



ROMANS series study guide

Speaker: Pastor Henry Schorr

Date: November 9 / 10, 2019

Sermon Title: The Danger of Trusting in Religion

PURSUE RELATIONSHIP: Opportunities to connect and pray as a group

1. How often do you judge other drivers and excuse your own driving habits?
2. What traditions or symbols do you find meaningful in Christianity? Why?

PURSUE GOD: Time that is devoted to the Word of God

Read Romans 2:17-24

3. What traps does Paul warn us to avoid and what is the consequence of falling into these traps?

Read Romans 2:25-29

4. What has been your journey with religious tradition/symbols and a living faith? For example, family Christian heritage, baptism, membership, communion, church attendance on Sundays, etc.

PURSUE MISSION: Seek to be the community of God's people in your community

5. What traditions/symbols in your life are important to you? Are you viewing them through the lens of law or grace?

Read Romans 3:2

6. How would you describe the Christian's responsibility in being entrusted with His Word?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Is there an aspect of your faith that has become a ritual?
What could you change to make it more a matter of the heart?

This week's writers: Gene and Karen Gibbs, Edi Dygert, Deb Matiko, Jared Harrison and Jorel Quemuel

THE WORD (NIV)

Romans 2:17-29

¹⁷ Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and boast in God; ¹⁸ if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; ¹⁹ if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, ²⁰ an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— ²¹ you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? ²² You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³ You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? ²⁴ As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

²⁵ Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. ²⁶ So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? ²⁷ The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker.

²⁸ A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. ²⁹ No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God.

Romans 3:2

Much in every way! First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.



ROMANS series study summary

The Danger of Trusting in Religion

Romans 2:17-29

Pastor Henry Schorr

King David sinned greatly then minimized and covered up his sin. Still he was called a man after God's own heart (1 Sam 13:14). How is that? He owned his sin and confessed it to God. Paul in Romans 1 highlighted people who suppress and even replace the truth of God so they may do as they wish. Others, respectable people and the religious (Romans 2), judge these self-centered idol-worshippers. Paul (like Nathan the prophet did to David) says they are just as needful of the Savior as the Romans 1 crowd. Everyone holds the danger of trusting in the wrong things – even religion. Paul illustrates the danger of religion by using the Jewish faith (Romans 2:17-29).

1. Don't put your trust in your religious tradition (vs 17). Many Jews were attributing their Jewishness – having been chosen by God – as their status before God. They had lost sight of God's call on their lives as a people (e.g. Jonah) to be a light to the world and the channel through which the people of the world would come to know Him (Gen 12:3). In short, being a Jew was their passport to heaven. Christians too can be guilty of this by appealing to our church membership or family background as our passport to heaven.
2. Don't put your trust in your religious knowledge (vs 17). Many Jews were proud of their knowledge of Scripture (the Old Testament), thinking that if they knew it and taught it, they were in good standing with God. Paul remarked that it was not enough to simply be the chosen people of God and have His law (Isaiah 29:13). Paul exhorts us to examine our own lives and ensure we are not doing the same thing. How has having Christ in my life, and the Scriptures that I read, changed my heart and my life – or do I just know a lot of Biblical and theological facts (vs 23-24) without backing them up by living them out? Paul's concern was that we have a living faith in Christ (Hebrews 4:12) over a past prayer spoken, or spiritual accomplishments. Our focus should be Christ – surrendering to and following Him daily.
3. Don't put your trust in religious rituals or symbols. Circumcision was the symbol that Jews were God's people (vs 25-28). If one was circumcised it was deemed as one's passport to heaven. Paul says that such symbols mean nothing if one is not living out one's faith. For Abraham, circumcision showed what God had already done in him rather than what he might do. Today people put similar trust in baptism, communion or membership. Symbols are important and illustrate important truths, but they do not impart salvation or righteousness. Nothing external makes you a true believer. Going through the motions will not get you to heaven. We are saved because we trust in Jesus Christ. No one is more worthy to give our lives to. What counts is what is happening in your heart – following Jesus because we want to and get to.