

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

**Facilitator:** Encourage your members to **BRING THEIR BIBLES** and use them during Connect Group.

## **CONNECT Group study questions for November 19, 2017**

**Title: What's the Deal with Circumcision?—Romans 4:9-15**

**Read:** Romans 4:7-8 for context.

*“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven,  
And whose sins have been covered.*

*“Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.”*

**Read:** Romans 4:9-15

*9 Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, “Faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness.” 10 How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; 11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, 12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.*

*13 For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; 15 for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.*

**Review:** Read the notes from Pastor Peppy’s lesson, *What’s the Deal with Circumcision?* and share what God revealed to you from his message.

**Question:** The Jews of the Apostle Paul’s day thought they had a unique relationship with God as circumcised descendants of Abraham.

What categories of people can you think of whose claim to a connection with God is based on birth, behavior, church membership—anything in addition to or other than faith alone in Christ alone?

**Question:** A conversion to Judaism requires baptism, sacrifice, and circumcision for the men.

Can you think of corresponding observances or requirements converts to Christianity follow? If you can, explain their significance. **Facilitator:** This is a “get them thinking” question that may or may not have ready answers. My thoughts: Baptism to the Jew is a rite of purification; to the Christian it signifies a burial of the old life resurrected to new life in Christ (Colossians 2:12). We are exhorted to present our bodies as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1), and for the Christian, true circumcision is “a circumcision made without hands” (Colossians 2:11).

**Facilitator:** Have members of your group find and read from their Bibles the following Scripture passages: Colossians 2:8-15; Ephesians 2:11-22; Romans 2:25-29; Romans 9:24-29 and Deuteronomy 30:6.

**Question:** What is the overarching message in these passages? Do they change any thoughts you may have had about circumcision and uncircumcision? About faith and works? About justification and forgiveness?