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Outward Religion

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Romans 2:17-29 ¹⁷Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and boast in God; ¹⁸if you know His will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; ¹⁹if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those in darkness, ²⁰an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— ²¹you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? ²²You who forbid adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? ²⁴As it is written: “God’s name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” ²⁵Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. ²⁶If a man who is not circumcised keeps the requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? ²⁷The one who is physically uncircumcised yet keeps the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker. ²⁸A man is not a Jew because he is one outwardly, nor is circumcision only outward and physical. ²⁹No, a man is a Jew because he is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man’s praise does not come from men, but from God. (BSB)

I. Here are the details of this passage.

- A.** Paul changes the **direction** from mankind in general and focuses on the Jewish people. V. 17-20
- B.** Paul then **chastises** them for not living by the standards established by the law. V. 21
 - 1. They need to **practice** what they preach. V. 21, 23
 - 2. They need to **respect** private property. V. 21
 - 3. They need to **honor** their marriage vows. V. 22
 - 4. They need to not have **idols** themselves, especially money. V. 22
- C.** Paul accuses them of being **reasons** why people hate God. V. 23-24
- D.** Paul makes the case that the Jews who do not keep the law **100%** are no better than those who don’t have the law at all. V. 25-29

II. What can we learn from this?

- A. We can apply **all** of this to Christians because of our **relationship** to God through the New Covenant.
- B. We are better off when we **give** others grace and mercy because we do not measure up to God's **expectations** of His children.
- C. I need to make it a **goal** that I am no one's reason why they don't believe in Christ.
- D. We must work on our **Great Disconnect**.