

Lesson 3:  
The Jews' circumcision has become "unprofitable"  
Romans 2:1 – 3:8

**Romans 2:1-16: The Jews are (also) inexcusable**

1. Who does Paul say "therefore" (because of his prior argument) is "without excuse"? [2:1; cp 1:18-22]
  - Why, exactly, does Paul say these people are in this situation? [2:1]
  
2. What then is the only true standard? [2:2; cp 1:17; 3:4; etc]
  - So what does this say of those who practice unrighteousness even as they recognize it enough to "judge" it? [2:3; cp 1:32(!)]
  
3. In what way might the Jew (Paul's intended "audience" for this section) "**despise**" ('presume on', 'think lightly of') His goodness" [NKJV, ESV, NASB]? [2:4; cp 2:1-3; *see also Acts 14:17; 17:24-30 (Gentiles, too!)*]
  
4. Because of this attitude, what does Paul declare about such people? [2:5; cp 1:18]
  - On whom does "the righteous judgment of God" come, and based on what? [2:5-6; cp Psalm 62:12; *but see Romans 4:5-8; Psalm 32:1-2*]
  
5. What are **the only two** possible outcomes when God judges the works of men? [2:7-10]
  - Paul has repeatedly used the phrase "the Jew first and also the Greek" (1:16; 2:9-10; the idea is also present in 1:14-15); what is the conclusion he intends to draw by stating this? [2:11; cp 3:23]
  
6. Because God is impartial, it is not the law (of Moses) that saves man or condemns him. What is the common factor that brings ALL men (Jew and Gentile) under judgment? [2:12; cp 3:23]
  - In truth, how does the law work with regard to justification? [2:13; however, 3:10-12, 23]
  - In what way does Paul explain that the Gentiles "prove" that they are aware of the concept of law and have also fallen short of justification? [2:14-15; cp 1:32 – 2:3]
  
7. In order for God to be completely impartial, in what way will He "judge the secrets of men"? [2:16; cp John 12:47-48; Acts 17:30-31; *see also Romans 3:29-31*]

**Romans 2:17-29: "...your circumcision has become uncircumcision"**

8. Paul begins this section by making a "list" of the things which might cause the Jew to think he would receive "favored" treatment and thus escape the judgment of God in spite of his acts. What are these specific things that Paul mentions? [2:17-20 (8 or 9 items, depending on your translation)]

- [2:17]:

- [2:17]:

- [2:17]:

- [2:18]:

- [2:18]:

- [2:18]:

- [2:19]:

- [2:20]:

- [2:20]:

9. However, even with all of their special knowledge of the law and God's will to the point of being able to instruct others, what has been their practice regarding the law in their own lives? [2:21-23; cp the earlier injunction Paul made in 2:13]

10. What is one of the results of this Jewish hypocrisy, which Paul cites as "proof" against them? [2:24]

11. With regard to their circumcision (a sign of the Jews' **covenant** with God), what gives it value? [2:25]

- But what is the situation of the circumcised Jew who violates the law of the covenant? [2:25; cp the language used in Deuteronomy 10:15-17; 30:6]

- And what is the situation of the uncircumcised Gentile who does what the law requires? [2:26]

12. Because of this, what does Paul say the "righteous" Gentile would be able to do with regard to the "unrighteous" Jew? [2:27; cp 1:32; 2:14-15, 24; etc]

13. Confirming that "there is no partiality with God", what does Paul say is the "mark" of the one who is **truly** a Jew? [2:28-29]

- How does the phrase "in (by) the Spirit, not in (by) the letter" further help us better understand the nature of true "circumcision"? [2:29; cp 2:13-15; Col 2:11-12; Eph 2:11-18; see Dt 10:15-17; Jer 4:1-4]
- What is the blessed situation of the one whose **heart** has been circumcised? [2:29c; cp 2:17, 19]

### ***Romans 3:1-8: "...our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God"***

14. What question does Paul pose, anticipating it as an "objection" to what he has just stated? [3:1; cp a similar approach used by Paul in Galatians 3:19, 21]
15. What is the great "advantage" that Paul declares the Jews to have had over the Gentiles? [3:2; cp Paul's "argument" in Galatians 3:23-25]
16. Even though they had the law committed into their hands, did ALL Jews believe? [3:3]
  - Does the Jews' unbelief mean that God Himself was "unfaithful"? [3:3-4; i.e., because He promised to save them, yet Paul is declaring that not all Jews will be saved; cp Hebrews 8:7-8; etc]
  - Considering the context of Psalm 51 (which Paul cited here), how do David's words help declare the **righteousness** of God, even if his favored people should come to be condemned? [3:4; cp Ps 51:1-4; remember that David is called "a man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:21-22; Ps 89:20; 1 Sm 13:14)]
17. In chapter 3:5-8, Paul sets up another false argument from the Jews (he will deal with their objection more fully in chapters 9-11). According to 3:5 and 3:7, what is the basis of their argument? [3:5, 7]
  - What is Paul's emphatic initial response to this "accusation"? [3:6]
  - What is Paul's conclusion about why God MUST reveal His wrath? [3:6b; cp 1:18]
18. Because Paul teaches salvation by God's grace and not by perfect law keeping, what does he say some have accused him of teaching, in practice? [3:8]
  - What is his emphatic response in denying this accusation? [3:8b]