

Covenants of God X Justification to the Temple vs Justification to God

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I hope that you followed through with all of the first nine sermons that we have, and really there is no other way to fully understand the things concerning the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant as they are commonly known, and the problems and difficulties with the Jewish religion as they interface with it.

This time we're going to start getting into some more technical Scriptures. However, I hope that it will really be as simple and easy to understand with the background that we've gone through with the other sermons up to this point.

Acts 13—here is a very important place to start; it gives us a lot of understanding—though I may have passed over it a little bit. Here is the whole crux of the problem between the Old Covenant/Testament—which we could call the *Covenant with Israel*; and the New Covenant/Testament—the *Covenant with the Church*.

Paul was preaching, and we know the whole background about Paul, that he said that he was 'a Pharisee of a Pharisee' of the tribe of Benjamin; 'a Hebrew of Hebrews' concerning law-keeping 'blameless.' That's pretty good; that's better than you and me.

Here he comes into the synagogue and tells them all about Christ—His death and resurrection—he said, "Acts 13:38: "Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this man **the remission of sins** is preached to you." That's a very important key statement in reference in relationship to the New Covenant.

Verse 39: "And in Him **everyone who believes** is justified from all things... [That's everything; and in the Greek that is a tremendous statement; that's all inclusive—*everything!*] ...from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses." That is a powerful, powerful set of two Scriptures when we really look at it, think about it and understand it.

Let's dissect this just a little bit so we can understand. With the Law of Moses we need to understand that *justification under the Law of Moses* did what? What was required? That is what we need to understand first! Once we understand that and we understand the *function of law* and really grasp that, then we are going to be able to understand the difference and the problems between the Old

Covenant and the New Covenant and the intermixture of Judaism with it.

To be justified under the Old Covenant there was required sacrifices, circumcision, obedience to the laws of God. This justified them *to the temple only*; the temple on earth *only*; with the exception of those individual prophets and kings that God called and chose; that they had the Spirit of Christ *in* them (1-Peter 1:10-14).

There's a very important Scripture that we need to understand in relationship to this, because most people—Protestants, Catholics (not to say Jews) and those who believe in dispensationalism—have the erroneous conclusion that there were dispensations that God worked through. One of the dispensations was with the law with Israel and they received salvation. They had their sins forgiven by the sacrifices. What does Paul say concerning the blood of bulls and goats? *It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to bring the remission of sins!*

Hebrews 9:11: "But Christ Himself has become High Priest of the coming good things, **through the greater and more perfect tabernacle...**" Let's please understand that, though the tabernacle and temple on earth was inspired of God under His plans and directions, it was still *physical, imperfect!* God knew that! And the Covenant with Israel was physical and imperfect. The fault was—not with God in giving it—but the lack of the people in being able to obey. There had to be something better! There had to be something greater! That's why Christ came.

"...not made by *human* hands (that is, not of this *present physical* creation). Not by *the* blood of goats and calves, but by the means of His own blood, He entered once for all into the Holiest, having *by* Himself secured everlasting [eternal] redemption *for us*. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and *the* ashes of a heifer sprinkled *on* those who are defiled, sanctifies **to the purifying of the flesh.**" (vs 11-13). That's all it did. For the physical ritual worship at the temple, that's all it did!

Verse 14: "To a far greater degree, the blood of Christ, Who through *the* eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, shall purify your conscience from dead works to serve *the* living God."

One of the key, important things that was never accomplished under the Covenant with Israel

was, *it didn't change the heart!* That required something else, indeed!

Verse 15: "And for this reason He is *the* Mediator of *the* New Covenant: in order that through *His* death, *which* took place for the release of the transgressions *that were committed* under the first covenant..." This shows technically what happened. All the sins committed by Israel were never truly forgiven. They were only held in a 'pool' at the temple on earth.

In order for Christ to work with the New Testament Church, all of that past sin of Israel had to be born—as well as all the sins of all humanity, past, present and future—by Christ when He died. God wiped out all of that in the past, not until then. The assumption of dispensationalism then that they received salvation under the Old Covenant is completely wrong. You can't have eternal life until your sins are forgiven. Their sins were really not forgiven until Christ died—long after they had died many, many hundreds of years before.

Acts 13:39: "...from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses." In other words, it was impossible through the Law of Moses to forgive sins in heaven above. So, with the Old Covenant they were not justified to God in heaven above, nor did law-keeping forgive sin.

For example: I just read in the paper this morning that one of the Canadian viewers of Unsolved Mysteries—this has happened quite often in many different cases and locations—and it was one of the fellows that he was a co-worker with. He was wanted for murder and kidnapping. But he was one of the nicest co-workers that they had had in a long time. Did good things for them, brought presents, was easy and congenial to get along with, etc., etc.

