

## **“Religion” Is Not Enough**

Romans 2.17-29

*“You diligently study the Scriptures because by them you think you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”*  
John 5.39-40

A major problem in our world today is “religion.” In fact, lots of people are turned off to God because of “religion.” Many people will not consider the claims of Christ because of “religion.”

In our text, Paul exposes the fallacy of trusting in “religion.” There are a few questions we ought to be asking ourselves as Paul walks us through a picture of the “religious” Jews of his day.

### **Do You Trust In “Religion” Or In Christ?**

“Religion” produces people who trust in themselves and their identity as religious people. This was the case of the Jews to whom Paul wrote.

*“Now you, if **you call yourself a Jew**; if you **rely on the law** and **brag about your relationship to God**; if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth.”* Romans 2.17-20

*“You, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? As it is written: ‘God’s name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.’”* Romans 2.21-24

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### **Is Your Faith About Ritual or Relationship?**

*“Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. If those who are not circumcised keep the law’s requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? 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.”* Romans 2.24-27

One of the subtle traps of religion is the idea that somehow, if we participate in religious activity or ritual, that will gain us favor with God.

*“The LORD your God will **circumcise your hearts** and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.”* Deuteronomy 30.1-6

**Deuteronomy 30.11-18**

### **Is It Time to Face Reality?**

*“A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. 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.”* Romans 2.28-29

*“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. **Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the LORD is your life,** and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”* Deuteronomy 30.19-20

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