

**The opposite
of faith is not
non belief
but false
belief.**

**Jesus did not
come to deliver
us from secular
evil so much as
bad religion.**

**He “will render
to every man
according
to his
deeds”**



**Blessed are
those who hunger
& thirst for righteousness**

**He justifies the ungodly
by faith**



**He who knew no
sin became sin
for us that we
might become the
righteousness of God in him.**

The argument of Romans 1-5

ch.1

- 1. God judges all of us as guilty on the basis of His holy character and our moral merit.***

ch.2

- 2. Being religiously pious does not count for righteousness.***

ch.3-5

- 3. It is only by the righteousness of Jesus imputed to our account by faith that we are declared just before God.***

A necessary function of true religion

- 1. It must identify and address the root issue in the human dilemma - the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man.***
- 2. It must relate to the realities of the human predicament - man is spiritually unable to save himself.***
- 3. The absolute holiness of God can be reconciled with His unconditional promise of grace toward His people through the Christian Gospel.***

Romans 2

"17 But if you bear the name "Jew," and rely upon the Law, and boast in God, 18 and know His will, and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, 19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, 21 you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one should not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?"

"24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you" just as it is written. 25 For indeed circumcision is of value, if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 26 If therefore the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 And will not he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law? 28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God."

Who is the "you" in Romans 2?

- **All who do not live a holy life**

Human sin nature suppresses the truth and seeks life but does not seek God.

Many seek life in religion that does not bring the holiness that saves.

The holiness that reconciles a person before God is not from or through us but is won for us and imputed to us by Christ.

Three dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

- **Arrogance (vs.17-20)**

Finding security in their memberships, understanding, and religious piety.

- **Hypocrisy (vs.21-24)**

Quick to condemn others but not one's self.

- **Superficiality (vs.25-29)**

Living disintegrated lives.

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

- **Arrogance (vs.17-20)**

They find security in their memberships, understanding, and religious piety.

"17 But if you bear the name "Jew," and rely upon the Law, and **boast in God**, . . . 19 and are **confident that you yourself are a guide** to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, . . .

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

- **Arrogance (vs.17-20)**



Bibliolatry

Loving the written word more than the living Word.

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

• **Arrogance** (vs.17-20)



“Truth that is not applied is no better than error and may be a whole lot more damaging. The Devil is a better theologian than any of us and is the Devil still.”

A.W. Tozer

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

• **Arrogance** (vs.17-20)



**The N.T. has 20 qualifications for an elder in the church.
Only 2 have to do with Scriptural knowledge.**

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

• **Hypocrisy** (vs.21-24)

“23 You who boast in the Law, through your **breaking the Law**, do you dishonor God?”

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

• **Hypocrisy** (vs.21-24)

Some common reasons people are not interested in the church

1. Hypocrisy and pride
2. Majoring on minor issues
3. Out of touch with the real world's needs
4. Empire building & insecure leadership
5. Family feuds & “game playing”

The subtle dangers of religion

1. *It tends to give us a sense of security, which relaxes our guard.*
2. *It can build a prideful & judgmental segregation from others.*
3. *It can create a false sense of spiritual security.*
4. *It can excuse people from social moral responsibilities.*
5. *It can be a storefront for self-serving behavior.*

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

• **Superficiality** (vs.25-29)

“24 For “*the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you*” just as it is written.
25 For indeed circumcision is of value, if you practice the Law; but **if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.**”

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

- **Superficiality** (vs.25-29)

Corban (Mk.7:11-12) neglecting social moral obligation by hiding behind religious piety.

1. Church attendance
2. Devotional quiet time
3. Tithing money
4. Reciting prayers
5. Family feuds & political power plays.

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

- **Superficiality** (vs.25-29)



Religiosity

Loving the ceremonial art more than what it represents.

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

- **Superficiality** (vs.25-29)



Ministry

Loving service of others apart from worshiping God.

Dangers of religion from Romans 2:17-29

- **Superficiality** (vs.25-29)



Respect

Wanting the favor of man more than the love of God.

Two spheres of application

- Preparing all of us to realize our own need for Godly righteousness of Jesus imputed to us by faith.
- Challenging disciples of Jesus to walk in a manner worthy of their calling in response to God's grace.

There are few things worse than bad religion
and few things sweeter than good religion.