

Romans 2B

Cont. Trading God's Truth for Lie #3 (Following Laws/Rules)

Scripture: Romans 2:17-29

Big Idea: God doesn't just see what's on the outside- He looks at our hearts.

Call to Action: Ask yourself? Do I see the Bible as a bunch of rules or laws?

Family Action: What is one way this week I can show my children that I belong to God- not just by what I say, **but by how I live?**

Exposure to Exposition & Exploring the Scriptures: (15-20 mins)

- Bible Drills (Memorization of OT & NT Book order)
- Guide the children to Romans 2:17-29 in the Bible. (Help them as needed, NT vs OT)
- Say: We are going to continue through Paul's letter to the people of Rome.
- We will learn that the gospel is God's power to save everyone who believes, and we should never be ashamed of Jesus.
- Read aloud. (Ask kids to start their pointer fingers on v17 and follow along)

Review: vv.1-15 Paul's Introduction of the letter

vv. 16-17 How we are made right with God (main point of letter)

vv. 18-32 How you're NOT made right; Lie #1 Worship of the Creation (Idolatry/ Paganism).

vv. 2:1-16 Lie #2 Being "good" doesn't make us right with God (vv.1-11) & beginning of Lie #3 Moralism/ Laws (vv.12-16)

vv. 2:17-29 Continuing Lie #3 Following Laws/Rules doesn't make us right with God. (Laws/ Nomianism)

Opening Question

"Have you ever thought, 'I know all the rules, so I'm doing great,' but then realized your heart wasn't right? Paul says having the rules isn't enough- God cares about our hearts."

We cannot reach heaven by following "Laws or Rules," so Paul addresses this issue because many people believe that's how you get to Heaven. Can we keep all the laws/rules? (Think about the laws in your country or at your school.)

Romans 2:17-29 NLT - Trading God's Truth for Lie #3 (Laws/Rules)

The Jews and the Law

17 You who call yourselves Jews are relying on God's law, and you boast about your special relationship with him. 18 You know what he wants; you know what is right because you have been taught his law. 19 You are convinced that you are a guide for the blind and a light for people who are lost in darkness. 20 You think you can instruct the ignorant and teach children the ways of God. For you are certain that God's law gives you complete knowledge and truth.

21 Well then, if you teach others, why don't you teach yourself? You tell others not to steal, but do you steal?

22 You say it is wrong to commit adultery, but do you commit adultery? You condemn idolatry, but do you use items stolen from pagan temples? 23 You are so proud of knowing the law, but you dishonor God by breaking it. 24 No wonder the Scriptures say, "The Gentiles blaspheme the name of God because of you."

25 The Jewish ceremony of circumcision has value only if you obey God's law. But if you don't obey God's law, you are no better off than an uncircumcised Gentile. 26 And if the Gentiles obey God's law, won't God declare them to be his own people? 27 In fact, uncircumcised Gentiles who keep God's law will condemn you Jews who are circumcised and possess God's law but don't obey it.

28 For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision. 29 No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people.

Romans 2:17-20 You who call yourselves Jews are relying on God's law, and you boast about your special relationship with him. 18 You know what he wants; you know what is right because you have been taught his law. 19 You are convinced that you are a guide for the blind and a light for people who are lost in darkness. 20 You think you can instruct the ignorant and teach children the ways of God. For you are certain that God's law gives you complete knowledge and truth.

V17-20 Knowing the Law Isn't Enough

- The Jews had God's Law and thought it made them special. v17
- They believed this made them teachers and guides for others. vv18-19
- By knowing the Law or rules doesn't mean you're living by them. v20

Kid Point: God wants us to follow Him from the heart, not just know the rules.

Romans 2:21-24 Well then, if you teach others, why don't you teach yourself? You tell others not to steal, but do you steal? 22 You say it is wrong to commit adultery, but do you commit adultery? You condemn idolatry, but do you use items stolen from pagan temples? 23 You are so proud of knowing the law, but you dishonor God by breaking it. 24 No wonder the Scriptures say, "The Gentiles blaspheme the name of God because of you."

