

# ROMANS

## PART 5: THE TRUE JEW

Romans 2:17-29

Mike Taylor [www.TaylorNotes.Info](http://www.TaylorNotes.Info)



In this passage Paul is using diatribe<sup>1</sup> to confront unsaved Jews who felt they were beyond God's judgment because they were not like the gentiles. He may also be addressing Christian Jews in Rome who were carrying their sense of religious superiority into the church.

### A. MAIN IDEA



A Jew who is focused only on outward religious physical observances is not a real Jew, but a true Jew has God's law written on his heart.

### B. EXPLORING THE TEXT (ROM. 2:17-29)

*"Now you, if you call yourself a Jew; if you rely on the law and boast in God; <sup>18</sup> if you know his will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law; <sup>19</sup> if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, <sup>20</sup> an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth--*

*<sup>21</sup> you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? <sup>22</sup> You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup> You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? <sup>24</sup> As it is written: "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."*

*<sup>25</sup> Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. <sup>26</sup> So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? <sup>27</sup> The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are lawbreakers. <sup>28</sup> A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God."*

<sup>1</sup> Diatribe is a rhetorical technique where one creates a dialog with a fictitious opponent.

### C. QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

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1. What is the "law" Paul is referring to in this passage?
2. What are the two foundational principles of the Mosaic Law (Deut. 6:5-6; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 10:25-27)?
3. What criticism was Paul making toward the Jews (17-24)?
4. What point was Paul making in 2:25-29?
5. What kind of a Jew is Paul describing in 2:28?
6. What kind of a Jew is Paul describing in 2:29?
7. What does it mean to have God's law written on your heart (2:15)?

### D. APPLYING THE TEXT

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God's law, written on my heart, is expressed when...

- ✓ I practice regular quiet time and look forward to that time with Christ.
- ✓ Making choices, I seek Christ's guidance first.
- ✓ My relationship with Christ is motivated more by love than duty of fear.
- ✓ My actions demonstrate a desire to build God's kingdom rather than my own.
- ✓ Peace, contentment, and joy characterize my life rather than worry or anxiety.
- ✓ I seek to love my neighbor as myself.
- ✓ I love God with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my mind and with all my strength.

