

Introduction

About thirty-four years ago Karen and I were going through some evangelism training. In one of the sessions the pastor stated two problems that kept people from becoming Christians. The first problem is that they had never heard the gospel. Paul discusses this in Romans 10 when he said, “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?” Jesus gave a mandate to all of us to go preach the gospel so that people can hear the good news about Jesus.

(Rom 10:14) “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?”

The pastor went on to say that the second reason that unbelievers do not become Christians is that they have met those that call themselves Christians. In our text today Paul addresses this second reason that the pastor gave. Paul wrote about those that preached, but were guilty of doing the things that they were preaching about. Because of their lifestyles, “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles.”

(Rom 2:21b-24) “...You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? {22} You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? {23} You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? {24} For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.”

The first part of Paul’s gospel presentation establishes that all have sinned and are without excuse. In Romans 1 God revealed Himself and His invisible attributes to everyone through creation. He also revealed His wrath. Even though God revealed all of this, man chose to worship the creature rather than the Creator. Even the most vile and depraved sinner was without excuse. In Romans 2, Paul addressed the religious people who judged others, yet were guilty of the same sins. We looked at how God was going to judge. He judges righteously. He judges by our deeds. He judges without partiality; both Jew and Gentile are without excuse. He judges those with the Law according to the Law and those without the Law according to the internal law, their consciences. God judges the secrets of our heart, and God has given all judgment to Jesus, and all judgment will go through Him.

In our text today, Paul continues to address the moral, self-righteous, religious hypocrites. These people thought that they were okay and had a free pass. Paul challenges them with the intent to dispel their false security. Karen and I also went through Evangelism Explosion (EE) training while we were living in Orlando. There are a couple of EE questions that were used to determine if someone believed and if so, what were they trusting in. The first question to ask someone, “If you died tonight, do you know for sure that you will go to heaven?” The second question was, “If you died tonight and were standing at the gates of heaven, and the Lord said to you, ‘Why should I let you in?’, what would you say?” In our text today, Paul is addressing the Jews who believed they were going to heaven, and Paul is responding to their answer of the second question. The Jews trusted in their heritage, the fact that they were Jews, descendants of Abraham. Second, they trusted in the Law. Third, they trusted in their circumcision. They believed that no circumcised Jew would go to hell. Paul exposes the false security the Jews had because of these three beliefs. We will look at these three things that gave them a false security, and then some applications for our own lives.

False Security (Rom 2:17-29)

1. Relying on Heritage
2. Relying on the Law
3. Relying on Circumcision

(Rom 2:17-29) “But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Law and boast in God, {18} and know *His* will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, {19} and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, {20} a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, {21} you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? {22} You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? {23} You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? {24} For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written. {25} For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. {26} So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? {27} And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter *of the Law* and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law? {28} For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. {29} But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.”

1. Relying on Heritage

Paul begins with “but if you bear the name ‘Jew’ and rely upon the Law and boast in God, and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, and are confident...” These are people who are confident that they are saved. These are people that have a false security. They are relying upon things that are not going to gain them entrance into the kingdom of God. The first one of these is the name “Jew.” Paul is obviously not addressing the Gentiles here who did not consider themselves as Jews; he is specifically addressing the religious Jews who thought they were God’s chosen people. These were people who thought that they were special people. These were people who thought that God had established His covenant with them. These were people that believed if you were a Jew, you were going to be saved on that basis alone. It was critical that you could establish your heritage and blood line because the sons of Abraham were God’s chosen people.

(Rom 2:17-19) “But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Law and boast in God, {18} and know *His* will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, {19} and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,”

There is a lot of truth in their understanding. They were chosen by God. The Jews did bear that name. The name Jew comes from Judas, one of the twelve tribes of Israel, and it means to praise. The Jews were a “praised” people. The Jews were the people of promise. God had given them His Law, and revealed His Law to them. God had established a covenant with them. The Jews were right about all of this; they are a special people to God. But, these will not gain people entrance into God’s kingdom.

Paul has just given the principles of God's judgment. He is going to judge according to our deeds. So, Paul gets right to the point and asks them if they, who are teaching others, are teaching themselves. He asks if they preach about stealing, do they steal. He asks that those that teach about adultery, do they commit adultery. He asks those that abhor idols, do they rob temples? These are pointed questions that show that they are transgressors and violators of the Law. He tells them that the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of them. They may carry the name of Jew, but God is going to judge the Jews according to their deeds. He concludes that those who are true Jews are those who are Jews inwardly. Their trust in their heritage of being a physical descendant of Abraham has been shattered.

(Rom 2:20-29) "a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, {21} you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? {22} You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? {23} You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? {24} For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.... {28} For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. {29} But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God."

