

## **Romans 2:17-29**

**RO 2:17** Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and brag about your relationship to God; <sup>18</sup> if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; <sup>19</sup> if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, <sup>20</sup> an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth-- <sup>21</sup> you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? <sup>22</sup> You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup> You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? <sup>24</sup> As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

**RO 2:25** Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. <sup>26</sup> If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? <sup>27</sup> The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.

**RO 2:28** A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

**PP1 Talking about our integrity.**

Verses 17 – 20 Paul is dialoging with a Jew. Sets him up . Look at it.

**PP2 RO 2:17** Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and brag about your relationship to God; <sup>18</sup> if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; <sup>19</sup> if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, <sup>20</sup> an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth--

This could be a. a Hebrew, b. a Jew or c. an Israelite. What's the difference. In Paul's day these titles had some specific meaning. A Hebrew was a Jew born in Israel, a Jew could be anyone of Jewish decent and an Israelite was a Hebrew and a Jew and also of the Jewish Aristocracy. Who is he talking to? All of them. Why single out the Jews?

Because in some early churches the Jews began placing Jewish standards on the gentile christians. So here Paul again points out that they are no better. Remember the last few weeks – the universality of sin. Obviously the Jews needed reminding of their sin a bit more.

**PP3 Look at how Paul words it.**

i. **Pp4 Rely on the law – even brag about your relationship to God.**

- ii. PP5 Know God's will – know the law
- iii. PP6 Knowing the law gives right to be leaders
- iv. PP7 Instruct lesser people.
- v. PP8 Knowing law is knowledge and truth.

But lets see where Paul takes this. Remember this letter is to Christians!!! This letter is to us.

PP9

***<sup>21</sup> you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? <sup>22</sup> You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup> You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? <sup>24</sup> As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."***

Paul brings out some home truths.

V21 – PP10 **do you teach yourself?** (Do you take notice of what you teach. Is it do as I say not as I do.

PP11 **You proclaim** (Preach) not to steal, but do you – How?

Lets personalize this. Tax returns, what can you claim, what should you claim?  
Is it only financial – what about speeding. 1 klm over is  
breaking the law

I'll let you carry that further.

V22 – PP12 **Not commit adultery but do you.** This is a bit harder to look at.

But

Maybe Paul had Jesus teaching in mind.

***<sup>Pp13 MT 5:27</sup> "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' <sup>28</sup> But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. <sup>29</sup> If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. <sup>30</sup> And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell."***

Let's also be realistic, it's not just men who perve, you women have you, do you look at the abs of a model ofr an athlete and go "Wow nice"

Hey, this is a bit personal. Yeh, and difficult, With contemporary TV, lust is the aim of advertising. Look at the options. Sex sells. If your eye causes you to sin, get rid of it. If TV causes you a lust problem – get rid of it. Deal with. You see, sin is catching up with these Jews, just as it catches up with us. Now most of us would probably not even realise that TV causes us to lust, or envy, or waste time or whatever. It sneaks up on us.

What bout this abhorring idols and robbing temples.

A couple of ideas suggested by commentators.

- a. PP14 Maybe the Jews in Rome used items from other temple worship to be melted down and recast into jewelry etc
- b. PP15 Maybe they aren't paying their temple tax because they live so far away
- c. PP16 Maybe Paul is referring to sacrilege in a general sense.

Basically, PP17 Paul perceives they aren't treating God right.

In some ways I love the next verse.

**PP18<sup>23</sup> *You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law?***

There is some real reality here. It is really in your face. You brag about knowing yet you don't live like you do. The answer to this question is the same as we have heard for the last two weeks. Yes, we break the law.

We who know, the truth, still keep getting it wrong. We place ourselves on such pedestals don't we. We know the truth. We understand this theology or that theology and can sprout this verse to justify that doctrine. Yet we still sin.

**PP19<sup>24</sup> *As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."***

Our reputations as christians can put God in a bad light. Isn't this so different from Chapter 1

**PP20<sup>RO 1:8</sup> *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world.***

I hope and pray that God's name will never be blasphemed by us.

The next bit cuts right through the Jewish mentality.

**PP21<sup>RO 2:25</sup> *Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. <sup>26</sup> If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? <sup>27</sup> The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.***

Why is circumcision such an issue???? It was one of God's express commands. It was a private sign between men and God or parents and God. But notice it is one of God's commands. Just because a guy was circumcised, didn't mean that he kept all the law, just that bit. Paul points out that some who didn't follow that rule still lead Godly lives. What are our issues like circumcision?

- i. PP22 Church membership
- ii. PP23 Baptism / Confirmation
- iii. PP24 Sunday church attendance
- iv. PP25 Not drinking

- v. PP26 Not swearing.
- vi. PP27 Whatever.

These days we have different standards than in previous years, does that mean we are more sinners than more before?????

Paul articulates it in a way that the Jewish guys couldn't ignore.

**PP28** *RO 2:28 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. 29 No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.*

It is about our relationship to God. It is a matter of the heart. A Jew could still sin even if he was circumcised, had a great heritage and did his best to keep the law. Why? Because it is the desire to be right with God that is he circumcision of the heart. Now we know how to get right with God. It is all about accepting Christ's forgiveness. Recognising that it is through Jesus that we get right with God, Yet, we add to it. Jesus and Baptism, Jesus and church membership, Jesus and wearing the right clothes, Jesus and looking good, whatever we place on it. We are just as bad as the Jews.

It is just Jesus that deals with sin. And the amazing part that Paul points out is that it is not about us. It is not about how we look, it is not about praise from our friends, the church people, or even the pastor. It is about how God see's us.

**PP29** *Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.*

Let your heart be cut by God.