

## **GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR MAN FROM START TO FINISH**

### **Part II: Man's Need For God's Righteousness, Romans 1:18-3:20**

#### **C. The Condemnation Of Unbelieving Jewish Man, Romans 2:17-3:9**

##### **1. Unbelieving Jewish Man's Condemnation Under The Law (Romans 2:17-28)**

###### **I. Introduction**

- A. Having clarified **why** man *needs* God's righteousness, starting with pagan man's need for it in Romans 1:18-23, Paul continued by explaining pagan man's condemnation in Romans 1:24-32.
- B. Yet, **Jewish** men who have the Old Testament that **we** also have in **our Bibles ALSO** stand **CONDEMNED** before God *for violating God's Law* according to Romans 2:17-28, so we view that passage for insight:

###### **II. Unbelieving Jewish Man's Condemnation Under The Law, Romans 2:17-28.**

- A. Having established the condemnation of pagan man in Romans 1:18-32 and the condemnation of moral man in Romans 2:1-16, Paul began to address the Jewish man's status before God in Romans 2:17.
- B. His theme in Romans 2:17-28 is that even the Jewish man who had so much of God's Word and ordinances stood condemned because of his unbelief in God (as follows):
  1. Paul named 8 truths of the Jew that **to him** set him above pagan and moral man before God, v. 17-21a:
    - a. The Jew relied on the Mosaic Law for his spiritual vitality, Romans 2:17a,b.
    - b. The Jew bragged about his covenant tie with God, Romans 2:17c; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 447.
    - c. The Jew then knew of God's will and plan for the ages, Romans 2:18a; *Ibid.*
    - d. The Jew had tested and approved what was superior as to God's standards, Romans 2:18b; *Ibid.*
    - e. The Jew was instructed by the Law, having been taught it since his youth, Romans 2:18c; *Ibid.*
    - f. The Jew thus believed that in relation to the Gentile, he was a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish and a teacher of spiritual infants, Romans 2:19-20a; *Ibid.*
    - g. The Jew believed he had in the Law the "embodiment of knowledge and truth," Rom. 2:20b; *Ibid.*
    - h. The Jew believed he was the one who was the teacher of others, Romans 2:21a; *Ibid.*
  2. However, Paul addressed the Jew who had these concepts of superiority in his mind in relation to pagan and moral man on how he himself violates the Law with his own personal acts of sin, Romans 2:21b-24:
    - a. Paul began his critique of the Jew by asking, "Do you not teach yourself?" (Romans 2:21b; *Ibid.*)
    - b. He then added four questions that implicate the Jew himself of violating the very teachings of the Law that he teaches: (1) Paul asked if the Jew who taught a man should not steal if he himself did not steal, v. 21c. (2) He asked if the Jew who taught one should not commit adultery if he himself did not commit adultery, v. 22a. (3) Paul asked if the Jew who taught one should abhor idols if he robbed temples, v. 22b NIV. [When Gentiles left money in pagan temples expecting the temple gods to protect it until they returned to retrieve it, Jews would steal the deposited money, knowing the Gentile gods were false and hence harmless to them, creating anger in the Gentiles. This sin indicates the idolatry of covetousness in the Jew, cf. Col. 3:5d.] (4) Paul asked the Jew if in bragging about the Law he himself dishonored it by breaking it, and in doing so especially in regard to robbing Gentile temples, he caused God's name to be blasphemed among the Gentiles, Romans 2:23-24.
  3. Since the Jew rested in the ritual of circumcision, Paul addressed that rite, noting that if the Jew broke the Law, he had become as one who was uncircumcised, for a Jew is a true Jew based not on what occurs externally with physical circumcision, but what occurs in his heart unto the praise of God, Rom. 2:25-28.

***Lesson:*** Paul explained that the Jew who viewed himself as spiritually superior to pagan man and moral man of the Gentile world because of his possession and use of the Old Testament Scriptures nevertheless stood just as condemned by God as was pagan and moral man, for he violated the very dictates of God's Law himself!

***Application:*** (1) Since the Jew who has the Law of God in his Old Testament Scriptures stands condemned before God for violating that Law by his acts of sin, every Jew in himself stands condemned by God. (2) By application then, every person in every religious group that holds to Scripture at least in name stands equally condemned before God in himself as a violator of that Word of God. The Law of God does not justify, it only exposes sinful man's sin regardless who he is, Romans 3:19-20. (3) Thus, may we seek to evangelize every person in every religious group in the world, regardless if they adhere to some biblical rules or ethics, for all men, even the very religious, are lost without Christ's salvation! (4) If WE have not done so, may WE believe in Christ to be saved!