

**"The Doctrine of Condemnation"**

**Romans 1:18-3:20**

**Part 9**

**Introduction:** In our study of the Doctrine of Condemnation we have looked at the Rational Sinner who is guilty of suppressing the Light/Truth given to them by God. This person denies the existence of God and follows human reasoning instead. We also looked at the Reformed Sinner. This person believes in God but does not see their need of forgiveness. They compare themselves to the Rational Sinner and see themselves as "righteous" because they do not practice the same sins. But they too are guilty of sin and the judgment of God is according to Truth against all sinners. By judging others, the Reformed Sinner proves they have within their hearts a law. They know right from wrong. There is a moral standard placed with every person. They however are more refined in the way they sin as compared to the Rational Sinner (this gives them a false sense of security) but they will still face the wrath and the judgment of God because of their sin.

Tonight, in our study we have come to the third sinner which Paul will point to.

**I. The Religious Sinner**

**Romans 2:17-3:8**

**Notice Romans 2:17**

This verse is addressed to the Religious Jew but there is an application to all Religious Sinners. Here in this verse we see that the Jew was resting in the Law. The people of Israel were God's chosen people and to them was given the Law through Moses. Because of this the Jew believed he was exempt from the judgment of God. Notice the words of McDonald on this verse:

*"There is no doubt that many Jews felt they were immune from God's judgment. God would never send a Jew to hell, they thought. The Gentiles, on the other hand, were fuel for the flames of hell. Paul must now destroy this pretension by showing that under certain circumstances Gentiles may be closer to God than Jews. First, he reviews those things which a Jew prized as giving him an inside track with God. He bore the name of a Jew and thus was a member of God's chosen earthly people. He rested on the law, which was never designed to give rest but rather to awaken the conscience to a sense of sinfulness. He gloried in God, the only true God, who had entered into a unique covenant relationship with the nation of Israel."*

Because the Jew was of the chosen people he made his boast in God. We can see the attitude of the Religious Sinner in the conversation which Jesus had with His followers as the religious Jews of His day listened in.

**John 8:31-41**

<sup>31</sup> Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

<sup>32</sup> And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

<sup>33</sup> They answered him, we be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sawest thou, Ye shall be made free?

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

<sup>35</sup> And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

<sup>36</sup> If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

<sup>37</sup> I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

<sup>38</sup> I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

<sup>39</sup> They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, if ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

<sup>40</sup> But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

<sup>41</sup> Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, we be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

<sup>43</sup> Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

<sup>44</sup> Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

The Jews believed because they were of the seed of Abraham this automatically made God their Father. Therefore, the Religious Jew rested in the Law and in their ancestry. They believed they were exempt from the judgment of God.

There was something which the Religious Jews neglected to see within their own lives and it is revealed in Jesus Words as recorded by Matthew. They were shallow and everything was about the external.

**Matthew 23:25-28**

*<sup>25</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.*

*<sup>26</sup> Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.*

*<sup>27</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.*

*<sup>28</sup> Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.*

The Jews were not able to keep the Law and instead of allowing the Law to lead them to see their need of a Savior they placed their focus was upon the external ceremonies of the Law. They were guilty of hypocrisy. Notice the words of Cole:

*"Of course, the Jews did obey some of the external requirements of the Law. They were very careful concerning ceremonial cleanliness. They meticulously tithed even their table spices. They fasted and prayed at the stipulated times. But Jesus rebuked them because while they honored God with their lips, their hearts were far from Him (Mark 7:6). They knew God's commandments, but they just kept those that could be seen by men, so that they looked spiritual. They didn't seek to please God from the heart. Hypocrisy is all about maintaining outward appearances, with no regard to obedience from the heart."*

To pull all of this together we can see that the Religious Jew/Sinner is lost and they too need the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let us notice the Truth they have.

**Notice Romans 2:18**

They know the MORAL will of God and they even approve the MORAL will of God. This possession of the Truth placed the Religious Jew in a very dangerous situation.

