

Intro: Lunch meeting recently. They meet with a men, talk about faith, Jesus, Christianity. *"I'm not religious."* "Well, good, neither am I." It's about a Relationship. *"The Church is full of hypocrites."* "Amen. I'm one of 'em." Instead of claiming you're righteous, admit that you're a sinner. Broken the law in many ways. Demonstrate repentance. See that the point of the law is to point you to Jesus in the Gospel.

Thesis: *"The Law diagnosis sin and the Gospel is the cure."*

I. All are Condemned Under the Law (2:12-24)

V12. - *That's all of us.* We will be judged by the law.

V13. - *That's none of us.* Only Jesus.

V14-15 - We all understand the law to an extent, and still sin against it - our conscience. *"Our contradicting thoughts accuse or excuse."* **Guilt/Shame/Hiding** and **Denial/Deflect/Cover-Up.**

V16 - One day even our secrets will be judged. You got any secrets? Hidden sins? Wife, Kids, Hubby, etc.

V17-23 - Even leaders, teachers, theologians, preachers who get this, still break it. Knowingly/unknowingly. Being able to teach about it and talk about it doesn't make you immune. You're still accountable to it. Not immune just because you're an expert at diagnosing.

ILLUSTRATION: Heart surgeon suffered a heart attack while performing an open heart surgery.

v21 - **Teach/Preach to yourself.** *"Man. I don't even believe this stuff."* *"That's actually a good point."* *"Good stuff."* *"True."* **Journal. Pray Out Loud. Preach to yourself. Share/Counsel Gospel for others.**

v22 - **Adultery.** Heart? Lust? Porn? Movies? Shows? How's your lust? Eyes? Habits?

v23 - What **idols** are in your life? Money. Greed. Maybe not to worship, but to sell = money.

v24 - God is blasphemed. "Church is full of hypocrites. Self-righteous people" "Amen."

II. The Law is "All or Nothing" - (2:25-29)

A. **Circumcision.** 10x. *"Cut around."* Sign of "Cleansing" / "Change" / "Set Apart"

B. **Perfection.** Requirement. Not just better obedience.

ILLUSTRATION: I was homeschooled. **"Grading on a scale/curve."** What's that?! Best person in the class ruined the curve! God doesn't grade on a scale. Or maybe He does, but Jesus is the standard. He's "that one student." Bible Teacher: Exam day. Vote for who you want to take the Exam. Perfect Score. Class got the credit. That's what Jesus did for us. Perfection. We get the credit by faith. Good News.

C. **"I've been Baptized."** **"I got baptized."** Circumcision doesn't save anyone by making you a true Jew. Baptism doesn't save anyone by making you a true Christian. Faith alone. Christ alone.

D. **You can be circumcised outwardly, and not inwardly. You can be baptized outwardly not inwardly.** Cleansed on the outside, but not the inside.

E. **The Law cannot save.** It can only tell you you need salvation. **GOSPEL of GRACE in JESUS.**

III. Then Why The Law? (3:1-8)

A. **v.1-2** - Any advantage at all? Obedience? We have His Word. Promises. Truth. Law. 3 uses of the law. 1) *Restrains Sin.* 2) *Reveals Sin/Need for Jesus.* 3) *Guides Believers in Faith-Obedience.*

B. **v.3-4** - We can know God and about God. We can live more fully. Gospel. Salvation. We learn about God's faithfulness because of the Law. Because we break it. Try to keep it. I dare you! :-)

C. **v.5-8** - God's condemnation & Justice. Shows us what is right and good. Shows us we can't keep it. Shows us we need saving/forgiving. It is fair. Jesus's Grace. Righteousness.

ILLUSTRATION: I drink tap water. After a while, you don't notice. But then you taste some good water. You realize yours tastes like chlorine. Or you go to Florida and try their water. You realize how good yours is. You appreciate it more. Dirty Window. White Paint. New Carpet.

D. **If our sin shows off God's glory, holiness and grace, then why not just roll with it.** I've actually heard this reasoning as an excuse to act and talk however a person wanted. So yes, we are forgiven. But we're also changed.

E. **"May it never be!" "Never let it be!"** More in **Romans 6.**

CONCLUSION: Sitting in Church makes me a Christian about as much as sitting in a garage makes me a car or sitting in McDonalds makes me a hamburger. Baptism. "Being Good & Southern." Hard Working. Culturally-Morally acceptable. Voting for a certain party. Reading certain Books/Bible. Homeschooling.

"The Law diagnosis sin but the Gospel is the cure."