

The Book of Romans - Part 13

Greetings once again in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I'm glad you could join me today for "It's a Good Life." We're going to continue our study in the book of Romans, chapter 2.

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Last time, we studied up through verse 27 of Romans chapter 2, and in those last two verses that we looked at, Romans 2:26-27, Paul's point was this. The lack of circumcision does not condemn the Gentile, and possession of circumcision does not save the Jew.

In Galatians 5:6, it says, *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.* And Galatians 6:15 says, *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.* The only way a person becomes a new creature is through and in Jesus Christ. And this is what Paul is pointing to here in Romans chapter 2.

Now, the remainder of this chapter, verses 28 and 29, we look at today. And it says there, ²⁸*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:* ²⁹*But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

Notice the contrast here. The contrast found in these verses is outward and inward, flesh/heart, letter/spirit, men/God. And there is a difference of being a racial Jew and a regenerated Jew. A real Jew, according to

Paul and the Scriptures here, is a regenerated Jew. Now, what is on the inside is what really counts, Paul is saying here. And Paul is preparing us for chapter 3, which we're going to get into in a few moments. Where he's going to show us, and we'll see, what we are really like on the inside, for real heart circumcision... and you can see Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6, and many other aspects of heart circumcision. This is not speaking of the fleshly heart, but the inward person, the real person, the circumcision of the heart. Look at something else, verse 28. In verse 28, Paul is talking about a Jew who is a Jew outwardly. He's not talking about a Gentile.

And then we see that the Jew Paul is talking about has been circumcised, and he is a descendant of Abraham, but he is not a believer. He is not right with God, and this is what Paul is trying to get across to these people. And then we see that this Jew that Paul is speaking to is a Jew outwardly and physically, but he is not a Jew inwardly and spiritually. In verse 29, Paul is talking about a Jew who is a Jew inwardly. He's not talking about a Gentile.

And then we see that the Jew in verse 29 is a Jew who believes in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He's not only a child of Abraham, but he is a child of God. Now, in verse 29, Paul is not saying that Gentiles are Jews inwardly. Saved Gentiles are never referred to as Jews, and they are never referred to as Israel. And someone has said this, that this passage does not teach that all believers are Jews or that the church is the Israel of God. Paul is talking about those who are born of Jewish parentage and is insisting that the mere fact of birth and the ordinance of circumcision are not enough. There must also be inward reality.

Note this, it says "whose praise is not of men but of God." The term "Jew" is from the name Judah, one of the twelve sons of Jacob, which means "may he be praised." The inward Jew is one who does not necessarily receive the praise of men but does receive the praise of God.

So, we move into chapter 3 now. Paul perfectly and skillfully showed in chapter 2 of Romans that the Jew is without excuse and is under the condemnation and judgment of God. Now in chapter 3 the Jew is down to his last resort. The Jew here is going to try to argue his way out of judgment. Can you imagine trying to argue your way out of judgment with God? Well, that's what the Jew is trying to do here in chapter 3, and we find the very same thing today with people.

When we present the Gospel to others and clearly show that their own simpleness and that they're in need of Christ, they often begin raising objections and throwing out arguments to try to get themselves out from under the judgment of God. For example, they might ask questions like this: What about the heathen? How can a loving God send anyone to Hell? You've heard these, and I'm sure maybe you've used those arguments. How can God send anyone to Hell? Well, the fact of the matter is God sends no one to Hell. Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels, according to the Scriptures. It wasn't prepared for mankind. It's sad to say though that men who refuse Jesus Christ as Savior that's where they're going. And God sends no one there.

Christ died for this whole world. He died for the sins of the world. He died for you and for me and for everyone else in this world. The difference between me and an unsaved person is Jesus Christ. I received Him by faith. I trusted in Him. His blood cleansed me from all sin. And if you've never asked Him into your heart, you're not cleansed from all

sin, and He did for you, as well, but you must appropriate what He did for you. You must receive what He did for you. Ask Him into your heart.

We move now into Romans chapter 3 and verse 1. The Bible says, *What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision?* In other words, what does it mean to be a Jew? If the Jew has no special thing coming from God, then what good is it? Well, what is the advantage?

The word "then" means therefore, and this word points back to chapter 2 where we saw that the Jews rested comfortably in three things. First, they had the law; secondly, they were circumcised; and third, they were children of Abraham. We see that Paul made it very clear in chapter 2 that having the law doesn't do a person any good, verse 13 of chapter 2. And then being circumcised doesn't do a person any good, too, verse 25; and then being a child of Abraham doesn't do any good, chapter 2, verses 28 and 29.

With these things in mind, it is natural that the Jew would then ask the questions found in Romans 3:1. *What advantage then hath the Jew?* And so forth. And what good is it if we are condemned with the rest of the world, then what profit is there in being a Jew? If we are under God's judgment, you would say, just like the Gentiles, what advantage is there in being a Jew? What is the benefit? What good is it? If having the law and being circumcised and being a child of Abraham does me no good, then what advantage is there in being a Jew? And Paul answers that question in verse 2 of chapter 3. He says, *Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.* Unto the Jew were committed the oracles, the Scriptures.

Are the Jews advantaged? He says much every way. Chiefly, they had the oracles or the

sayings of God. Psalms 147 talks about this in verses 19 and 20. It says, *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel.* ²⁰*He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the LORD.* The Jews had the Old Testament. They had the writings of God. But they did not do the things of God.

And notice the word “committed.” The oracles of God were committed or entrusted to the Jew.

What a great privilege and a great responsibility was given to the person who has been given the Bible. Having a Bible is an awesome responsibility. If we possess the truth, then we are responsible to do something with the truth that we possess. And how many Bibles are there in the homes of America which are never opened and never used? When the Jews were entrusted with God’s Word, they were responsible to obey and believe the written revelation which they had. Were they faithful to trust or not? In Romans 3:3, it answers the question. *For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?*

These are accusations now from the Jews. Were the Jews accusing God of being unfaithful? Faith of God without effect? And secondly, verse 3 shows who really is unfaithful. Faith here means faithfulness. And the question is shall their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God? The answer is no. Can the faithfulness in man cancel the faithfulness of God? No. Second Timothy 2:13 says, *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.*

And Paul keeps going. Romans 3:4 says, *God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.* The

question in verse 3 is answered in verse 4. The answer to verse 3? God forbid. Notice verse 3 says some did not believe. Not all. All Jews were not unfaithful, but the majority of the Jews did not believe in Christ as Messiah.

And the word “justified”... “Realize that God is true,” is what Paul is trying to say. *That thou mightiest be justified in thy sayings.* “Lord, whatever You say is right.” And this is the way our attitude and our lives should be governed today. “Whatever, Lord, you say is right and just.”

And notice the term “and mightiest overcome.” The Victor is the Lord. “Lord, You are always the Overcomer and the Victor. You are always right, and You always win every case.”

And fourth, I would have you to see in verse 4 of Romans 3 in this verse that Paul is quoting Psalms 51:4. David’s great confession after his sin of adultery. He said, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.* David recognized God’s authority. He was right.

Trust Jesus to save you today. Trust Jesus to lead you as a saved person. Do right.

May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer. We’ll continue our study in Romans chapter 3, and as we do that, we’re going to see that Paul the apostle is bringing us up to a very important lesson here. And he’s already given us important lessons in this book of Romans.

May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.