He was a fugitive from the law; he had broken the law, committed murder, kidnapping; he ran off, went to Canada and became of model citizen. Did that law-keeping by him—after the murder—justify him to the law of the land because he did obey the law after he committed the murder? *NO!* So the co-worker called the station, they called the police and the next morning he was arrested on his way to work, brought back to face the consequences of the law. Wherever there is a transgression, there is a penalty to be paid. When the penalty is paid, there is justification.

Does everyone follow that clearly? We must follow that concept clearly. With that we can also see the situation that law-keeping is still required, but it didn't redeem him from what he had done. That's a vast, important difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

With the New Covenant justification by grace is to justify us to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the presence of God the Father in heaven above. *Far greater!* It needs a different means than law to do that. Paul said, '*If there were a law whereby eternal life could be given, then eternal life would have been by law.*'

Don't you believe there would be a lot of people around trying to do that? *Sure there would!* But it would be so perfect and demanding that no one would meet it. What are the requirements for justification under the New Covenant by grace?

1. repentance
2. baptism
3. believe and faith in Jesus Christ and God the Father

You must receive the Holy Spirit and you must keep God's laws.

Let's just review again: The function of law is to show what sin is, to give us a minimum standard of conduct whereby we should live. Grace starts out with the forgiveness of sin upon repentance and belief in Jesus Christ. But what the Jews were actually trying to do is they were trying to get in right standing with God *by their law-keeping*, which included *some* of the laws of God and *all of their traditions* and everything that they had, which *they felt that indebted God to them to make God do something for them!* That's still the basis of most religions today.

Did you hear what the Buddhist explanation was for the assassination of those five kids over here in Stockton, Calif.? The Buddhist explanation was that it's karma. Karma is not the name of a woman. Karma is the name of a concept in Buddhism, which is this: Since they believe in re-incarnation everyone has to die at some time, and your life is based upon merits and demerits. The reason that these kids were slain over here was because, obviously, in their previous life they had done something like that to someone else, so therefore, karma worked out in their lives and they had to be slain this way.

Isn't that a handy-dandy answer? No atonement! No forgiveness! No understanding of allowing depraved, wretched individuals to go through the society and kill innocent people. That's a penalty that society pays when you let depraved, wretched people roam the society, they're going to do things like that.

Then we can add the case of Ted Bundy; thank you that he was executed! Someone asked if that was a Christian attitude. I'll tell you what a Christian attitude is: God will throw him in the Lake of Fire! It's that simple. God gave to man the

authority to take the life. He gave that to the civil governments, not to us as people, as a church. That's why I explained that we don't bring *the administration of death*.

Ted Bundy was so depraved. I saw part of the interview by James Dobson—Focus on the Family. He interviewed and took Bundy's last confession and all of this thing. Bundy said that it started with pornography. That was only part of it. I also think that he was pretty much in love with himself, thought he was pretty smart and good looking, and thought that he could do almost anything and get away with it. This is the guy who would put his arm or leg in cast—a clamp-on cast—and then he would get some of these girls to help him out; then take them out and murder them.

All of his law-keeping in jail did not undo all of the murders that he committed. Did not change him. That's why God says you don't let depraved people run through the society, because they're going to wreak havoc on innocent people. It's your choice to make. If you want them to run wild then you're going to reap the results. If you don't take care of it the way God instructed you to—get rid of these people—then it's going to be an awful and terrible thing to live with.

That may be kind of a diversionary from what we're talking about, but it effectively brings home the point and the principle that the law-keeping is required, but law-keeping does not correct a past situation. That's what justify means: *to correct*. That's what God gave under the Old Covenant: if you would do such and such that would pay for it. That is justify.

- How are we going to be justified with God?
- The great, ever-living, fantastic, all-powerful God?
- How are we as human beings—though sinners we are—have access to God?
- That we can have the privilege granted to us, given to us, the right to pray to God and actually be brought into His presence through that prayer in heaven above?

That's what we're talking about. This is what Paul is trying to explain. Yes, through the temple you can have certain blessings; yes, you can have certain things forgiven. But through this One—Christ—you are justified from all things, which could not be done through the Law of Moses, or—I might add: *any other law or tradition*.

We need to understand this first. We're going to come across some difficult Scriptures. Many of the things we're going to cover from now on are going to be difficult Scriptures. But, if you really understand what we've covered previously, it

will clear up—just like taking your windows and finally getting them clean.

