

ROMANS: CHARTER OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH
"Part V: The Condemnation And Salvation Of Scripture-based Men"
(Romans 2:17-3:26)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Perhaps one of the most intriguing statements made by Jesus Christ regarding **who** would **NOT** enter heaven was made in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 7 verses 22-23 as follows:

"Many will say to me in that [the judgment] day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

In other words, people who would KNOW their BIBLES well enough to call Jesus "Lord, Lord", who had PROPHESED and exorcised demons and done MIRACLES that only those who would KNOW about Jesus as revealed in the BIBLE would not make it to heaven.

THAT being so, we have to conclude that it is possible for someone who has attended NEPAUG Church for decades, and who has an excellent KNOWLEDGE of the Bible, and has SERVED in its ministries with a STERLING record to end up in the end spending eternity in HELL!

That being so, HOW can we, or ANYONE ever make it to HEAVEN?

(We turn to the sermon's "Need" section . . .)

Need: "How can JESUS say NOT all who are devoted to His cause will enter heaven? How can SCRIPTURE-BASED people be lost?!"

- I. **Following his discussion on the condemnation and salvation of PAGANS and MORAL men, Paul spoke of the CONDEMNATION of SCRIPTURE-BASED people, Romans 2:17-29:**
 - A. In Paul's era, his Hebrew countrymen adhered to the Scriptures as their basis for eternal hope like many in **Christendom do TODAY:**
 1. Paul noted the Hebrews used the Mosaic Law as God's truth, 2:17.
 2. They felt the Law's revelation of their unique privileges as a chosen people before God made them right with God, Rom. 2:17b.
 3. They believed they knew God's will and approved of what was superior to all others since they had Scripture knowledge, 2:18-20.
 4. Many in Christendom feel the same about their position before God due to their similar knowledge and devotion to Scripture.
 - B. Yet, **regardless** of his religious trappings, Paul showed the Hebrew stood as condemned before God as the pagan or moralist, 2:21-3:20:
 1. Paul asserted his Scripture-based Hebrew countrymen really taught of their own sins if they fully admitted as much, Romans 2:21.
 2. To illustrate his point, he noted specific **rebellions** against God's righteousness and their **suppressions** by his Hebrew countrymen:
 - a. First, while the Hebrew fondly held to the Ten Commandments, he typically violated at least three of its commands (as follows): (a) Paul complained the Hebrews typically stole, committed adultery and idolatry, 2:21b-22b, all violations of the **BASIC** Ten Commandments, cf. Ex. 20:15, 14 & 4-6! (b) They did so by "robbing [Gentile] temples", the correct translation of Romans 2:22c in the NIV! (**UBS Grk. N.T.**, p. 534) (c) We explain this: Gentiles would deposit monetary sums in a pagan temple to be guarded by the temple's god while on a journey. They felt no one would invoke that god's wrath by touching the money. Yet, the Hebrews, knowing there was no true God but their own, thought little of taking this money! (d) However, in taking what was another's, they **stole**. (e) In lusting after what belonged to others, they were both covetous and worldly, and hence spiritually adulterous, cf. Col. 3:5d with James 4:4.
 - b. Also, in taking what was another's property, God's reputation was hurt before Gentiles: they viewed their Jewish offenders and thus their **God** as **corrupt**, Romans 2:23. That made the Hebrews fuel deep anti-God **attitudes** among Gentiles, 2:24.

3. Paul anticipated **objections** to his charges he had often faced in his ministry from **Hebrew countrymen**, objections showing their **own suppression** of the truth of their guilt. He revealed as much in his Rom. 3:1-20 argumentation (Bib. Know. Com., N. T., p. 448-449):
 - a. The Hebrews **often** reacted to being called sinners by Paul by **seeking** to **undermine** Paul to **cloak** their **guilt**: **one** reaction was to imply Paul taught there was no advantage to being a Jew since he was as condemned as the Gentile, 3:1; Paul responded, saying the Jew was advantaged in being given God's Word, 3:2.
 - b. **Another typical guilt-hiding** Hebrew reaction to Paul's charges was their saying Paul errantly implied God's program was doomed because some Jews sinned, ruining an omnipotent God's agenda, 3:3; Paul responded that God was true to Himself in spite of the Hebrew man's sin, Romans 3:4.
 - c. A **third typical** Hebrew **guilt-hiding** reaction to Paul's charge was the claim Paul taught the Jews' "sins" only upheld God's righteousness, thereby making God unjust to turn around and punish the Jew for sin, 3:5; Paul responded that God had to judge the Jew if He would judge the godless Gentile that every **Jew** felt was **deserving** damnation for sin, 3:6, 7-8.
 - d. **Fourth**, to offset the Hebrew view that Hebrews were better than Gentiles, making Gentiles deserve hell unlike Hebrews, Paul cited the very **Scriptures** the **Hebrews** held as **sacred** to show the Gentile **and Hebrew alike** were **condemned**, 3:9-20.
 - e. In summary, as the Hebrews rebelled against God and tried to **suppress** its **significance** in slanderously charging **Paul** with **error**, they were as ripe for wrath as the pagans, 1:18-22a; 3:8!
- II. **Yet, God's offer of salvation from sin by faith in Christ's death on the cross extends to ALL, even the SCRIPTURE-BASED, 3:21-26.**

Application: (1) *Even if we have devoutly used the BIBLE all of our lives, if we do not place a personal faith IN Christ and His death on the cross to handle our sin, we will end up in Hell.* (2) *If we have not exercised that faith in Christ as yet, it is our hope at Nepaug Church that you will do so, and do so TODAY!*

Lesson: *Even ALL DEVOUTLY SCRIPTURE-BASED men stand in need of faith in Christ to be released from God's condemnation to hell. This is because even ALL DEVOUTLY SCRIPTURE-BASED men are guilty of rebellion against God and of further suppression of the truth!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . .)

This past week, I received two different copies of the same petition in the mail from two different sources in Evangelical circles in Christendom. It is certainly not the first time I have received it, either!

The petition has been put out by parties that are very dedicated to the preservation of the Bible's message over the radio. They urge us Christians to write to the Federal Communication Commission in Washington, D. C. to stop an alleged petition NO 2493 that would end the "reading of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior on the airwaves of America." The petition warns that atheist, Madeline Murray O'Hare's group is behind this alleged push to remove Christian truths from the airwaves of America.

The problem with the petition is that its credibility is seriously suspect. Just last month, I heard Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family declare on radio station WIHS that not only has Madeline Murray O'Hare been dead for several years, but that no such petition exists. In fact, Dr. Dobson reports that the FCC has been so swamped with mail from Christians on this matter to that the FCC's operations are being seriously hampered all to the American taxpayer's expense!

Well, **somebody in Christendom is ERRING** in a **big** way! I really doubt that the error is with Dr. Dobson as he **must** keep abreast of what is going on at the FCC as his ministry in part **depends** on his liberty to speak freely by radio! The error undoubtedly rests with Christians who are slandering without checking their sources!

This just shows the **ERROR** and **SIN** that plagues even those who are committed to **SCRIPTURE**.

Yes, ALL men need salvation -- especially Scripture-based people in even OUR Evangelical circles!