

Romans 2:17-29 Destroying False Security: The Jew/Religious Man Condemned

Paul now shifts his focus directly towards the religious Jew who trusted in his Jewish heritage and rites. He boldly proclaims that no religious act can save. And while Paul addresses the Jew, his message echoes clearly to the modern Christian.

Topic: Religion

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*MLJ- "No man truly comes to Christ unless he flies to Him as his only refuge and hope, his only way of escape from the accusations of conscience and the condemnation of God's holy law."

"Christianity isn't a religion, it's a relationship."

-Religion = Rules, ceremonies, or religious identity; man's effort to be made right with God.

-Relation = A true & living relationship with God through Jesus Christ His Son

*Spurgeon- "No man will ever put on the robe of Christ's righteousness till he is stripped of his fig leaves..."

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"called a Jew" "rest on the law" "make your boast in God"

Micah 3:11 — Her heads judge for a bribe, Her priests teach for pay, And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD, and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No harm can come upon us."

Jeremiah 7:3-4 — Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. "Do not trust in these lying words, saying, 'The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are these.'

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"know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law"

Instructed = katēcheō (κατηχέω); to teach orally by repetition.

(Source of English word "catechism")

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"a guide to the blind, a light to those in darkness"

Isaiah 42:6-7 — "I, the LORD, have called You... As a light to the Gentiles, To open blind eyes..."

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“an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes”

Matthew 23:15-16a — “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. “Woe to you, blind guides...

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“do you steal?”

Isaiah 56:11 — Yes, they [Israel's leaders/“watchmen”] are greedy dogs Which never have enough...They all look to their own way, Every one for his own gain, From his own territory.

Malachi 3:8 — “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.

Matthew 21:13 — And He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’”

Matthew 23:14 — “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

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“do you commit adultery?”

Matthew 5:27-28 — “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’

-“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Matthew 5:31-32 — “Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’

-“But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

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“do you rob temples?”

“Rob temples” = hierosyleō (ἱεροσυλέω); to commit sacrilege, plunder sacred things
-hieron (ἱερόν); temple, sacred precinct
-syleō (συλέω); to despoil, strip, plunder

Deuteronomy 7:25-26 — You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not covet the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it is an abomination to the LORD your God. Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it is an accursed thing.

Joshua 7 & Achan

Talmud: Avodah Zarah (“foreign worship”) discusses how Jews should deal with idols and idolatrous practices:

“But if a Jew took it, since it is of great monetary value, he will sell it to a gentile and the buyer will worship it.”

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“You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?”

John 5:45 — Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust.

“the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you”

Isaiah 52:5 — ...says the LORD, “And My name is blasphemed continually every day.”

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2:25-29 Circumcision Is of No Avail

Rabbinic Confidence in Circumcision’s Saving Power

Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1

“All Israelites have a share in the world to come”

Midrash Tanchuma, Lekh Lekha 20

“Circumcision is so precious to the Holy One, blessed be He, that He assured Abraham that no one who had been circumcised would descend unto Gehenna...”

Midrash Bereshit (Genesis) Rabbah 48:9

“In the age to come Abraham will sit at the gate of Gehenna [hell], and he will not permit a circumcised Israelite to go down there.”

Matthew 3:9 — and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.

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"circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law"

It was obviously a big deal:

Exodus 4:24-25 — And it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the LORD met him and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses' feet...

Is Baptism important?

The Jews had Circumcision & The Sabbath
-Christians have Baptism & Communion
-One for entry & the other for remembrance
-Both useless without a living faith.

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"he is not a Jew who is one outwardly... he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit"

Who remembers the three rules of Biblical interpretation from last week?

-Context, Context, & Context
-Paul is NOT defining what a "Jew" is in this context.

Deuteronomy 10:16 — "Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.

Heart-circumcision was not new to Israel

Leviticus 26:41

Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6

Jeremiah 4:4; 9:25–26

Ezekiel 36:26; 44:9

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John 3:3 — Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

John 3:4 — Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

John 3:10 — Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?

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“whose praise is not from men but from God”

“Jew” from Judah, which is associated with the word for “praise” (Genesis 29:35; 49:8)

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Enough about Jews, WHAT ABOUT US?

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Security in the Name

“if indeed you are called a Jew”

Cultural Christian identity — family religion, denominational label, national heritage

Matthew 7:21 — Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Matthew 13:24-30

The Parable of the Wheat & Tares

Revelation 3:1 — I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.

“I’m Catholic”

-“I’m Lutheran”

-“I’m Baptist”

-“I’m Pentecostal”

-“I’m a Revivalchurcher”

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Security in the Book”

“rest on the law... know His will... the embodiment of knowledge and truth”

Knowing the Bible does not save you.

James 1:22 — But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

2 Timothy 3:7 — always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

John 5:39–40 — You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

*MacArthur- “The deepest pit of hell is reserved for the people who know the most and never by faith appropriate... You can know everything there is to know about Christianity, turn your back on Jesus Christ and walk away and yours is the severest condemnation.”

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Security in “The Boast” (vv17, 23)

“make your boast in God... You who make your boast in the law”

Doctrinal pride / Denominational Tribalism

Luke 18:11 — 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.”

1 Corinthians 8:1 — Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

Luke 18:13 — “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!’

Galatians 6:14 — But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ

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Security in the Ritual/Sign

“if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision”

Neither Communion nor Baptism can save you nor damn you.

1 Corinthians 11:28–29 — But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.

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Security in the Heritage

“he is not a Jew who is one outwardly... but he is a Jew who is one inwardly”

Being raised in a Christian home does not make one a Christian

-GOD HAS NO GRANDCHILDREN!

Born Into the Church?

“Covenant Children”

-Children of believers regarded as members of God's people from birth

-Paired With: Baptismal Regeneration

-Infant baptism = the new circumcision

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Catholic Catechism — parents would deny the child "the priceless grace of becoming a child of God" if not baptized shortly after birth

-The infant believes “not by their own act, but by the faith of the Church.”

Not Just Catholic

-Luther kept it — “God creates faith in the infant at baptism”

-Calvin kept it — covenant inclusion, children are "holy"

-Westminster Confession — commands infant baptism of believers' children

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Lutherans, Presbyterians, Reformed, Anglicans, Methodists, & more all believe in infant baptism.

FOR THE NERDS:

-Paedobaptism = (Greek paidos = child)

-Credobaptism = (Latin Credo = “I believe”)

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BAPTIST / EVANGELICAL VERSION

-Church membership does not save you

-Being raised in church does not save you

-A prayer does not save you

-An altar call does not save you

-Raising a hand does not save you

-Walking an aisle does not save you

-Getting really emotional in a service does not save you

-Adult Baptism does not save you

John 1:12–13 — But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:6–7 — That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, “You must be born again.”

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“whose praise is not from men but from God”

2 Corinthians 13:5 — Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. -Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? -unless indeed you are disqualified.

Psalms 139:23–24 — Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

James 1:22 — But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

1 John 2:3 — Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

1 John 3:14 — We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

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Philippians 3:5 — [I was] circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee...

Philippians 3:7-9 — But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

Do you know Jesus?