Romans 9:30—It's interesting that I'm going here, because this is the conclusion, the sum of chapters 2-8, and the first part of 9. “What then shall we say? That *the* Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness...” What are we dealing with here? *The Gentiles who didn't receive the Law of God, had not the Law of God!* They had how many centuries of just given over to idolatry, wretchedness and stupidity? Of course, Israel never did—did they? *Oh, yes, they did!* Sure they did! But at least God worked with them, because He said He would, because of His promise to Abraham.

I tell you what, if I had to put up with all the nonsense that God had to put up with, I would look for some way to break that promise somehow, because of all the trouble putting up with it. I wouldn't have making it to the original person. But God is true and God is right and God is great, so He's going to keep it down. He said so. His very existence and being depends upon it.

Now we have a situation where the Gentiles—whom the Jews considered as animals, subhuman, worthy of death; can't even be in their company—now God rejects the remnant of the Jews and Paul says, ‘I'm going to the Gentiles.’ A Pharisee going to the Gentiles? I hope you understand what that really means! I hope you understand how severe that Judaism was at that time. It's even more severe now, but how that they called what they said and did—their traditions and everything—the Law of Moses.

Now Paul's making a profound statement, v 30: “What then shall we say? That *the* Gentiles, who did not follow after righteousness **have attained righteousness...**”—through Christ. This righteousness means *right standing with God through the justification and forgiveness of your past sins by grace!*

“...even *the* **righteousness that is by faith**” (v 30). We all understand that—don't we? Hopefully! This is not been easy even for me as a minister to understand that down through the years. One of the reasons that I had to get in study these things was because you read some of the things that the Protestants put out and you think: *they're right*. If they're right, then we're wrong! What are you going to do? Are you going to have a bifurcated or split-conscious and say, ‘I know that even though that sounds right, they're still wrong’—and go on and never find out whether it's really right or wrong.

Here's the one that really blows your mind, v 31: “But Israel, although they followed after **a** law of righteousness, did not attain to a law of

righteousness.” Are the laws of God righteous? *Psa. 119:172 says ‘all Your commandments are righteousness!’* They had it. Did they follow it? Did they add to it try and make it better? Did they try and improve on God? *Yes! A law of righteousness did not attain.*

- Did it make them perfect? *No!*
- Did it make them spiritual? *No!*
- Did it bring eternal salvation? *No!*

This is why you get the statement, which is true: ***All the law-keeping in the world will not bring you salvation!*** That is a true statement. But the conclusion made by the Protestants is: so therefore, don’t keep the Law. That’s the wrong conclusion! They don’t know the difference between salvation and the requirement of law-keeping.

Verse 32: “Why? Because *they did not seek it by faith, but by works of law...*”

(*KJV*): “Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by **the** works of **the** law....”

The works of the law is an incorrect translation. It should be *works of law*. If you read *the works of the law*, then you wonder what on earth are you doing keeping the commandments of God? If it isn’t going to get me anything, why am I doing it? Isn’t that the first question that would come to mind?

It’s very important to know that it’s a principle: by works of law. They didn’t want to have any faith. ‘If it isn’t written down, I don’t have to do it.’ If we don’t have something describing it, ‘I’m not held responsible.’

- If I make a sacrifice to God, He must honor it.
- If I follow the traditions of the elders, God must honor it.

That is a *work of law*. A work of law is to *have God indebted to you*, because you do one of His laws or you do a law that you *think* is a law of God and *God must do something for you*. That’s the whole basis.

When you talk about keeping the laws of God so you can have the blessings of not having sin in your life, that’s fine. But that doesn’t force God to give you eternal life. Keeping the law after receiving the Spirit of God is different than trying to go off on your own without any faith, without any belief—rejecting Christ in effect and saying, ‘God, I’m doing this; You said to do these things, so therefore, You must do something for me.’

Total difference! That’s different than claiming the promise of God! That’s trying to undo your own sin by your own righteousness, which is *a*

work of *a* law. That’s very important that we grasp that function right now, because when we get to the book of Galatians then we are going to sail through and that’s going to be so clear it’s going to be absolutely unbelievable. They didn’t attain to it!

“...for they stumbled at the Stone of Stumbling [Christ], exactly as it is written: ‘Behold, I place in Sion a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense, but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed’” (vs 32-33).

It isn’t either/or; you’re going to do it God’s way. It isn’t one way or the other. It isn’t going to be ‘I’m going to do by law because I’m a Jew and circumcised, and we’re the chosen people.’ *NO!* It isn’t going to be ‘I grew up in this church, therefore, God has to accept me.’ *NO!* That’s *a work* you’re doing; that’s a law that *you* are creating. So, you’re going to stumble at Christ.

