

## INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL

### ROMANS 2:12-29

2/9/25

#### I. UNIVERSAL TRUTH

Romans 2:12-13 - “For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. <sup>13</sup>For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.”

##### A. All who sin deserve judgment

Romans 3:20 - “For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.”

##### B. External hearing of the law vs. internal doing of the law

##### C. God judges internally not externally

#### II. GENTILE IS WITHOUT EXCUSE IN JUDGMENT

Romans 2:14-16 - “For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. <sup>15</sup>They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them <sup>16</sup>on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.”

##### A. Gentiles do not possess the law externally

##### B. God’s law is impressed on every heart internally

1. Internal law = Natural law

##### C. The Gospel is what saves us from the indictment of the law

#### III. JEW IS WITHOUT EXCEPTION IN JUDGMENT

##### A. Jews possessed the law externally

Romans 2:17-24 - “But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God <sup>18</sup>and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; <sup>19</sup>and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, <sup>20</sup>an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— <sup>21</sup>you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? <sup>22</sup>You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup>You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. <sup>24</sup>For, as it is written, ‘The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.’”

1. Missed the purpose of the law – instruct

Isaiah 42:6-7 - “I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, <sup>7</sup>to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.”

## 2. Doing the external without the internal always leads to hypocrisy

### **B. Jews possessed the rite of circumcision externally**

*Romans 2:25-29 – “For circumcision indeed is of value if you obey the law, but if you break the law, your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. <sup>26</sup> So, if a man who is uncircumcised keeps the precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? <sup>27</sup> Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law. <sup>28</sup> For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. <sup>29</sup> But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.”*

#### 1. Circumcision was meant to be external and internal

*Deuteronomy 30:6 - “And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”*

*Jeremiah 4:4 - “Circumcise yourselves to the LORD; remove the foreskin of your hearts, O men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem; lest my wrath go forth like fire, and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.”*

#### 2. When we cultivate the internal the external will follow

## **COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What did you think about the message this week? What stood out to you or challenged your thinking?
2. Why does the Church today not want to talk about God’s judgement? Why is God’s judgement so important in clearly understanding the Gospel?
3. What should all of Paul’s teaching on God’s judgement (the past 3 weeks) motivate us to do?
4. What are some easy and external things that we can boast in before God? How does a passage like this help shift the focus of our boasting?
5. Why do we have such a strong urge to boast in our performance before God? What verses or biblical truths have helped you combat this mindset?
6. How can we make sure that our hearts are right as we do outward and external spiritual acts?
7. How do we cultivate the internal aspects of our spiritual walk?
8. What is one thing from the message or your Community Group this week that you need to live out? How can the group be praying and encouraging you with this?