

BOOK OF ROMANS
GOD AND RELIGIOUS SINNERS-PART 1
ROMANS 2:17-18

Introduction

In *ISAIAH 1:1ff*, the **PROPHET ISAIAH** saw a **VISION** from the **LORD** of the problems that were associated with the nation of **JUDAH** and the city of **JERUSALEM** which were the seat of **JUDAISM**, the **RELIGION** of the **HEBREWS** or **JEWS**! Of course the **JEWS** were very steeped in their **RELIGION** and the various **RITUALS** associated with their **RELIGION**. But that is largely all that it had become to them... nothing more than meaningless **RITUALS**!

The **OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS** as well as the **NEW TESTAMENT APOSTLES** had a time getting the **JEWS** to see they had a **SIN PROBLEM**! **PAUL** laid out the argument here in **ROMANS** showing that both the **JEW** AND **GENTILE** have the same **PROBLEM**—a **SIN PROBLEM** of which the **GOSPEL** of **JESUS CHRIST** is the **ONLY REMEDY**!

In our text in **ROMANS**, we see **TEN ADVANTAGES** the **JEW** had over the **GENTILE** that he **BOASTED** in or took **PRIDE** in. Five of these have to do with **WHAT THE JEW WAS** in *verses 17 and 18* and five have to do with **WHAT THE JEW DID** in *verses 19 and 20*!

I. WHAT THE JEW WAS.

1. “Thou Art CALLED A JEW...” (Vs 17a)

The name “**JEW**” (which means “*of Judah*”) was the name the **ISRAELITE** bore proudly because the name “**JEW**” came to denote all the **PECULIARITIES** and **SPECIAL FAVORS** of their **RELIGION** as **GODS CHOSEN PEOPLE**!

(The term is first found in Scripture in *2 Kings 16:6* in the days of *King Ahaz of Judah* who did evil in the **LORD**’s sight.)

So, what is in a **NAME**? Quite a bit if you have a good **NAME** and live up to the that **NAME**!

Proverbs 22:1– “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, And loving favour rather than silver and gold.”

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Ecclesiastes 7:1– “A good name is better than precious ointment;

But though they were called **JEWS**, they weren’t what the **LORD** called them or chose them to be! They fell short!

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Well, let’s stop here for a minute and think about our NAMES related to who we are for a minute?

The name CHRISTIAN used to actually mean something more precise than it does now! CHRISTIAN used to be associated with those who were CHRIST-LIKE (or a FOLLOWER OF CHRIST!)

The term **CHRISTIAN** is used only three times in the **BIBLE**. Its first use in: *Acts 11:26*– “...And the disciples were called *Christians first in Antioch.*”

Its second use in: *Acts 26:28*– “Then Agrippa, said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a *Christian.*”

Its third use in: *1 Peter 4:16*– “Yet if any man suffer as a *Christian*, let him not be ashamed; bu let him glorify God on this behalf.”

Sadly, the name **CHRISTIAN** has now been watered down to where it is now broadly associated with a rather large umbrella of **RELIGIONS** some of which are only loosely tied to **JESUS CHRIST** of the **BIBLE** and even others that teach and preach a different **JESUS CHRIST** and a different **GOSPEL** than what is found in the **BIBLE**!

So, who were these **CHRISTIANS** in Antioch?(*Acts 11:19-30*) These were **BELIEVERS**! (*That should speak of our FAITH IN CHRIST and HIS WORD as shown by our BEHAVIOR! Yet that has been watered down in our day to just a mental assent that is largely absent of PRACTICE!*)

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These were **BELIEVERS**...

These were **SAINTS!** (*Speaks of what **CHRIST** made us that also is shown by our **BEHAVIOR!** “**SAINT**” means one who is **SET APART** for **GOD!** **GOD SET US APART** unto **HIMSELF** when we **BELIEVED** the **GOSPEL**. After we **BELIEVE** the **GOSPEL** we are also to **SET OURSELVES APART** for **GOD!**)
(i.e. Because we are **SAINTS**, we are to be **SAINTS!**)*

These were **BRETHREN!** (*Speaks of being **BORN AGAIN** into **GOD’S FAMILY** along with others who have been **BORN AGAIN!**)
Galatians 3:26– “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”*

Galatians 4:6– “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.”

