

"It is possible to be a Christian without being religious."

"It is possible to be religious without being a Christian."

(Fritz Ridenour)

Advantages the Jews held over the Gentiles:

1. The 1st advantage of the Jew is their name. (v.17a)

The name "Jew" means praise to "Yahweh".

Note: When people are steeped in religion they talk about their names and churches.

When people are steeped in Christianity they talk about Jesus.

2. The 2nd advantage of the Jew is their book. (v. 17b-18)

"...rely upon the Law and boast in God, and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed in the Law." (v. 17a-18)

3. The 3rd advantage of the Jew is their works. (v. 19, 20)

Two devastating blows to the Jew:

1. Preaching without practice. (v. 21-24)

Note the 5 questions Paul asks:

#1: "You, therefore who teach another do you teach yourself?" (v.21)

#2: "You who preach that one shall not steal do you steal?" (v.21)

#3: "You say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?" (v.22a)

#4: "You abhor idols do you rob temples?" (v. 22b)

#5: "You boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God?" (v.23)

Question: What's the point of the questions?

Answer: The point is that religious people are good at telling other people what to do. Unfortunately, they often do the very thing they condemn in others.

Question: What do you call people who say one thing and do another?

Answer: Hypocrites

2. Ritual with reality (v.25-27)

Two points to answer the Jews' wrong understanding of circumcision:

1. Circumcision is of value if you practice the Law.

2. It is better to be uncircumcised and truly obey God than to be circumcised and break God's Law.

Why is Paul's teaching relevant? Paul is saying that religious ritual is worthless unless something has already happened in the heart.

In Romans 2:28, 29 Paul explains the matter of what makes a person acceptable to God both negatively and positively:

1. Negative: Being acceptable to God is not an outward thing.

2. Positive: Being acceptable to God is an inward thing.