I heard this guy on KGO and they were interviewing him on a book *How to Get Unstuck*—to get out of the problems of your life. He kept saying that everything comes down to a spiritual thing and we must take care of our spiritual lives: God or whatever you believe in.

I thought to myself, *isn’t that clever*. He says, ‘I’m a Christian myself, but whatever works for you.’ He isn’t really a Christian, because you can’t tell people ‘whatever works for you’ if Jesus said, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no one comes to the Father but by Me.’ There’s only one way; there isn’t going to be any other way.

I thought to myself: that is so subtle; that is so clever; that is so enticing to get people. Doesn’t everyone want to be successful? *Yes!* Doesn’t everyone want to progress? *Yes!* That’s the first thing that Satan told Adam and Eve. “...but everyone who believes in Him shall not be ashamed” (v 32).

Romans 10:1: “Brethren, the earnest desire of my heart and my supplication to God for Israel is for salvation. For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge” (vs 1-2). That is not according to the knowledge that God gave them, that they needed a Savior: Jesus Christ. “...not according to the knowledge” because they rejected the knowledge, laws and commandments of God that they could *keep their own traditions*. There are many ways that you could apply this.

Verse 3: “For they, being ignorant of the righteousness *that* comes from God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.” What Paul is saying is that you cannot reject the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and say you’re going to go out and establish

your own righteousness, which God must accept. Let's take even one step further and make it very clear: You cannot—even if you desired—keep the laws of God and reject Jesus Christ and say that you're righteous before God. *Won't happen!*

Now we come to a verse that the Protestants love to read and they don't even understand it; they don't understand what's being said. I hope you do; I hope I do.

Verse 4: "For Christ is the end of works of law for righteousness to everyone who believes." What on earth are we talking about? The Protestants erroneously believe that Christ is the end of the law, therefore, there's no law to be kept or enforced. That is completely wrong and erroneous. What are we talking about? We are talking about *a law of self-righteousness!* If you accept Christ and His righteousness to be applied to you, Christ ends all the *works of law* to establish your own righteousness. That's what he's really saying. Christ ends that!

It's been explained in the past that Christ is the purpose or the 'teleios'—*the end result of what the law is to point to*. That is not quite exactly correct. That's better than the other explanation: *that Christ did away with the Law!* It means that if you accept Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; if you repent and are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit:

- You're going *to walk in the ways of God!*
- You're going to *walk toward the Light Who is Christ!*
- You're going *to keep the commandments of God!*

But in keeping the commandments of God you know that your only righteousness or justification before God is through Jesus Christ. What Paul in effect is saying is that Christ ended the misapplication of the self-righteousness for *their own* justification. That's another way to put it. ***Christ did not end the Law!***

- Who is Creator? *Christ!*
- Who is Lawgiver? *Christ!*
- In Whose name is the Holy Spirit sent? *Christ's!*

If everything does not come through Christ for that right standing, righteousness, or justification—which comes from God the Father through Jesus Christ—all of your own 'good' works, if you reject Christ or you do not accept Christ, amount to nothing: *spiritually, eternally!* You might have 'good' works and be an honest and sincere person, so you lead a decent and normal and acceptable and sincere life. That's fine, but that has nothing to do with salvation.

You might even be kind to your neighbor.

You might never have stolen a thing in your life. You might have been as righteous as George Washington. This is a message within a message for those whom God calls, so that we can understand not to be entrapped into the snares of Judaism; or not be entrapped into the snare of law-keeping and forget Christ. That's what it's talking about.

We do have to keep the commandments of God. But I tell you what, after you know them and you have them in your heart and mind, you don't have to go around saying, 'I'm keeping this commandment.' ***NO! You know it!***

(go the next track)

Romans 2—Here's one of Paul's long sentences. The reason that it's so difficult is because with the Greek you can have dangling this and dangling that all the way through. As far as English grammar goes, it blows your mind. Any editor today would just pick this up and shoot it and send it back full of holes from a shotgun saying 'you don't know how to write.'

Romans 2:1—after Paul condemns all the Gentiles for all the things and rejecting God: "Therefore, you are without excuse, O man, everyone who judges *another*; for in that in which you judge the other, you are condemning your own self; for you who judge *another* are doing the same things. But we know that the judgment of God is according to Truth upon those who commit such things. Now, do you think yourself, O man..." (vs 1-3). He's talking to any human being anywhere in the world. In the Greek this what they call the vocative mode, which is mankind, anyone who reads it, men in general.

"...whoever is judging those who commit such things... [the thing in the first chapter] ...and you are practicing them *yourself*, that you shall escape the judgment of God? Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that **the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?**" (vs 3-4).