John the Baptist had preached the same message to the Jewish leaders. He told the Pharisees and Sadducees to flee from the wrath to come. He was speaking of the judgment of God on the day of wrath or judgment, and that they were not going to escape it. In verse 9, he said, "do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham." He goes on to tell them that the axe is going to cut down and throw into the fire every tree that does not bear good fruit. The fact that they were physical descendants of Abraham was not going to help them escape the wrath of God at judgment.

(Matt 3:7-10) "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? {8} "Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance; {9} and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. {10} "The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

Jesus also preached this message to the Jewish leaders. In John 8, Jesus acknowledges that they are Abraham's descendants, but he also tells them that they were seeking to kill Him. They answered, "Abraham is our father." Jesus then said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham." He concludes in verse 44, "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father..." Even though they were bloodline descendants of Abraham, they were not Jews inwardly. They were carrying out the devil's deeds and desires, not God's deeds and desires. The Jews had a false sense of security in being called Jews, earthly descendants of Abraham.

(John 8:37-44) "I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. {38} "I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father." {39} They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus *said to them, "If you are Abraham's

children, do the deeds of Abraham. {40} "But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do. {41} "You are doing the deeds of your father." They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God." {42} Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. {43} "Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. {44} "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies."

2. Relying on the Law

The second sense of false security was these Jews relied upon the Law. God had given Moses His Law for them to live by. The Law revealed God's will. This Law governed their worship, their family life, their work, their rest, their justice system, and every part of their life. They were given God's divine revelation, and no other people on earth were given this Law. God had given them something very special. The Jews prided themselves in knowing the Law. They knew God's will and approved the things that are essential. They were instructed out of the Law, and this gave them a false sense of security.

(Rom 2:17) "But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Law and boast in God, {18} and know *His* will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law,"

Paul went on to talk about how confident they were in being a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness. The Jews did consider themselves to be the light of the world. They considered themselves to be superior to everyone else because of the Law.

(Rom 2:19-20) "and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, {20} a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,"

In John 9, Jesus healed a man who had been born blind. The Jewish leaders eventually put him out of the synagogue because of his testimony that Jesus had healed him. Jesus said to them, "for judgment I came into this world, so that those who not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." The Pharisees who were with Jesus heard this and said, "We are not blind too, are we?" Jesus replied, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains." Jesus was using blindness to teach them about their spiritual condition. They were spiritually blind and did not see themselves as sinners. They saw others as blind and themselves as a guide to the blind.

(John 9:39-41) "And Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind." {40} Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, "We are not blind too, are we?" {41} Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

In Matthew 15:14, Jesus said that the Pharisees were blind guides of the blind. Then, in Matthew 23, where Jesus gave eight woes, he called them blind five times. They did not see themselves as blind, but Jesus said they had it backwards. They thought they were a guide to the blind, but they

were actually blind, and were blindly leading others. Jesus came into the world to give sight to the blind, but they did not receive Him because they did not see themselves as blind.

(Matt 15:14) “Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit.”

(Matt 23:16-19) “Woe to you, **blind** guides... {17} "You fools and **blind** men!... {19} "You **blind** men... {24} "You **blind** guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!... {26} "You **blind** Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also.”

The Jews saw themselves as the light of the world. John told them that he was not the light, but came to bear witness of the light.

(John 1:6-9) “There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. {7} He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. {8} He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light. {9} There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.”

Jesus told them that He was the light of the world, and that those who follow Him will not walk in darkness. This was difficult for the Jewish leaders to accept, because they did not see themselves as walking in the dark, but being the light. They rejected Jesus as the light of the world, and told Him His testimony was not true.

(John 8:12-13) “Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life." {13} So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true.”

The Jews saw themselves as correctors of the foolish and teachers of the immature. They thought that in the Law they had the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth. Like Jesus, Paul is trying to let the Jews in Rome know that relying on the Law is a false confidence.

(Rom 2:20) “a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,”

Paul moves from their self-righteous attitude to their deeds. Since they were teaching others, he asked if they were teaching themselves. In other words, were they learning and applying the things that they were teaching others. I love Ezra 7:10, because Ezra set his heart on studying the law of the Lord, practicing it, and then teaching it to others. Ezra was a doer of the law, not merely a hearer of the word. Doers of the word have a greater understanding and can more effectively help others apply the word in their lives. One of the things that my father insisted on at Murchison Drilling Schools was experienced instructors. He wanted people that had supervised drilling operations and could teach out of both knowledge and experience. These religious Jews were not applying the Law in their own lives, but were teaching others.

(Rom 2:21) “you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”

(Ezra 7:10) “For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice *it*, and to teach *His* statutes and ordinances in Israel.”

