

Romans 2:17-29 – The Gospel and Confidence!

Scriptures:

Matthew 7:22-23 - Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

17 Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on

G2453 -

G1879 – trust, rely on.

the law, and make your boast in God,

G2744 – brag about, rejoice in, glory in.

Notes:

One of the dangers the lost face is that they do not know they are lost. This is especially true of those who are religious and lost. Religion has never saved anyone, but religion is very good at blinding people to the fact that they are lost. Many religious people, like Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists will stand at the White Throne of Christ and be surprised that Jesus will reject them (Matthew 7:22-23). And there will be some who claim to be Christian but are not. And this is not just about religious religions. Some people believe in things in a manner that some might view as religious. Climate change zealots fall into that category.

This text is a warning to "religious people like us to guard ourselves from the dangers of a false religious confidence." (Hughes, 1991) page 62

(verses 17-18) – Paul begins by highlighting the privileges they claim as Jews. To the Jews, there was nothing higher than being a Jew. They believed they had been set apart by God and were therefore better than everyone else. They had the Scriptures, and they knew God's will. When they compared themselves to the Gentiles, they were far superior. Well. That is what they deluded themselves to believe. They were guilty of spiritual blindness ().

Scriptures:

18 and know His will, and approve the things

G2307 – desire, wish.

G1381 – judge as good.

Notes:

that are excellent, being instructed out of the

G1308 – superior.

G2727 – informed.

law,

Scriptures:
Matthew 23:15-16 - "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.
16 Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.'"

Matthew 15:8-9 -
"These people draw near to Me with their mouth,
And honor Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me.
9 And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'

19 and are confident that you yourself are

G3982 – "to be convinced v. — to be persuaded or sure of the truthfulness or validity of something."

Notes:
(verses 19-20) - They were guilty of spiritual blindness (Matthew 23:15-16). They boasted about their relationship with God and their knowledge of His Word and will but they were far from Him (Matthew 15:8).

a guide to the blind, a light to those who are

G3595 -

in darkness,

20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of

babes, having the form of knowledge and

 
truth in the law.

Notes:
There is a real danger in these days of spiritual pride and blindness. It might be easy to imagine that you are spiritually superior to those ignorant masses that surround us. Especially in a church like this one where we emphasize knowing God's Word. There are many people who have a superior knowledge of God's Word, maybe even understanding the Greek or Hebrew it was originally written in, and yet have hearts of stone, unfeeling to the things of God.

The big problem of this spiritual blindness is the spiritual pride it produces. We as Bible-believing Christians to watch out for spiritual egotism that comes from a growing knowledge of God.

Scriptures:

Matthew 5:27-28 - You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Proverbs 4:23 - Keep your heart with all diligence,

For out of it spring the issues of life.

Luke 18:9-14 - Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' 13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Scriptures:

21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you

not teach yourself? You who preach that a

man should not steal, do you steal?

Notes:

(verses 21-23) - The privileges God bestowed upon the Jewish people should have produced godly saints. Instead, it produced self-righteous hypocrites. They looked at the sins of others and judged them as guilty and did not see similar sins in their own hearts.

We are not guilty of sin only after we have committed that sin ([Matthew 5:27-28](#)). The seeds of sin germinate in the heart before they bear fruit in our lives. That is why the Proverbs tells us ([Proverbs 4:23](#)).

Turn to [Luke 18](#). If ever, we as Christ-followers, start to believe we are superior to others, even unbelievers, we are in grave danger. Jesus described the self-righteous attitude of the Pharisees of His time. [Luke 18:9-14](#). Humility is a sign of true faith. Before we judge the world around us, we must shine the searchlight of God's Word on our own heart. If we all did that more, we would be more gracious to those around us, including unbelievers.

22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do

Notes:

you commit adultery? You who abhor idols,

do you rob temples?

Scriptures:

23 You who make your boast in the law,

Notes:

do you dishonor God through breaking the

G818 -

G3847 –
transgression,
violation.

law?

Scriptures:
Isaiah 52:5 - Now
therefore, what have I
here," says the LORD,
"That My people are
taken away for nothing?
Those who rule over
them
Make them wail," says
the LORD,
"And My name is
blasphemed continually
every day.

24 For *"the name of God is blasphemed*

among the Gentiles because of you," as it is

Notes:
When a Christ-follower is
hypocritical or commits a sin
publicly, the world not only
denounces him, but their church,
and God. The more influence
someone has in the world, the more
they must strive for holiness and
purity in their life. We have all heard
of pastors with large congregations
who were caught in adultery or
some other sin. Unbelievers are
quick to point and claim that all
believers are like that, and that God
cannot be real if that is what his
people do. It also causes believers
with weak faith to stumble. Christ-
followers are not perfect but they
should always be conscious of the
fact that they are on display before
the world to draw them to God.

written.

25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if

G5623 –
beneficial, useful.

you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of

G4238 – do.

G3848 –
“transgressor n.
— a person who
goes beyond or
oversteps a moral
boundary or
limit.”

the law, your circumcision has become

uncircumcision.

Notes:

(verses 25-27) – Many Jews that had developed the wrong belief that just because they were Jews, they were okay with God. The sign God gave them Jews to mark them as part of the Jewish community was circumcision. This wrong doctrine even went so far as to say that circumcision kept them out of hell.

Circumcision is a symbol. It is a symbol of a relationship between the circumcised person and God. It carries with it the promise of faithfulness. God promised to be faithful to the Jewish people and He expected them to be faithful to Him by faith and obedience to His Word.

In the same way that a wedding ring is a symbol. By wearing a wedding ring, I am bearing a symbol of my marriage. It symbolizes my commitment to my wife to be faithful to her for the rest of my life. Adultery would be a betrayal of the covenant I made with her before God and would render my wedding ring meaningless. The symbol is only meaningful as long as the covenant remains intact.

26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps

Notes:
(verses 26-27) -

the righteous requirements of the law, will not

his uncircumcision be counted as

circumcision?

Scriptures:

27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if

Notes:

This is to say that the external factors they might use to declare themselves right with God did not prove they were right with God. It is like asking someone if they are a believer and them replying, 'I am a Catholic' or 'My parents were Christians', or 'I was baptized as a baby, or as an adult', or 'I attend Calvary Chapel French Valley'. None of those things make you a believer – a Christ-follower. In the same way sin springs forth from the heart and manifests in the things we do, so does salvation.

he fulfills the law, judge you who, *even* with

your written *code* and circumcision, *are* a

transgressor of the law?

Scriptures:

Romans 10:9-10 - ... if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

28 For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly,

Notes:

(verses 28-29) – God is not fooled by mere outward expressions of piety or religious practices, no matter how spiritual they may look. God sees the heart. If you were asked, 'Are you saved?' We should be able to confidently answer, 'Yes!' But where does that confidence come from? If your confidence is your church attendance or service, or your knowledge of God's Word, then you are deluding yourself. Salvation does not come from what we know or what we do, it comes from what we believe (Romans 10:9-10).

nor *is* circumcision that which *is* outward in

Believing what God said in His Word is what makes us right with God. It is the Word of God that has the power through the working of the Holy Spirit that can transform our lives (Hebrews 4:12).

the flesh;

29 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.

[Top of Section](#)

[Top of Chapter](#)