We can't even claim our own repentance—right? Our own repentance is not even a work that we can say that *we* do—though we go through it. Who leads us to it? ***God does!*** God in His graciousness calls us and leads us to it.

There comes a time in your life when you go along and if God's dealing with you, all of a sudden you really realize what a rotten, miserable dodo you've been. God has led you to that! That is fantastic! What we're beginning to see is, yes, there are certain things that we can do; yes, there are certain things that can be done; but unless God does it spiritually—eternally forever—we're not going to

march up to God and say, ‘God, I kept the Sabbath all my life.’ God could look back and say, ‘I’ve been here for all eternity, tell me more.’

Verse 5: “But you, according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart, are storing up wrath for yourself against *the* day of wrath...” I could not help but think of this Ted Bundy character. When he was asked: ‘Do you really have any sorrow for what you’ve done, killing all these women’—30 plus. He said he still had more that he could confess about, but ‘unless you lift the execution I’m not going to tell you.’ I couldn’t help but think: He’s hardened his heart so hard he doesn’t have any feeling at all.

Not even when James Dobson was there interviewing him, trying to elicit some kind of sorrow and emotion out of him, that he could have even a drop of the milk of human kindness. The hardness and unrepentant heart! Wasn’t it ironic, he didn’t want to die. You talk about a hardened heart!

But you look at him, because he’s supposedly good looking and all of this sort of thing, isn’t it something how some people rely on their good looks and they get away with absolute atrocities! Everyone is so ready to run in and hold their hand and forgive them. I’ve seen that so many times! That’s why Proverbs talks about the deceitfulness of beauty.

“...and revelation of God’s righteous judgment, Who [God] will render to each one according to his own **works**” (vs 5-6). It looks like we’ve got to do some things. The word ‘deeds’ (KJV) in the Greek is ‘ergon’—*works*. Something’s going to happen with our works. Is this a contradiction of the thing before? *No, it’s not!* We’re still held accountable.

Verse 7: “On the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works... [doesn’t say they’re sinless (note Eph. 2:10—that we are created to walk in good works, which He before ordained.)] ...are **seeking glory and honor and immortality**—eternal life.” Keep seeking for that; for glory, honor and immortality and God is going to give you eternal life. It means that the result is going to be eternal life.

- Isn’t that true?
- Aren’t we seeking to do well?
- Aren’t we here on the Sabbath?
- Aren’t we trying to be inspired by God’s Word?
- Aren’t we seeking the honor that comes from God?

At the Feast of Tabernacles I was tremendously inspired when we were talking about what it’s going to be like to be as God *is* God. I do

every time I think of it. It really just inspires me, tremendously. You want eternal life! I want eternal life!

Verse 8: “On the other hand, to those who are contentious and who disobey the Truth... [the commandments of God, Word of God, the Truth of Jesus Christ] ...but obey unrighteousness... [to them] ...—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil, both of *the* Jew first, and of *the* Greek; but glory and honor and peace **to everyone who works good...**” (vs 8-10)—‘ergon’—*the one who is working good*. What is good? *The things that God has said is good!* That’s what you’re working for. So, Paul is lifting everything above the standard of any human judgment, but the standard of God.

“...both to *the* Jew first, and to *the* Greek” (v 10). That’s shocking to the Jews! They just will not accept that any other people have any rights but them.

Verse 11: “Because there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned... [apart from law; apart from the knowledge of law] ...without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned within *the* law shall be judged by *the* law, (because the hearers of the law *are* not just before God, but the doers of the law **shall be justified**” (vs 11-13). A key and very important thing to understand.

The sum of that is this:

- if you’re Abraham’s seed, don’t count on it for justification; *it won’t work*
- if you have the knowledge and don’t live by it, *it won’t do you any good whatsoever*
- If you try and live by it without Jesus Christ, *it’s worthless*

Verse 14: “For when *the* Gentiles, which do not have *the* law, practice by nature the things contained in the **Law...**” The only place in the whole New Testament showing it means the commandments and laws of God; other places where it says ‘the works of the law’ are generally *a work of law*.

“...these who do not have *the* law are a law unto themselves; who show **the work of the Law** written in their own hearts...” (vs 14-15). Isn’t that almost the same thing that God wants to do (Heb. 8, 10)—putting the Law in their hearts and minds and their inward parts.

Example: The pygmies—even though they’re in the jungle, cursed in the seat of Ham, and in the middle of the rain forest—they still have one thing that they follow. They do not tolerate adultery.

Are they not before God's eye greater than our society for that one thing? *Yes!* So, who are we to stand up and condemn them? That's what Paul is talking about here.