**Matthew 25:14-19**

*<sup>14</sup> For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.*

*<sup>15</sup> And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.*

*<sup>16</sup> Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.*

*<sup>17</sup> And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.*

*<sup>18</sup> But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.*

*<sup>19</sup> After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.*

Here in the Parable of the Talents we see that there will be a day of reckoning and each person will be held accountable for the Truth entrusted to them. The Jew was given the Law and was instructed from the Law and knows the MORAL will of God so that raises them up to a higher level of accountability. Let us now notice how the Religious Jew views themselves.

**Notice Romans 2:19-20**

The Religious Jew seen themselves as the example for all others to follow. They saw themselves as a guide to the blind, a light to those in the darkness, and teachers of the foolish and the immature. The bottom line here is the Religious Jew saw themselves as superior to the Gentiles. To the Jew it was the Gentile who was blind, in the dark, foolish and immature.

Now let us see the conviction from Paul.

**Notice Romans 2:21**

They were very quick to instruct others out of the Law but they refused to acknowledge they were guilty of breaking the Law. They preached that man should not steal but they were guilty of stealing. They may not break into another man's house and steal but they had their ways of stealing. We can get a picture from the Old Testament as to what Paul is speaking of here.

**Amos 8:4-6**

*<sup>4</sup> Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail,*

<sup>5</sup> *Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?*

<sup>6</sup> *That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?*

Things were the same in Paul's day.

**James 5:1-6**

*Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.*

<sup>2</sup> *Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.*

<sup>3</sup> *Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.*

<sup>4</sup> *Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.*

**Matthew 21:12-13**

<sup>12</sup> *And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,*

<sup>13</sup> *And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.*

They were guilty of doing exactly what they preached against.

**Notice Romans 2:22a**

They also preached against adultery and at the same time they were guilty. Most likely Paul had in mind here what Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount.

**Matthew 5:20, 27-28, 31-32**

<sup>20</sup> For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>27</sup> Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

<sup>28</sup> But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

<sup>31</sup> It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

<sup>32</sup> But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

The Religious Jew had a way to twist the Law in order to justify what they desired to do.

#### **Notice Romans 2:22b.**

The meaning of this statement is not clear. The Religious Jews preached against idolatry but they had no problem with idolatry if they could make a profit from it. The phrase "commit sacrilege" means to "rob temples". They had no problem with idolatry if it would bring in a profit. Some believe they would rob from the pagan temples and then sell what they had stolen. Others believe they robbed from God's Temple by withholding tithes and so their money became an idol to them. Whatever Paul refers to here we know they were guilty of practicing what they preached against making them hypocrites.

Let us now notice the condemnation.

#### **Notice Romans 2:23-24**

They boasted of the Law and saw themselves as representatives of God. But they were guilty! Because of their hypocrisy they were dishonoring God. People could see through the masks which they were wearing. They preached one thing but practiced another. Let me show you the words of John the Baptist to the Religious Jews.

#### **Matthew 3:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

<sup>8</sup> Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

<sup>9</sup> And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

John called them vipers because their preaching and their practice poisoned many people's minds. Let us notice how Jesus addressed the Religious Jews.

**Matthew 23:13-15**

*<sup>13</sup> But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.*

*<sup>14</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.*

*<sup>15</sup> Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.*

**Notice Romans 2:24 again.**

Paul lays upon them the guilt of blasphemy. This to the Jew was the greatest judgment which could be pronounced on them. Their life style was dishonoring to God. They were not turning people to God but they were turning them away from God.

**Conclusion:**

This was addressed to the Religious Jews of Paul's day but it is applicable to anyone today who is religious but not saved. It is not enough to know the Truth. It is not enough to know the will of God. The Truth must enter the heart and there must be a transformation. Religion will not save anyone. Ceremonies and rituals will not get one person into heaven. The law was never given to save anyone but it was given to help us to see we are guilty. So often when people come face to face with their true sinful heart they turn to external rituals and practices to make up for their sinfulness. The Jews relied upon circumcision. People today REST in church membership, a Christian family, a position within the church, finances given to the church, and baptism. None of these will save anyone.

If you are RESTING in anything other than the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross for your salvation then you are a Religious Sinner who needs a Savior.