

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Romans

A New Life

Lesson #13: Misguided Zeal

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever known a devout non-Christian (an Orthodox Jew for example)? How did you respond to his or her religious devotion?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Note: We come now to the second part of Paul's discussion on the relationship of the Jews to the gospel of justification by faith. Here Paul showed that the Jews themselves were responsible for their rejection. They thought they could gain a right standing with God on the basis of personal performance. But they should have known that nothing they could possibly do would ever merit acceptance by God.¹

Read Romans 9:30 – 10:21

1. Why was Israel rejected? Didn't it have the law? 30-32
2. Why was Jesus Christ more of a stumbling stone to the Jews than to the Gentiles? **1 Pet 2:8** Why is He a stumbling stone to people today? **1 Cor 1:23**
3. Many people believe religious zeal and sincerity are all a person needs to be saved. After reading vv. 1-4, why is this not so? **2 Tim 3:7; Matt 22:29**
4. What is the difference between righteousness of the law vs. righteousness of faith? Where does a person go to find the true Word of God? **Deut 30: 11-14; Jn 1:14**
5. Why do you think it is important to publicly confess the belief in one's heart? vv. 9-13 **1 Cor 12:3**

Note: This affirmation (Jesus is Lord), the earliest Christian confession of faith, was probably used at baptisms. In Biblical terms, the heart is not just the seat of emotions and affections, but also the intellect and will.

6. Why is important for Christians to believe that Jesus came back from the dead? **1 Cor 15:4; Acts 3:15**
7. Has your belief in Christ changed the way you publicly express your faith? If so, how?
8. If Israel did not lack the opportunity to hear or have the ability to understand, why didn't she believe? 16-21 How does this compare to the reasons people have today?

APPLICATION

Paul expressed his love for his fellow Jews because he understood where they were coming from. With whom can you identify? How can you share the Gospel with them?

Although law points us in the right direction, it provides no power to achieve its demands. It was never meant as a way to merit God's favor. Its role was to reflect the character of God in terms of ethical goals. The Jewish legalists had perverted the divine intention of the law and made it into a way to gain God's favor based on personal merit.²

The gospel puts a high premium on God's truth. The gospel is the life-changing, sin-cleansing, salvation-giving, soul-transforming, heaven-opening truth that comes only through trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.³

¹ ² Mounce, R. H. (1995). *Romans* (Vol. 27, p. 205, 208). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

³ MacArthur, J. (1996). *Romans*. Chicago: Moody Press.