"...their consciences bearing witness, and their reasonings also, as they accuse or defend one another); in a day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel. Behold, you are called a Jew... [now we're getting down to the real difference here] ...and you yourself rest in the law, and boast in God, and know *His* will... [Paul is really taking them to task; this is really hard stuff to a Jew] ...and approve of the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the Law; and are persuaded *that* you yourself are a guide of *the* blind, a light for those in darkness, an instructor of *the* foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of the knowledge and of the Truth *contained* in the Law" (vs 15-20).

Verse 21: "You, then, who are teaching another, do you not teach yourself also? You who preach, 'Do not steal,' are you stealing? You who say, 'Do not commit adultery,' are you committing adultery? You who abhor idols, are you committing sacrilege?" (vs 21-22).

That's exactly what Judaism did; created every way where they could rob, steal, lie, and as matter of fact, when you go through it and really understand about Judaism and its source—as outlined in this series of articles put out by the *Good News* magazine put out years and years ago by Ernest Martin—shows that what happened in the Hellenism of the Jews before the Macabean Revolution. They actually absorbed into their traditions all the elements of Platonic philosophy, where you must minutely control everyone's individual life with a law. Unbelievable! We could spend days, hours, months, and years going into that—we won't do that.

Verse 23: "You who boast in law... [Isn't that exactly what happens in Judaism? We have the Torah, but the Torah to them is everything that's in the Talmud, the Mishna.] ...are you dishonoring God through your transgression of the Law?" He's saying very clearly: you have it, but you're not doing it.

Verse 24: "For through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles, exactly as it is written." That's a powerful statement. You Jews who are supposed to know what's right and wrong and do 'good,' you're causing the people to blaspheme the name of God.

- How many people have been turned away from the Sabbath because of Jews?

- How many people have been turned away from wanting to find out about God because of Jews?

Verse 25: "For on the one hand, circumcision profits if you are observing *the* Law; on the other hand, if you are a transgressor of *the* Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision." Whoa! Those are strong words, because a Jew believe that if he is circumcised nothing can take him away from God's obligation to him; that God must honor that!

Paul is saying, '*No!* Don't you go out there and have a flesh inspection and think that everything is hunky-dory! It's not!' ***If you're breaking the Law***—and it doesn't matter if you circumcise five fingers on each hand and have stubs—***it's worthless!*** Also, you don't have God's Spirit.

Verse 26: "Therefore, if the uncircumcised is keeping the requirements of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?" A horrible thought to the Jew that man uncircumcised—who is counted less than a beast, worse than an animal, made to be robbed and cheated and looted from—that God would count him as circumcised? That's what Paul is saying. This is powerful, powerful heady stuff!

Verse 27: "And shall not the uncircumcised, who by nature is fulfilling the law, judge you, who, with *the* letter and circumcision, *are* a transgressor of *the* law?... [That is strong, strong stuff!] ...For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in *the* flesh; rather, he *is* a Jew who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit *and* not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God" (vs 27-29).

Again, powerful Scripture. It shows that we're dealing with eternal life and justification for eternal life with something that's going on here.

Philippians 3 is just crushing to the Jew who doesn't know Christ. I mean, totally devastating! This follows right along. Now you know why the Jews made the statement: 'Jesus we can understand, but Paul we will never forgive!'

Philippians 3:1: "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in *the* Lord. Indeed, for me to write the same things to you *is* not troublesome, but for you *it is* safe. Beware of dogs... [Those aren't pooches running around the neighborhood. He's talking about people who act like vicious dogs to chew you alive!] ...beware of evil workers, beware of the concision" (vs 1-2).

Think about this for a minute. Paul looked upon those who cross-bred Judaism and Christianity

as they were going around, instead of circumcising a little flesh, but were taking meat cleavers to do the operation. That's what he's talking about: *the cut off ones*. Very frank!

Verse 3: "For we... [the Christians] ...are the circumcision, who serve God in *the* spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in *the* flesh." Maybe in reading some of these things we've not understood the power with which Paul was writing these things.

Now you know why Jews hate Christianity. Jews cannot stand the New Testament. There are some who have read it and been convicted and have been converted. But I'm talking about Judaism *per se*, not the exception.

Verse 4: "Though I might also have *reason* to trust in *the* flesh. If any other thinks he has *cause* to trust in *the* flesh, I *have* much more: Circumcised on *the* eighth day; of *the* race of Israel, from *the* tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with respect to law, a Pharisee; with respect to zeal, persecuting the Church; with respect to righteousness that *is* in law, blameless. Yet, the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ" (vs 4-8).