V21-24 Hypocrisy Dishonors God

- Paul points out that some Jews taught others but didn't obey themselves. vv21-23
- Saying one thing and doing another is hypocrisy.
- Hypocrisy makes people think poorly of God. v24

Example of hypocrisy: If a teacher says, "Always tell the truth," but then they tell a lie, that's hypocrisy.

Or if a kid says, "Sharing is important," but never shares their toys, that's hypocrisy too.

Kid Point: I need to live what I say I believe.

Key Theological Term: *blasphemed*- to speak against God or slander towards God

Romans 2:25-27 The Jewish ceremony of circumcision has value only if you obey God's law. But if you don't obey God's law, you are no better off than an uncircumcised Gentile. 26 And if the Gentiles obey God's law, won't God declare them to be his own people? 27 In fact, uncircumcised Gentiles who keep God's law will condemn you Jews who are circumcised and possess God's law but don't obey it.

V25-27 Outward Signs Don't Save Us

- The Jews had circumcision as a special sign of belonging to God. v25a
- But Paul says the sign means nothing if you disobey God's Law. v25b
- Even someone without the sign but who obeys God is honoring Him more. vv26-27

Kid Point: What's on the outside doesn't save me- God looks at my heart.

Romans 2:28-29 For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision. 29 No, a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people.

V28-29 True Faith Is in the Heart

- Being a real follower of God isn't about outward appearances. (Jews, Catholics & Mormons, etc.) v28
- God's Spirit must change our hearts, not just our outside. v29a
- Real praise comes from God, not people. v29b

Kid Point: Only God can change my heart to follow Him.

Observation Questions (What did it say?)

1. What did Paul say the Jewish people were proud of having? (*The Law of God v.17-18*)
2. What did Paul ask them about teaching others but not keeping the law themselves? (*Do you dishonor God by breaking the law v.21-22*)
3. What did Paul say about what really makes someone a Jew? (*A true "Jew" is one who has a heart change, by the work of the Spirit v.28-29*)

Understanding Questions (What does it mean?)

1. Why is it a problem to boast about God's law but not actually obey it? (*You dishonor God*)
2. What does Paul mean when he says "circumcision of the heart"? (*A new heart. The old heart is cut off and a new heart that loves God is given. This takes time and the word of God to change us.*)
3. Why does God care more about our hearts than the rules we try to follow on the outside? (*We can't "make" ourselves more like Jesus by doing rules or law (that's work). A heart shift is triggered by a love for God, which then produces a Jesus-like life.*)

Application Questions (What should I do?)

1. Am I tempted to act "good" on the outside but hide sin on the inside?
2. How can I let God change my heart instead of just trying harder to keep rules?
3. What is one way this week I can show that I belong to God- not just by what I say, but by how I live?

Activity #1: Heart Change

Supplies Needed:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Markers

Directions:

- Give each child a heart-shaped paper.
- On one side write "Outside," on the other "Inside."
- Have them list or draw ways God changes the inside (love, honesty, kindness).
- On the outside, have them list or draw practical ways they can show God's love (write a thank you card for a teacher, help cook dinner, mow a neighbor's lawn)

Activity #2 : Memory Verse: (Come up with moves)

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile.

Activity #3: For Older Youth Students, see separate printable handout.

Remind them: What is the Gospel?

Jesus' perfect life paid for the sins of all who believe. Jesus died on the cross as the punishment for sin. But Jesus did not stay dead, three days later He rose to life (resurrection) defeating the power of death. Believe, and you will be saved!

- We are all sinful. We all deserve the consequence of sin- death.
- Jesus is what saves us from the sin we all have in our bodies. And one day, he'll even give us a new body.

Supporting Truths Kids Can Grasp:

- Knowing God's rules is not enough—our hearts must obey Him.
- Hypocrisy dishonors God.
- Labels and outward signs can't save us.
- True followers are changed by the Holy Spirit on the inside.