

THE HONOR

2.3.2019



ROMANS
THE GREATEST LETTER EVER WRITTEN.

Romans 2:17-29

IS GOD'S NAME DISHONORED & BLASPHEMED BECAUSE OF YOU?

ROMANS 2:17-29 {GOD'S JUDGEMENT AND THE LAW}

17 But if you call yourself (*name yourself/identity*) a Jew and rely (*rest on*) on the law and boast in God 18 and know his will (*revealed*) and approve what is excellent (*essential*), because -> you are instructed from the law (*instructed = katēcheō*); 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 (*corrector*) of the foolish, a teacher of children (*immature*), having in the law the embodiment (*essence*) 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?

- **Q. Is he saying** “Do not tell people what is right and wrong, because nobody’s perfect and you’ll be seen as a hypocrite”?
- **A. No!** He’s *not* accusing them for approving what is excellent, instructing, guiding, teaching—He’s indicting them because of what he made clear in **verse 17** and by what he says in **verse 23**. Look at **verse 17** and **verse 23** very closely!

ROMANS 2:17: “But if you call yourself a Jew and rely (*rest on*) on the law.” (*They RELY on yet don’t obey*)

- “RELY” = epanapauomai (2x): “to rest upon anything.”

If, for your identity, you **RELY** on anything to do with who you **ARE** or what you **DO**, you are like a house built on sinking-sand right next to an active volcano—it’s only a matter of time.

- **Q. What do you RELY on?**
- **Q.** What or who are you relying on to make you valuable, to give you a sense of worth, to give you satisfaction/happiness?
- **Q.** What are you relying on in order to make you acceptable to God or to escape the judgement we’ve earned for our sin?
- **A.** If it’s not God and His free grace in Jesus, it’s an idol; a false god. The crazy thing about Idolatry is that *anything* can be turned into an idol—even good things. Take the Jews here as an example: they turned the perfect Law of God into an idol.
- **That’s why John Calvin famously wrote, 500 years ago, “The Human heart is a perpetual factory of idols.”**
- **One way to help you realize what you RELY on, in order to identify your idols, is to look at your FEARS.**
- **Q.** What do you have that if you lost it, you would lose your desire to go on? Why do you worry? Why are you anxious?
- **Q.** What are you chasing that if you never got it would make life feel meaningless? Why do you worry? Why are you anxious?

• **Another way to help you identify your idols is to look at what you BOAST in; what you BRAG about; what you feel great PRIDE about. You know what it was for the Jews, by and large? Look at verse 23.**

23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law.

- [[“BOAST” = kauchaomai (37x): “rejoice; praise something; brag on something.”]]
- [[“DISHONOR” = antimazō (7x): “bring shame upon; insult; treat with contempt (word deed or thought).”]]
- They **BOASTED** in their **moral superiority**; they **TOOK PRIDE** in the fact that they **did not “do [terrible] things or give approval to those who did”**; they **REJOICED** in that they **did not suppress the truth of God** but accepted the Bible as God’s authoritative Word; They **GLORIED** in that they were guides to the blind, teachers of the ignorant!
- **Q. Sound like anyone today? A.** Sadly, this sounds like a ton of *professing* Christians!
- **Some do this today with MORALS/MORALITY; Some do this today with THEOLOGY/DOCTRINE.**

Irreligious people dishonor God by *suppressing* the truth about God and His Law, disobeying Him. Religious people dishonor God by *relying on & boasting in* the truth about God and His Law, all the while disobeying Him.

- **Q. What do you BOAST in? THEOLOGY?** (*when we’re relying on or boasting in ourselves, look at the result in verse 24!*)

24 For, as it is written, “The name (*reputation/character*) of God is **blasphemed** among the Gentiles (*ethnos = nations*) because of you.” (*Is. 52:5*) [[BLASPHEMED = blasphemēō (34x): “defame; rail on; revile; speak falsely; speak evil of.”]]

When we aren't honest about our own sin—if we pretend to be more righteous than we are—we aren't fooling anyone. And God's name is blasphemed because of it! (they would blaspheme anyways, but our hypocrisy causes more!)

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.

Q. What is circumcision? **A.** It was the cutting off of the foreskin, as a sign that you were in God's covenant.

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 (approval; commendation) is not from man but from God.

- [["HEARTS" = Kardia: "the fountain of thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors."]]
- **The Religious person, boasting in and relying on their obedience to the Law** is like a husband loving his wedding ring, not His wife; or a parent that loves their child's birth certificate on not their child. It's insanity! Those are just signs/indicators.
- **PHILIPPIANS 3:3** "For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and [boast] in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh."

The true people of God are not those who have been outwardly circumcised, outwardly baptized; they're not those who have prayed a prayer and "asked Jesus into their heart";

- **The true people of God are NOT those who claim to be morally superior or anything of the sort**—the true people of God are those who confess that they are *NOT* morally superior; who confess that they *HAVE* broken God's Law—yet they have been changed inwardly by God and now have faith in Jesus and what He's done alone to save them!

If your faith is in Jesus alone, you need to know this & rejoice in this: the only way you are a Christian is because God the Holy Spirit changed your heart without your permission— "circumcising your heart."

- **If your faith is not yet in Jesus alone, if you've not been changed deeply:** The only way you're going to stop *relying* on yourself and stop *boasting* in yourself is by God the Holy Spirit changing your heart.

Q. How does He do that? **A.** He does it as you *hear* about, *read* about, *think* about Jesus and what He's done on the cross to save sinners like us!

- **On the cross, hanging there, bleeding, suffocating, taking the wrath of God for sinners, Jesus was saying to you:** "Because you have boasted in yourself and broken God's Law, I'm being broken so you can be forgiven."
- **On the cross, Jesus honored God by dying to save those who have dishonored Him;** Though he was the rule maker and rule keeper, He died to save the breakers.
- **And when you see the CROSS for what it is—the great LOVE of Jesus bleeding in your place to save you and make you happy forever—the Spirit will change your heart and you will trust Jesus alone!**

HOW WILL GOD'S NAME BE HONORED AND PRAISED BECAUSE OF YOU?

- **If you don't care about this question, you aren't a Christian.** You need to be saved. You need to be changed.
- **Q.** How will God's name be honored and praised because of us?
- **When you and I RELY on Jesus & His grace alone & make our boast in Jesus & His grace ALONE!**
- **When you see and trust Jesus and what He DID to save EVEN YOU, you'll start to say thing like Paul in**
- **1 Corinthians 1:31**, "Let the one who boasts boast in the LORD!"
- **2 Corinthians 11:30**, "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness."
- **Galatians 6:14** "Far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world."
- **Q. What do you RELY on?**
- **Q. What do you BOAST in?**
- Your life is saying something—it has a *subtext*—and it's one of these three:
 - 1) Aren't *I* great?
 - 2) Aren't *We* Great?
 - 3) Isn't *JESUS* great?