There's Paul's evaluation of Judaism without Christ, or the Old Testament without Christ if you seek eternal salvation. That is why a lot of these sacred namers—when they bring back a Pharisaical type of cross-breeding of Pharisaism and sacred names into the New Testament, it breeds all the stuff that comes with it:

- strife
- contention
- laws
- rules
- regulations

It's amazing! Paul said, v 8: "But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **count them as dung**; that I may gain Christ." You wouldn't give the time of day to a pile of manure—would you? That's what he's saying.

Verse 9: "And may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law... [people can be as self-righteous as the Jews were] ...but that *righteousness* which *is* by *the* faith of Christ—the **righteousness of God** that *is* based

on faith." The word *of* is 'ek'—*comes out from God to you*; it's imputed to you.

Now you know why I tried to build up to this, because we're getting into some heavy stuff to really understand. But it's fantastic once you understand it. It is magnificent! It is great that God would call us and grant us this grace and His love, to deal with us in this manner. I'm sure that Paul was frustrated in dealing with all of these nit-picky people that would come along. You can't dismiss them; you've got to answer them.

Colossians 2:11—this shows how that this circumcision of the heart is accomplished: "In Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ"—which is Christ *in* you that happens after you're baptized and receive the Holy Spirit. That's the circumcision of Christ.

That is what counts, brethren. Nothing else in this world counts! If we can just get that one thing today: ***Nothing else in this world counts, if you do not have the circumcision of Christ!*** You may be a 'good' person as far as this society is concerned. But that doesn't mean that you're right with God. ***Being right with God is the most important thing that there is!***

What did Paul say? *Count everything else but dung!* That's what counts. It doesn't matter

- who you are
- what you are
- who your ancestors were or who they weren't
- how tall you are
- how short you are
- how fat you are
- how thin you are
- how beautiful you are
- how ugly you are
- whether you're male or female

or as we'll find when we get to Galatians:

- Scythian
- barbarian

or whatever

What counts is that ***you have that circumcision that is in Christ***—which is of the mind!

Just keep this in mind: Whenever you hear or see anything done by a Jew who is following Judaism—that's not to condemn Jews—keep this as an observation.

Sometimes I can't sleep so I got up and watched Night Line. They had the governor of Florida—Martinez—and he was talking about the death penalty for Bundy, why it should be done. They also had an attorney for the ALCU—Swartzkman;

here's a good example of a Jew who is supposed to know law, and he's also an attorney. He twisted everything and got it so out of whack and out of proportion that people can't think when they try to follow that kind of reasoning.

This is what God absolutely condemns! God says it's going to be harder on them because 'you make people blaspheme Me through your law-breaking.' I couldn't help but think of that when I saw that. You'll see a Jew of the synagogue of Satan somewhere there spouting off all of this stuff all the time.

That's why it's very powerful where Paul is writing against the Jews; writing against his own people! That's something!

People will protect their family regardless. Again, since we're talking about Bundy, even Bundy's mom said, 'Well, we didn't raise him that way; he was a nice boy.' Even she protected her son to the very end and said, 'We still love you, son.'

Paul got up here and wrote some powerful things against the Jews! They were impeding the progress of Christianity.

Romans 3:1: "What then *is* the advantage of the Jew, or what *is* the profit of circumcision? Much in every way. Primarily, in that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? Shall their **unbelief nullify**... [make of no effect God's faith] ...**the faithfulness of God**?" (vs 1-3).

That is a powerful statement, too. Make God's faith of no effect? God has faith? Where does faith come from? Can God give you something He doesn't have? *Faith comes from God! God has faith!* He has faith that His Word, His way, His plan and everything is going to be done. Furthermore, He has the power to carry it out! So, Paul is saying, 'What if you Jews don't believe? Are you going to change God?'

Verse 4: "MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, let God be true but every man a liar, exactly as it is written: 'That You [God] might be justified in Your words, and might overcome when You are being judged *by men*.' But if our unrighteousness brings to reality God's righteousness..." (vs 4-5). What if we're all so unrighteous? What if we're all such dirty, rotten, miserable sinners that that actually commends the righteousness of God, showing that God's way is righteous.

In other words, there comes a time when there's so much sin that you think there's got to be a better way. Even though you're sunk down into the middle of it, like some of these dope addicts, etc. They're right at the bottom of it, and all their

behavior does is show that God's way is right.

That's what he's saying here, that their unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God. It's kind of difficult statement to understand just reading it. I know that if you have no background at all in the Bible, they read that and it's almost a cross-eyed statement to try and understand.

"...what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous to inflict His wrath (I am speaking according to man's view.) MAY IT NEVER BE! Otherwise, how shall God judge the world?" (vs 5-6). God judges it many different ways. All you have to do is read Deut. 28.