(James 1:22) “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

(Psalm 111:10) “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do *His commandments*; His praise endures forever.”

Paul gives a number of examples of their teaching. The first is about stealing. He asked them if they stole. The prophet, Malachi, gave a strong word to the Jews of how they were robbing God by not bringing their best offerings, and not bringing their whole tithe so that the Levites and Priests could have food in the house.

(Rom 2:21) “you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal?”

(Mal 3:8-10) “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. {9} You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation *of you!* {10} Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.”

He asked them if they committed adultery or robbed temples. The Jews had ways around the Law. They would divorce a wife to take another woman so that it would not be called adultery. Jesus told them that divorcing a woman to take another wife was adultery.

(Rom 2:22) “You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?”

Paul summarized by saying that they were boasting in the Law, but were breaking the Law. They were not just breaking the Law, but because of their lifestyle, the name of God was being blasphemed among the Gentiles.

(Rom 2:23-24) “You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? {24} For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.”

Many of you know my testimony, and how one of the turning points for me was the hypocrisy that I saw in the religious leader at the church we went to. I saw the pastor smoking, drinking, and cussing. In my opinion the name of God was blasphemed because of his lifestyle, and I turned completely away from God and declared I was an atheist. It was many years later that God softened my heart and revealed to me that He is real, and that He is loving, and He did this by bringing people into my life that were genuinely serving God.

3. Relying on Circumcision (the Sign of a Covenant)

The Jews relied upon their name and the fact that they had been given the Law. They also relied upon circumcision, which was the sign of the covenant that God gave to Abraham. He was to circumcise all of the males, and they were to do this on the eighth day. From a medical standpoint, on the eighth day, a baby’s blood has the ability to coagulate, so doing a circumcision prior to the eighth day would be dangerous. Circumcision was just a sign of the covenant that

God made with Abraham and the Jewish people. Circumcision was not the covenant, it was an outward sign and reminder of the covenant.

(Gen 17:10-12) “This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. {11} And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. {12} And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants.”

Paul tells these religious Jews that circumcision is of value if they practice the Law, but if they are a transgressor of the Law, their circumcision was considered uncircumcision. He said if the uncircumcised man kept the requirements of the Law, his uncircumcision would be regarded as circumcision. In God’s covenant with Abraham, he was to keep the laws and statutes that God had given. The circumcision was just a sign and a reminder of the covenant. Signs are important, but the keeping of the Law was the most important thing, and the Jews had not kept the Law; they had merely been circumcised. Their transgressing of the Law was likened to being uncircumcision. Paul is letting these Jews know that their reliance upon circumcision is a false hope for salvation.

(Rom 2:25-26) “For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. {26} So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?”

When I was a young Christian, I became involved in evangelism with Campus Crusade for Christ. Although I did not agree with all their methods, I fully supported the message of the gospel. In sharing with people, one of the most common responses was, “I am already a member of the church.” I would ask them what church they were members at, and they would tell me Catholic, Methodist, Christian, Episcopal, or other denomination. These people did not have a relationship with Christ, and had never received Christ, or confessed Him as Lord; they just were a member of the church. I developed a wrong belief about church membership, and considered it a stumbling block to many. When Karen and I attended the First Baptist Church of Orlando, she wanted to join the church. I let her join, but I refused to join. At that time I did not believe in church membership, and I also did not believe in their requirements of church membership. In order to join, you had to be baptized by them. I had already been baptized at McKinney Bible Church and did not see their requirement as Biblical. I did not see the Ethiopian eunuch getting baptized into a local congregation. I did not see Cornelius and his household get baptized into a local church. I did not see the Philippian jailer baptized into a local church. I saw people place their faith in Christ and get baptized, and not necessarily into a local church. So, Karen joined and I did not join that church. Soon after that I began to learn about the significance of church membership, and today I have strong convictions about it, and I believe that many large churches today do not understand church membership because they do not practice it. The point of this is that many people rely on the fact that they were brought up in a certain church to get them to heaven. They have never given their life to Christ and made Him Lord. Like circumcision, it is a false sense of security.

Paul tells these Roman Jews that the physically uncircumcised, i.e. the Gentiles, who keep the Law will judge those that have the Law. He said that those who are true Jews are not outward, but inward. He said that circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter.

(Rom 2:27-29) “And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter *of the Law* and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law? {28} For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. {29} But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.”

Circumcision became a very controversial issue in the early church. There were certain Jews that taught that you had to be circumcised to become a believer. Paul and the apostles met in Acts 15 and came to one mind on the issue. They did not require circumcision to be saved. They recognized that we are saved by faith, not works. While circumcision was a sign of the covenant, Abraham believed and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. It was Abraham’s faith, not his circumcision that was credited to him as righteousness. It is our faith in Christ that brings us into a covenant relationship with Christ, not circumcision, church membership or anything else.

