

**LESSON - ROMANS 2:17-3:18** (NIV based)

THEME - Religious People And All Mankind Are Guilty Before God

OBJECTIVE - to search for the qualities and make personal applications

Q: Is being religious good enough for a person to get into heaven?

v.17 rely on the law; brag about their relationship to God

v.18 know God's will; instructed by the law

v.19 convinced they are enlightened

v.20 their source of knowledge & truth is embodied in the Law

v.23 break the Law themselves - hypocrites

v.25-27 rely on outward ritual - circumcision

Q: How can we determine if we ourselves and/or other religious people have what it takes to be acceptable to God?

v.29 KEY VERSE: inward circumcision of the heart by the Holy Spirit - not the Law

Q: Is it possible for anyone to have enough intrinsic goodness to be acceptable to God based solely on that goodness?

POINT: all of mankind is guilty before God - this includes the wicked, heathen, good people, and religious people

EVIDENCE:

v.3:9 all are under sin

v.3:10 there is no one righteous - not even 1

RIGHTEOUSNESS = acting in accord with or conforming to a moral standard, especially the standard of God's own righteousness

v.3:11 no one truly seeks God - on their own

v.3:12 all have turned away - together have become worthless = no intrinsic value of our own righteousness or goodness

Q: Can anyone come to God by their own efforts? A: v.3:12, 11 cannot get to God without God's help; v. 2:29 from God

Q: How does a person get to God if they cannot initiate and achieve it on their own? A: John 6:44-45, 65 Father draws people to the Son; in evangelism God uses us as a mouthpiece to draw people to the Son

BIG IDEA: There is no room for personal pride or merit in our salvation. God initiated or reached out to us. We did not reach out to Him - even though we think we did. We had all turned away. We were all condemned in our sins before God - no matter if we were wicked, morally good, or religious. God in His grace has performed circumcision on our hearts. Shouldn't that instill in each one of us a strong sense of thankfulness?

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