"God's Warnings to the Religious"

(Romans 2:17-29)

The Big Idea:
Religious acts and religious affiliation have no value apart from a relationship with Jesus. (Romans 2:17-29)

<u>God's Warnings Against Religion</u>
1. Religious acts without a relationship with Jesus are worthless and breed arrogance. (Romans 2:17-24)

A. The Jews had the privilege of their name. (Romans 2:17a)

B. The Jews had the privilege of their book. (Romans 2:17b-18)

C. The Jews had the privilege of their works. (Romans 2:19-20)

2. Religious association without a relationship with Jesus is worthless and breeds false views of where our value comes from. (Romans 2:25-29)

<u>The Big Step(s)</u>

1. **Whatever you do and wherever you go this week, thank Jesus that you get to do it, not that you have to do it.**
2. **Whatever you do and wherever you go this week, picture Jesus next to you and do it as though you're doing it for and with Him.**

(Romans 2:17-29)

Read Romans 2:17-29

Romans 2:17–20 — Religious Privileges and Knowledge

1. **Identifying Religious Claims**: In verses 17–18, what specific privileges and claims does Paul list regarding relying on the law, knowing God's will, and boasting in God?

2. **Roles and Confidence**: How do verses 19–20 describe the specific roles the religious felt confident fulfilling toward others (such as being a guide to the blind, a light in darkness, and a teacher of children)?

3. **Knowledge vs. Humility**: Based on verses 17–20, how can possessing "the embodiment of knowledge and truth" in the written law lead to spiritual pride or self-reliance rather than genuine love?

Romans 2:21–24 — Confronting Hypocrisy and God's Reputation

1. **Self-Examination Questions**: What are the four specific, probing questions Paul asks in verses 21–22 regarding teaching oneself, stealing, adultery, and robbing temples?

2. **Dishonoring God**: According to verse 23, how does boasting in the law while actively breaking it affect one's relationship with God?

3. **Impact on Others**: What direct warning does verse 24 give regarding how religious hypocrisy causes God's name to be treated among non-believers ("the Gentiles")?

Romans 2:25–29 — Outward Symbols vs. Inward Heart Transformation

1. **Value of External Signs**: According to verse 25, under what condition does an outward religious sign like circumcision have value, and what happens to that sign if the law is broken?

2. **Real Disobedience vs. Genuine Obedience**: How does verse 27 explain that an uncircumcised person who keeps the law will condemn someone who possesses the written code and circumcision but breaks the law?

3. **Inward vs. Outward Identity**: How does Paul contrast someone who is a Jew "merely outwardly" with someone who is a Jew "inwardly" in verses 28–29?

4. **Circumcision of the Heart**: What does verse 29 mean by "circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter," and whose praise does such a person seek?