These were **DISCIPLES!** (*Speaks of being a **FOLLOWER** and **LEARNER** of **CHRIST** and **HIS DOCTRINE!**)*

Back to the **JEW**, a **JEW** was one who was tied to **ABRAHAM** by blood and so tied to the **ABRAHAMIC COVENANT**, but it was to be more than that! It should have also meant that they had the **FAITH OF ABRAHAM!**

ABRAHAM is one who **BELIEVED GOD** and proved it by his **PRACTICE**—his **BEHAVIOR...HOW HE LIVED!**
*“Thou art **CALLED** a **JEW**...”*

2. *“...And **RESTEST** In The **LAW**...” (Vs 17b)*

The word “*restest*” means “*to find rest, to find comfort.*”
This means that they had a **blind trust** in their **POSSESSING THE LAW**, not in their **KEEPING THE LAW**, because they largely did not and could not **KEEP THE LAW!**

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Deuteronomy 27:26– “Cursed be he *that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.*”

The **JEW** had the **LAW**, but the **LAW** did not have him. They **POSSESSED** that which **CONDEMNED** them! It **CONDEMNED** them because of their **DISOBEDIENCE!**

Sadly, some in **CHURCHES** boast of having **CHRIST** and the **GOSPEL**, but **CHRIST** and the **GOSPEL** don’t have them!

Let’s think about our association with **CHRIST** and **HIS CHURCH!** What about us? We boast of being affiliated with a **BIBLE BELIEVING CHURCH!** But do we really **SHOW** that **BELIEF** by our **WALK** or is it just **TALK?**

3. *“...And **Makest Thy BOAST** Of **GOD**...” (Vs 17c)*

They **BOASTED** or we could say they **GLORIED** in **GOD!**

They did not necessarily **GLORY** in the **GREATNESS, GOODNESS, or HOLINESS of GOD**, but rather they **GLORIED** that their **GOD** (i.e. the **GOD of the OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES**) was the **ONE TRUE GOD** while **ALL** nations with other so-called gods were in darkness!

On this account the **JEW** felt himself far elevated above all other people, and despised them!

It was true that they alone had the **TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD**, and that **GOD** had declared **HIMSELF** to be their **GOD**, but this was not a ground for **BOASTING**, but for **GRATITUDE!**

However, this **SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP** they claimed with **GOD** did not by-and-large alter their lives as **GOD** intended!

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The **JEW** continued to **LIVE IN SIN** and brought upon himself the **JUDGMENT** of the very **GOD** in whom he **BOASTED!**

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The question for us is much the same as it was for the **JEW!**
Are we **GLORYING** in **GOD'S GREATNESS**,
GOODNESS, and **HOLINESS** bringing us to **OBEDIENCE**
or are we just **BOASTING** that the **GOD** of our **BIBLE** is the
ONE TRUE GOD?

Do we acknowledge the **ONE TRUE GOD** without allowing
HIM to alter our lives.

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4. ***"And Knowest His (God's) Will." (Vs 18a)***

This is a reference to the **WORD OF GOD!**

How do we know the **WILL OF GOD?**

Through the **WORD OF GOD!**

John 15:3—*"Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you."*

John 17:17—*"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth."*

Psalm 119:9—*"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word."*

Psalm 119:11—*"Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee."*

Psalm 119:105—*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."*

Psalm 119:130—*"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple."*

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They **KNEW** the **WILL OF GOD** through the **WORD OF GOD**, but they were **NOT DOING** the **WILL OF GOD!**
James 1:22—*"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."*

5. ***"...And Approvest The Things That Are More Excellent, Being Instructed Out Of The LAW." (Vs 18b)***

The **TEACHING** and **READING** of the **LAW** each **SABBATH** gave the **JEW** a **HEAD KNOWLEDGE** of the **LAW** which enabled him to **DISCERN** the **THINGS OF GOD** that others might miss.

The good **JEW** knew the minute details of the **LAW** by **BEING INSTRUCTED** out of them. The problem is that they didn't necessarily **LIVE** by that **KNOWLEDGE!**

We can **KNOW RIGHT BIBLE DOCTRINE** and **ACKNOWLEDGE RIGHT BIBLE DOCTRINE** without **LIVING RIGHT BIBLE DOCTRINE!**

Now, we might be able to tell the difference between **JUSTIFICATION**, **SANCTIFICATION**, and **GLORIFICATION**—but the question is...

Have we been JUSTIFIED IN CHRIST JESUS? Is it showing!?

Have we been SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST JESUS?

And is that being proved out in our lives? (i.e. Are we being **SANCTIFIED** by **CHRIST JESUS**, becoming more in **HIS LIKENESS** day by day?)

Do we possess the **SURE HOPE** that we will eventually be **GLORIFIED** one day? (Possessing the **HOLY SPIRIT!**)

Only if we are **TRULY IN CHRIST!**

If we are **JUST RELIGIOUS SINNERS** we are no better than these **JEWES PAUL** addressed!