



A Worship Discussion Guide for Individuals, Groups & Families

For the week of February 5, 2023

Read the Bible passage aloud in your group meeting. This is a worship discussion guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for your meeting, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Warm Up

- Consider a time you were morally convinced something was right, yet you broke that commitment. It might be something like telling the truth, being consistent, staying faithful, or holding your tongue. **Why** did you break your commitment if you were convinced it was right?

Romans 2:17-29

Religious People Need the Gospel

Up to this point in chapter two, Paul has been addressing the religious Jew, who thought: “I am not like the pagans! I am moral and religious, so I am surely not under God’s judgment.” ([Romans 2:3](#))

¹⁷ But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God ¹⁸and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; ¹⁹and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, ²⁰an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— ²¹you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? ²²You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. ²⁴For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

- List several things Paul says the Jews of his day were proud of. How would you summarize their religion?
- Those who call themselves Christians can develop a similar religious pride. How do Paul’s words serve a warning to you today?
- Jews hated idols and would never take one for themselves. Why would he charge them with “robbing temples”? (22)
- What does Paul mean by “rely” and “boast”? How can it be wrong to “boast” about your relationship to God? (17)

²⁵ For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. ²⁶ So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? ²⁷ Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. ²⁸ For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. ²⁹ But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.

- In this section, Paul names a second religious commitment on which the Jews relied. What was it?
- What was the failure, or limited value, of this religious practice?
- These words still serve as an admonition to the church today. How might you assess if someone’s religion is empty?
- Paul points out we can’t be moral enough. The moralist can’t fulfill the very Law he honors. And so he blasphemes the name of God (17-24). Paul points out we can’t be religious enough. Religion can’t change the heart (25-29). What can you do about you Law-breaking, unchanged heart?
- Pray together in light of this week’s passage.

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Questions? Contact Pastor Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org