

b. Paul posed four questions he knew they would ask.

- 1) **Q:** If Jews are just as guilty as Gentiles, what advantage is it to be a circumcised Jew? (v.1-2)
 - a) God gave the Jews His oracles (the Old Testament scriptures). Thus, they knew God's laws and God's promised blessings on those who obey.
 - b) By having the oracles, they could learn from the many OT examples. (Rom 15:4) "*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*"
- 2) **Q:** Will the unbelief of some hinder the rest? (v.3-4)
 - a) It is true that unbelief prevents God's blessing.
 - b) However, that is not God's fault. God will be faithful even if every man is a liar. God is always just.
- 3) **Q:** If our sins highlight God's righteousness isn't God wrong for punishing us? (v.5-6)
 - a) **A colour is always the brightest next to its opposite colour.** God appears purer next to our imperfections. That does not make God wrong for punishing sin.
 - b) If it is wrong for God to punish a religious man's sin, then He could not punish the world for their sin.
- 4) **Q:** If God's truth is made more glorious when compared with my lie, why should He judge me as a sinner? (v.7-8)
 - a) This is another way of stating the previous question.
 - b) We must not think that man should sin so that God gets glory in making the repentant sinner righteous.

Conclusion: Like the religious Jews, religious people are often proud of their qualities. Without realising it, they are often poor examples through their inconsistencies. They wear outward labels that do not match their inward content. Like the Jews, they may be full of excuses for their sin. God gave us these verses to help the religious person see his or her need of God's righteousness. Religion does not make a person righteous. Only Christ can do that. On Judgment Day, scores of religious people will hear Christ's words, "*Depart from me ye that work iniquity*" (Matthew 7:21-23). You do not want to be among them. **Trust Christ!**

Song: Are You Washed in the Blood - 208

The Religious Need Righteousness

14 November 2021 AM - Romans 2:17-3:8 - Rom2021 - Scott Childs

Introduction: The Jews are God's chosen people. It was through their people that God chose to send Christ to this earth to atone for man's sins. Being God's chosen people, the Jews often thought they were better than all other people. In fact, many thought that being Jews made them righteous before God. Religious people today often make the same mistake.

Transition: This morning we are going to look at the religious Jew's need for righteousness from four perspectives.

1. The Proud Jewish Claims (Ro 2:17-20)

a. Paul identifies many proud Jewish claims

- 1) *Called a Jew* (v.17) – They were proud of their nationality.
- 2) *Rest in the Law* – They depended on the Law to save.
- 3) *Boast of God* – They believed in the true God of heaven.
- 4) *Know God's will* (v.18) – They knew God's requirements.
- 5) *Approve things that are more excellent* – They approved the things superior. They believed God's way is right.
- 6) *Guide to the blind, light to those in darkness, instructors of the foolish, teachers of babes* (v.19) – They boasted in their ability to lead those ignorant of the truth.

b. The Jews were very proud people

- 1) They thought they were right with God and better than the Gentiles.
- 2) **Many religious people today have a similar feeling toward the nonreligious. They think that being religious makes them right with God and better than others.**

2. The Poor Jewish Example (Ro 2:21-24)

a. Paul highlights five areas of their poor example

- 1) **They claimed to be teachers, yet** they did not do what they taught others to do.
- 2) **They preached against stealing, yet** they were notorious for their dishonesty and greedy dealings. Some Jews robbed God by not tithing (Mal 3:8). Others robbed their own parents of financial support (Mat 15:5-6).
- 3) **They said that adultery was wrong, yet** they lusted in their

hearts after women, and many were secretly immoral (Mat 5:28).

- 4) They hated idols, yet they committed sacrilege (i.e., robbed temples or deprived something of its sacred character). While they would not bow to an idol, they robbed God of the honour due Him by putting other things and pleasures ahead of God.
- 5) They boasted that they follow the Law, yet they dishonoured God by breaking the law.
- 6) These same faults are present in the lives of many very religious people today. Actions speak louder than words.

b. By of their poor example, Gentiles blasphemed God

- 1) Unbelievers are quick to blaspheme God when religious people are hypocrites. David's sin with Bathsheba is an example of this. (2Sam 12:14) "*Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.*"
- 2) Many people say, "I do not go to church because the church is full of hypocrites." That is sad, but often true. Saying one thing and doing another is wrong. We must seek to be good examples for Christ's glory.
- 3) Are you claiming to be something that you are not? If so, God knows the truth. You cannot deceive God.

3. The Perverted Jewish Reasoning Ro 2:25-29

a. They depended on outward rites

- 1) They reasoned that God accepted them because they were *circumcised* (v.25-27).
 - a) Baptist pastor, **Henry Mahan** states, "Circumcision was a symbol of the Lord's covenant and a sign of all the advantages enjoyed by the Jews. They thought that circumcision itself was sufficient to obtain righteousness."
 - b) *Circumcision* was an outward label, but it did not guarantee the inward heart was right with God. **Thomas Constable** illustrates this well. "In our day, cans and bottles have labels on them to indicate

what is inside. Circumcision was a label and implied that the Jew was obedient to God. However, if he was not completely obedient the label was not only worthless, but deceptive. The contents of the can are more important than the label. Similarly, if a Gentile was completely obedient to God, the absence of the label of circumcision was not of major consequence."

- c) Many religious people today think that christening or baby baptism will make an infant right with God. That is both faulty thinking and an unbiblical practice. Baby baptism is never mentioned in the Bible. Bible baptism is always by immersion after a person repents of their sin and trusts Christ for salvation.
 - d) If you have been saved but have not been baptised by immersion afterwards, you need to be baptised as a testimony of your salvation.
- 2) They reasoned that being born Jews they were God's children (v.28-29)
 - a) Again, God looks on the heart not on the outside.
 - b) John tells us in his gospel that salvation is not inherited from our blood relatives. (John 1:12) "*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*"

b. God requires inward reform

- 1) Anyone can partake in a religious rite. However, many professing Christians live no differently than unbelievers except that they occasionally attend church.
- 2) The Jews mistakenly thought their circumcision and their nationality made them righteous. We must not make the same mistake. God wants your heart. Salvation is not an outward act. It is an inward transformation by Christ.

4. The Predicted Jewish Objections Ro 3:1-8

a. Paul knew that Jews would object to his reasoning.

- 1) Like a lawyer, Paul was thinking ahead.
- 2) He disarmed the religious man's arguments.