

Religion Can't Save You

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Romans 2:17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God 18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; 19 and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— 21 you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. 24 For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

25 For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. 26 So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. 28 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

1. A great religious _____ can become a source of pride and complacency.

2. Do you practice what you _____?

3. If you claim to be one of God's _____, your life should reflect what God is like.

4. _____ does not defeat sin; it intensifies it.

5. Salvation is by the _____.

6. Religious ritual without a heart change is _____.

Truly religious people are convicted by the Holy Spirit, repent of their hard, sinful hearts, receive the Holy Spirit, and are enabled by the Holy Spirit to live a new life characterized by obedience to God.

Discussion Questions:

1. What was your biggest takeaway from this teaching?
2. Do you ever tell others to do something you are unwilling to do yourself?
3. Based on this passage, what was most Jew's attitude toward circumcision? What was the original purpose of circumcision?
4. What is most important to God?
5. How are we tempted to trust in external, religious things over spiritual realities? Discuss what some of these things might be for us as Christians.
6. Discuss ways a healthy church culture can foster the pursuit of heart transformation rather than mere external religious forms.
7. Pray for each other.

Next Week's Message: Romans 3:1-8