

Romans 2:17-29, Daily Devotions

☐ Monday - God Disdains Purely External Religion. Romans 2:17

In the first century (as well as today), many Jews believed that because they were descendants of Abraham and because the Law came through the Jews that was their ticket to paradise. But Jesus warned them that these things could not save them: "Do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'" (Mt. 3:9). Likewise, the apostle Paul, who was a "Hebrew of Hebrews" (Phil. 3:4-9), warned his countrymen that salvation does not come because "you bear the name 'Jew' and rely upon the Law and boast in God" (Rom. 2:17). And yet the same can be said for many in the Christian church today. How many who have grown up in a Christian family, owned a Bible, and went to church are in hell? Friend, these external things are of great advantage, but they cannot save you! God disdains purely external religion. Is your heart wedded to Christ?

Read Isaiah 1:11-18; 29:13

☐ Tuesday - Two Forms of Religious Hypocrisy. Romans 2:21-23

Religious hypocrisy comes in many forms. In Romans, Paul identifies two: [1] hearing without doing (Rom. 2:13; James. 1:22; 2 Tim. 3:7); and [1] preaching without practicing (Rom. 2:21-23; Mt. 23:1-3). And so he writes, "You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?" Christian, learn to preach the Gospel first and foremost to yourself.

Read Matthew 6:1-6

☐ Wednesday - The Effect of Religious Hypocrisy. Romans 2:24

What response does religious hypocrisy stir up in the world? Paul explains, "For the name of God is blasphemed among [unbelievers] because of you" (Rom. 2:24). O what reproach we bring upon ourselves, Christianity, the church, and, yes, even Christ, when God's own people play the hypocrite. Instead, "prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" (Phil. 2:15).

Read 2 Peter 2:2; Matthew 5:16

☐ Thursday - The Secret Part of Christianity. Romans 2:25-29

Man-made religion is all for show (Mt. 23:27-28). It is a veneer, a facade, an empty shell (2 Tim. 3:5). It demands attention: Look at me! See how religious I am! (Mt. 6:5). It is like the one-tenth of the iceberg above the water, but without any foundation hidden beneath. It may even call itself "Christian," yet even a good label cannot hide dead religion. But there is a secret, hidden, inward part to true Christianity. The Christian life is not only inward (Mt. 5:16; 1 John 3:18), but the inward part is the nine-tenths of the iceberg hidden beneath the surface that nobody sees except for God. It prays mostly privately (Mt. 6:5-6), and serves discreetly, "not by way of eye service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph. 6:6-7).

Read 2 Corinthians 13:5

☐ Friday - Father Abraham Has Many Sons. Romans 2:28-29

The Word of God declares, "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 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" (Rom. 2:28-29). "Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7). "And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise" (Gal. 3:29). Are you a son of Abraham?

Read Philippians 3:3

☐ Saturday - Praise From Men or Praise from God. Romans 2:29

Peer pressure and the need for the approval of other people has caused each of us to do things of which we were later ashamed. But never did a Christian commit an act he would later regret because he was seeking the approval of God (Rom. 2:29). "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God" (2 Tim. 2:15). Read Galatians 1:10