

We have seen three categories of men and their status before God:

1. Condemnation of the heathen man 1:18 – 32
2. Condemnation of the moral man 2:1-16
3. Condemnation of the Jew or the religious man 2:17- 3:8

Last Sunday Roger gave us a look at what a Jew might place his confidence in regards to his salvation.

Summary of the Jews

1. Possession of the Law 2:17-18
2. You are confident that you are a guide, a light, a teacher  
2:19-20
3. You who teach others, do you teach yourself? Inconsistency  
2: 21-24

Today we're going to look at the rite of Circumcision and because his father was Abraham were places to put a Jews' confidence in for salvation. 2:25-29

Then next week we'll look at "did the Jew have an advantage from God over the rest of humanity?" 3:1-4

Jews' condemnation: 3:5-8

A Jew believed he was exempt from God's wrath. He didn't believe ***Romans 1:18 (NASB) <sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.***

## Why did a Jew believe that he was exempt from the wrath of God?

Exempt because he had the law. Vv. 17-24

The thing that makes one a Jew is they have the law, but if you disobey the law then you are not a real Jew.

Exempt because he was circumcised. Vv. 25-27

Some men today believe they are exempt because they were baptized, or are a member of a certain church.

Exempt because he had Abraham as his father. Vv. 28-29

Opinion of the Jews **John 8:33 (NASB)** <sup>33</sup> *They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free'?"*

## **In the above verses Paul directly addresses the Jew.**

- He shows that the Jew “rested” on The Law, —
- He was proud that the will of the true God had been revealed to him.
- And he “knew” that will and was therefore able to “approve the things that are excellent.”
- He developed a confidence in himself as a guide, a light, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher, because in the law he had “the form of knowledge and of the truth.”
- **But did he apply it to himself**, —his teaching, his preaching, his saying what folks should be, his abhorring idols, his glorying in The Law?

**NO!**

***24 For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.***

Vv24 the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles **because of** the selfishness, the pride, the covetousness, the general wickedness of the Jew!

***Ezekiel 36:20-23 (NASB)***

*20 "When they came to the nations where they went, they profaned My holy name, because it was said of them, 'These are the people of the LORD; yet they have come out of His land.'*

*21 "But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations where they went."*

# SEVEN GREAT PRINCIPLES OF GOD'S JUDGMENT

1. God's judgment is "according to truth" (verse 2).
2. According to accumulated guilt (verse 5).
3. According to works (verse 6).
4. Without respect of persons (verse 11).
5. According to performance, not knowledge (verse 13).
6. God's judgment reaches the secrets of the heart (verse 16).
7. According to reality, not religious profession (verses 17-29)

***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.***

Denny from Newell:

"The absence of the article (before circumcision) suggests that the argument may be extended to everything of the same character as circumcision.

- Circumcision was the seal of the covenant, and as such an assurance given to the circumcised man that he belonged to the race which was the heir of God's promises.
- However if the actual inheriting of the promises has any moral conditions attached to it (as Paul proceeds to show that it has), then the advantage of circumcision lapses unless they are fulfilled.

Newell

Paul declares that Jewish circumcision, which was the mark of that nation's separation to God, was good only if one were really separated to God, but that if not, the Jew was really an uncircumcised one;

Newell

Wuest Translation,

*For indeed, circumcision is profitable if you are a practitioner of the law, but if on the other hand you are a transgressor of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.*

*Romans 2:25 (WEYMOUTH)*

*<sup>25</sup> Circumcision does indeed profit, if you obey the Law; but if you are a Lawbreaker, the fact that you have been circumcised counts for nothing.*



*<sup>26</sup> So if the uncircumcised man **keeps** the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be **regarded** as circumcision?*

If the uncircumcision maintains the just requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be accounted circumcision, because it has really done what circumcision pledged the Jew to do?

**Denney**

***Wuest translation:***

*Therefore, if the uncircumcision habitually guards righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be computed to his account for circumcision? RM 3:30; RM 8:4*

***27 And 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?***

The Jew is a law-transgressor, although he possesses a written revelation of God's will, and bears the seal of the covenant, obliging him to the performance of the law upon his body.

***WUEST translation: And the uncircumcision which by nature is fulfilling the law, will judge you who with the advantage of the letter and of circumcision are a transgressor of the law.***

The Jew was outdone instead, and “judged,” by those who, wholly outside circumcision, feared and walked with God.

Newell

*<sup>28</sup> For he is not a Jew **who** is one **outwardly**, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.*

Paul finally declares that a man is not a Jew who is merely one **outwardly**, and that God does not regard mere outward circumcision: that the only Jew in God's sight is an "Israelite."

**"Outwardly"** is *phaneros*, "apparent, manifest, evident, known." It refers to that which one can observe on the outside.

**"Who"** is a masculine relative pronoun and refers to the Jew, the ideal Jew, here.

*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.*

**"In spirit" and "in letter". It is that behavior of an individual which is in the sphere of man's spirit, his religious, God-conscious inner life, rather than in the realm of an outward meticulous observance of law, concerning which the apostle is speaking. WUEST**

Denney explains it this way:

“The argument of the foregoing verses assumes what is stated here, and what no one will dispute, that what constitutes the Jew in the true sense of the term, and gives the name Jew its proper content and dignity, is not anything outward and visible, but something inward and spiritual. And the same remark applies to circumcision itself.”

The epitome of this problem was pointed out by the Lord Jesus. *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy, and faith; these ought ye to have done."*

*([Matt. 23:23](#))*

Now Paul writes to all who are new creations in Christ: *"Ye are complete in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision not made with hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ"* ([Col. 2:10, 11](#)).

The believer's circumcision was not a fleshly ritual, but rather a spiritual reality. Not a part of the flesh cut away, but all - and that not with hands, but by the Spirit through the Cross.

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