation

IV. Conclusion

- a. If you have had the wrong operation
 - i. It is an unfortunate mistake

- ii. But you still need the right operation
 - iii. Seek a second opinion
- b. Consult with Jesus Christ
 - i. Surgeon: Jesus Christ
 - ii. Diagnosis: Sin
 - iii. Prognosis without Treatment: Death
 - iv. Recommended Treatment: Spiritual surgery for removal of sin
 - v. Prognosis with Treatment: Complete recovery and eternal life
- c. The Right Operation
 - i. Believe in Jesus as Lord and Christ (Rom. 10:10-11)
 - ii. Repent and turn away from your practice of sin (Acts 2:38)
 - iii. Confess your faith in Jesus before men (Rom. 10:10-11)
 - iv. Be baptized (buried) in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:11-14)