(Gen 15:6) “Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.”

In Paul’s letter to the Galatians, he deals extensively with this issue. He makes it clear that if we belong to Christ, we are Abraham’s descendants. He said that circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but what was important was to be a new creation. Our faith must be in Christ, not circumcision. We must be born again, an internal work of the Holy Spirit by faith that we become the people of God.

(Gal 3:29) “And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.”

(Gal 6:15) “For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”

Conclusion and Applications

Paul destroyed the three beliefs that the Jews were relying upon. Their belief that being a physical descendant of Abraham, a Jew, would give them a free pass to heaven was not a valid means of being saved from the wrath of God. Second, Paul destroys the notion that their knowledge of the Law gave them an automatic free pass from judgment. Third, Paul told them that their reliance upon circumcision was a false hope. It was just an outward sign, and God was looking for an inward sign.

Let’s take a look at some applications for our lives. First, there may be someone here today whose parents are Christians and they are relying on their heritage for their salvation. When you stand before God, He is not going to ask about your parents’ faith, He is going to judge you according to your sins. Your parent’s faith will not do you any good, as each of us is going to give account to God. Are you ready to give account? If not, in a minute there will be an opportunity to receive God’s forgiveness for your sins.

Second, there may be some who were baptized as an infant and are members of a church, but have never confessed Jesus as Lord of their life. Baptism, like circumcision is an outward sign of what is supposed to have happened on the inside. Paul said that circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but what is critical is that you are a new creation. Jesus told Nicodemus that he had to be born again to see the kingdom of heaven. The real question for you today is have you been born again. Baptism and church membership will not hold water in the

day of wrath. You must be born again to enter the kingdom of heaven. If you would like to receive Christ and be born again, there will be an opportunity in a minute to receive Christ.

(Gal 6:15) “For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”

(John 3:3) “Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Third, the Jews knew the Law very well. There may be some who know about Christ, His crucifixion, and Christianity. Like the Jews, knowledge of the Law or knowledge about Christ will not save you in the day of judgment. James said that if you believe in God, you do well, that the demons also believe and shudder. Knowledge and intellectual belief that God exists will not help in the day of judgment. In Matthew 7, Jesus gives us a glimpse of that day of judgment. People standing before God said, “Lord, Lord,” but they were not allowed in. Jesus said to them, “I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.” We must receive Christ and come into a relationship with Him. We must know Him, and He must know us. Our relationship with Christ should be evidenced by righteous behavior. If you would like to enter into a relationship with Christ this morning, I want to pray for you.

(James 2:19) “You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.”

(Matt 7:21-23) “Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven *will enter*. {22} Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' {23} And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'”

“Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God. I believe that You died for my sins and were raised from the dead. I ask You to come into my life and I confess You as my Lord today. I want to follow and serve You from this day forward. I ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

A final application is about being ready to make a defense of the gospel. In our reaching out to people with the gospel message, it is good to know what people are trusting in for their salvation. The EE questions are great questions. Paul gave answers today for the three things the Jews were relying upon. We need to be able to give some answers to people about the things that they are trusting in. Trusting in good works is a common belief. We should have some Scriptures memorized about salvation by works so that we can share those verses with people. Ephesians 2:8-9 and Titus 3:5 are two excellent verses. Another common belief is that God will judge on a curve. Again, we should have some Scriptures to discuss that false belief. Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23 are great verses to use to answer that question. Church membership is another common response. John 3:3 and Galatians 6:15 are excellent verses to discuss that belief. Like Paul, we should be able to make a defense of the gospel.

(1 Pet 3:15) “but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;”

Q & A

Introduction (Rom 10:14, Rom 2:21-24, Rom 2:17-29)

1. **Relying on Heritage** (Rom 2:17-19, 20-29, Matt 3:7-10, John 8:37-44)

2. **Relying on the Law** (Rom 2:17, 19-24, John 9:39-41, Matt 15:14, Matt 23:16-19, John 1:6-9, 8:12-13, Ezra 7:10, James 1:22, Ps 111:10, Mal 3:8-10)

3. **Relying on the Sign of a Covenant** (Gen 17:10-12, Rom 2:25-29, Gen 15:6, Gal 3:29, 6:15)

Conclusion and Applications (Gal 6:15, John 3:3, James 2:19, Matt 7:21-23, Eph 2:8-9, Titus 3:5, Rom 3:23, 6:23, John 3:3, Gal 6:15, 1 Pet 3:15)