

ROMANS

an invitation to the story that changes everything

THE RELIGION TRAP

Romans 2 | February 15, 2026 | Pastor Jenna

SERMON SUMMARY

In this message, Pastor Jenna confronts the tendency of "church people" to judge the sins of others while overlooking their own. In doing so, she uses Paul's challenge in Romans 2 as a mirror turned back on the self-righteous heart. While Christians are often quick to call out brokenness in the world, Paul reminds us that no amount of moral behavior, religious knowledge, or church tenure earns favor with God. Grace alone transforms the heart. The danger of self-righteousness is that it hardens us, leading to comparison, justification, and a loss of true repentance. Ultimately, the gospel story of Jesus invites us to move away from sin management and embrace inner transformation.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

- 1 Where do you most often see yourself tempted to judge others rather than examine your own heart?
- 2 Why do you think self-righteousness can feel so subtle and even "holy" in church culture?
- 3 Which examples of "re-labeling sin" stood out to you, and why did they feel uncomfortable or familiar?
- 4 How is focusing on behavior different from pursuing heart transformation? How have you seen that difference play out in your own faith?
- 5 What makes it difficult to sit with conviction before rushing to justification or defense?
- 6 What would practicing regular self-examination look like for you this week, and how could your group help you stay honest and humble?