

¹⁷ But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God ¹⁸ and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; ¹⁹ and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, ²⁰ an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— ²¹ you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? ²² You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? ²³ You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. ²⁴ For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

Message Ideas

- ◆ God formed the nation of Israel to teach other nations how to trust and praise God.

- ◆ Because of self-righteousness and hypocrisy, instead of teaching nations to praise God, Israel incites them to blaspheme Him.

- ◆ Since Israel’s mission is now the church’s mission, we can also make the same terrible mistake.

- ◆ People will often resist the gospel when we present ourselves as experts of righteousness instead of fellow students in need of grace.

- ◆ Because of the sensitive nature of message we are sharing with lost people, we must humbly offer ourselves as an example of what God offers to do to them.

- ◆ Every Christian has many areas of ongoing struggles. The Lord wants to use you as a classroom-example of grace to the world around you. This means being honest with non-believers about the ways Jesus is presently saving you from the power of sin in your life.

- ◆ A humble student of grace will keep taking people back to how Jesus handles and addresses our sins: bearing all our blasphemy on the cross to transform us into those who trust and praise God.

Small Group Questions

Getting Started

1. In verse 21 we have people trying to teach who had never been adequately taught themselves. Do you have any experiences with this? Share.

Digging Deeper (Read Romans 2:17-24)

2. Read verse 17. Look up the word “Jew.” What’s the definition and history?

3. God set Israel apart to be a missionary-nation to win the nations to himself. Where is that suggested in verses 19&20? What are some other passages that teach this (e.g., Isaiah 2:2&3; 42:6; Zechariah 8:23; Galatians 3:8)?

4. According to verse 24, instead of Israel helping the nations “to praise” God, they incited the nations to blaspheme him. Look up and discuss the passage Paul cites in verse 24 (cf. Isaiah 52:1-12). How does this help you understand his point?

5. Read the first part of verse 21. Israel created contempt for God among the Gentiles. One reason is that they “came off” like teachers who weren’t first, ongoing students themselves.

a) What are some trades or human endeavors where a teacher must be an ongoing student?

b) Trace how Israel’s history was evidence they were more students than teachers.

c) How should Israel have used their history/example to help Gentiles meet God?

6. Israel’s mission is now the church’s mission. Where do we see that in the Bible?

7. The church can make the same terrible mistake with our mission that the Jews did. How?

8. Because of the sensitive nature of the message we are called to give lost people, we must humbly offer ourselves as an example of what God offers to do to them.

a) Why?

b) What does that look like daily?

c) What challenges do we have doing this?

d) What Biblical examples do we have of this?

Making It Real

Pray for the salvation of the people in your life.

Resources

Romans: *Righteousness from Heaven* | R. Kent Hughes. www.blueletterbible.org www.preceptaustin.org