Verse 7: "For if, by my falsehood, the Truth of God has shown itself *to be* supremely great, to His glory..." Who is Paul talking to? *To the Jews!* The Jews are saying, 'Paul, you're lying.' He's saying, 'Look, even if I am lying, that ought to be known.'

"...why am I still being judged as a sinner?... [Some pretty sarcastic stuff—isn't it?] ...But not, according as we are being blasphemously charged, and according as some are affirming *that* we say, 'Let us practice evil things in order that good things may come.' Their condemnation is deserved" (vs 7-8).

That's the thing to this day that has worried people who are convinced in keeping the laws of God that if we really preach the Truth about grace we're going to be accused of preaching '*let evil reign that we may have forgiveness*' and have a wonderful time, because after all, God is going to forgive us. Paul is saying, '*No!* That's not what I'm preaching!'

Verse 9: "What then? Are we [Jews] of ourselves better [than Gentiles]? Not at all! For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—*ALL—with* being under sin"—because

- the only thing that can take you out of sin is Jesus Christ
- the only thing that can remove it is the grace of God
- the only thing that can put you in right standing is the grace of God

Verse 10: "Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—not even one! There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God'" (vs 10-11). All you have to do is turn on your television set if you want to know if that's true or not.

Verse 12: "'They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. **No, there is not so much as one!**'"

Technically, when you look at it before God, when you look at from God's perspective—as a human being who is imperfect, who has the law of sin and death within in them—is there truly any good thing that you can really do that is at the level that God is good? *No! That's what Paul is saying here!* None is good! That doesn't mean they can't be kind to their neighbors and things like this, but to do good the way God requires it, NO ONE is doing good. That's why when you do your best you feel like you've come up short—right? Don't worry! Don't feel bad! That's just part of the way we are. Turn yourself to God. Let God intervene in your life and help you.

Verse 13: “Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips, whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; their feet *are* swift to shed blood; destruction and misery *are* in their ways; and *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes” (vs 13-18).

No wonder Paul was chased out of every synagogue he went to. I mean, that is strong stuff! That's equivalent to walking in to a Protestant church and just lambasting, just going after them; or a Catholic church. It would be fruitless to saying anything to these Buddhists who reason in circles.

Verse 19: “Now then, **we know** that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under [in] the law... [those within the law; those who know the law; as included under an umbrella, you're within the radius of that umbrella] ...so that every mouth may be stopped... [even those who don't consider themselves sinners but are sinners] ...and all the world may become guilty before God”—under God's judgment! Everyone is under God's judgment!

Don't come along and say, 'I'm in the seat of Abraham, therefore, I'm not under God's judgment; but you dirty Gentiles over here, you're no good, I don't even want to sit down and eat with you. I don't even want to touch you. I don't even want to look at you.' That's the attitude that the Jews had. Paul is laying it out them.

Verse 20—the real key: “Therefore, **by works of law there shall no flesh be justified before Him...** [Why can't you be justified by a work of law, any law? *Because law is to tell us the knowledge of sin!*] ...for **through the law is the knowledge of sin.**” The Law was not designed to justify! ***Only God can justify!***

Romans 3:21 (KJV) “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested,

being witnessed by the law and the prophets.” That is in the *King James* a very difficult Scripture. It sounds like that now God is going to do what He's going to do without any law at all. But that isn't what it means.

It means: “But now, *the* righteousness of God *that is separate [apart] from law...* [that is above law the righteousness of God] ...has been revealed... [The righteousness and justification of God is a separate act which is above law. As God, it comes down, not from law up to God.] ...being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.” It doesn't mean doing away with law; it doesn't mean in the absence of law. It means: *separate from the law!*

It's kind of reasoning in a circle. If you think it's throwing out law, and yet, the Law and Prophets witnessed to this. *NO!* It means *separate from!*

Example: If Ed were sitting a room and saying, 'I'm without a wife.' If you didn't know he was married you would think he didn't have a wife—right? But if you knew that he was married, you would know that he's saying, 'I'm separated from my wife, she's in the other room, out of town or at work.' It doesn't mean you don't have a wife.

That's the problem in trying to understand this without law. People think the absence of entirely. But it means only *separate from*. It doesn't mean the removal of.

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 13:38-39
- 2) Hebrews 9:11-15
- 3) Acts 13:39
- 4) Romans 9:30-32
- 5) Romans 10:1-4
- 6) Romans 2:1-29
- 7) Philippians 3:1-9
- 8) Colossians 2:11
- 9) Romans 3:1-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Peter 1:10-14
- Psalm 119:172
- Ephesians 2:10
- Hebrews 8; 10
- Deuteronomy 28

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Transcribed: 12-27-12