

THE DARK SIDE OF BEING SUPER-RELIGIOUS

Romans 2:17–29

Paul didn't beat around the bush. When he sat down to write the Romans a letter about the Gospel, he decided to take the gloves off, to call a spade a spade, and to say it straight. He refused to waste time getting to the core of our problem: it's SIN. Of course, he didn't stop there, since the Gospel (which means "good news") provides incredible hope. But in order to get to the good part, it's necessary that everybody understands, accepts, and identifies with the bad part: we are sinners, totally and completely separated from inner goodness. Whether we're out-and-out vile and shameless (as described in Romans 1:18–32) or we are pious and self-righteous, looking down at those who live such openly godless lives (as described in Romans 2:1–16), we're still sinners—still as bad off as we can be before a righteous, holy God. But Paul isn't through! Next on his list is the super-religious Jew, who believes his/her traditions, fleshly works, and privileged position before God put him/her on a higher plane than all others on the planet. "Not so," says Paul in the last 13 verses of Romans 2. Even the super-religious are sinners!

I. Understanding What Being "Religious" Means

Introduction

- Definition
- Explanation

II. Analyzing the "Religious Jew"

Exposition

- Traditional Claims of the Jew
- Actual Facts About the Jew
- Practical Truth for the Jew

III. Comparing "Religion" to a "Relationship with Christ"

Application

- In what you do _____
- In why you do _____
- In how you respond _____