

## The Dishonoring of God by Our Deeds

(How many of us in here would say... I know God... and I could point someone to Jesus?)

Romans 2:17-24 <sup>17</sup> 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.”

### ❖ Intro:

#### ➤ What are we going to do with these verses?

- The quick answer is.... Just move on down the line... right?
- Many people may think that this part of Romans is just for the Jews...
  - So... let's get on to the good stuff...
  - But... Remember... this book is written to Jews and Gentiles...
- **And... there is something here for you today...**
  - And it would be missed if you just read past this...
  - This is why I am such a firm believer in Expository Preaching...
    - ◆ You get into things you might have otherwise overlooked...
- **What does God say about His Word?**
  - **2 Timothy 3:16-17** <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
  - With that in mind... let's dig in to God's Word today...
    - ◆ So that you and I will both be complete and equipped for every good work...

### ❖ Where Have We Been?

#### ➤ Paul is doing one main thing:

- **Making** an argument that all men everywhere are guilty before God.
  - And not only are they guilty... but they have no hope of being right with God
  - At least not on their own...
  - Not by birth or by works or by anything...
- **And they therefore** need God to intervene on their behalf...
  - And this is where Paul introduces the Gospel...
  - Because the Gospel brings a solution to man's problem of death

#### ➤ Last Week Paul instructed us:

- **It is not the hears of the law that are right before God...**
  - Rather **it is the doers...**
  - And we made the argument that a doer of the word...
    - ◆ Is not the **perfect person** who has never broken the law...
    - ◆ Rather He is someone who **loves** God and God's Word
    - ◆ He **relies** on God to help him walk by the Word by faith
    - ◆ And He **runs** to God's provision in His Son for forgiveness
      - When he inevitably **fails** in the Word
- **At the end of the section we covered...**
  - Paul says that there is a day coming...

- When Jesus will **judge** the secrets of men... there is a day coming
  - ◆ So... let's ask a question...
- **1) What do you think is going to happen when your day comes?**
  - Pick one... (give some examples)
  - They aren't all right. They can't be can they?
    - Where did these ideas come from?
  - Which of the eternal options seem most likely?
    - Which has the most proof?
    - Where do you get your proof for what you believe?

**One More thing in the form of an introduction to these verses:**

- **2) There is a great example laid before us.**
  - A great warning for us all... and we would all be wise to heed it...
  - **As I said at the beginning of looking at these verses...**
    - We might be tempted to run past these verses because they are addressed to Jews
    - Paul is speaking directly to the Jews it seems...
    - We would be in error if we overlooked these verses as if they do not apply to us...
  - **Because they do apply to us... and I'll give you two reasons...**
    - **1) We use O.T. characters as examples on godly living all the time...**
      - ◆ we use david to teach us about how we ought to love God...
        - or we may use him to warn us against being idle and covering sin
      - ◆ We use Abraham as an example of faith
      - ◆ We use Moses and the Exodus as a correlation of how we come out of slavery
        - And how Jesus delivers us from the bondage of sin
        - And gives us rest in His forever kingdom...
    - **2) If you look close enough I think we see ourselves in these verses...**
      - ◆ during this time... the Jewish people had a history of having God's Word
        - And God is calling them into judgment for how they handled it
      - ◆ The Christian church has the teachings of God today...
        - And God will call us into judgment for how we handle it...
      - ◆ So... because you have God's Word this morning... in your hand or phone...
        - These verses speak to you

### ❖ **Where are We Going?**

- **I believe** there are three fundamental questions we need to ask in response to this text.
  - And all three are clearly stated in the text.
  - **1) Do you teach yourself?**
  - **2) Do you dishonor God by your deeds?**
  - **3) Is God blasphemed because of you?**
- **Then... I think we may need to ask a question...**
  - Because the tendency might be to run from responsibility... and that too is sin...
  - **1) Should we run from being teachers and instructors and leaders?**
    - I believe it is important to take the responsibility with soberness.
      - ◆ **James 3:1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.**
    - But Jesus also tells a story about 3 men given something from God...
      - ◆ And two did something with what God had given them.
      - ◆ One did not... and he was cast away from the Master...

- **There is a more strict judgment coming upon those of us that teach...**
  - That is for certain...
  - And I am certain that as of right now...
    - ◆ There are many areas that I have not fully listened to what I am teaching.
    - ◆ And God knows this and He is going to deal with me accordingly...
- **But we must be careful that we do not take these verses... walk away and say**
  - Well... I am not ever telling anyone anything ever again...
  - If you do... you miss the whole point here...
  - **Paul is not saying “don’t teach”**
    - ◆ Paul is reminding us that all are under sin...
    - ◆ And He is warning us against hypocrisy...
    - ◆ He is reminding us to teach ourselves
    - ◆ He is warning us against dishonoring God
    - ◆ He is warning us against the possibility of people blaspheming God b/c of us

### ❖ 1) Do You Teach Yourself?

- **<sup>17</sup> 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?**

#### ➤ Do You Teach Yourself?

- I want to get to this question... b/c I think it is the question Paul wants them to consider

#### ➤ But First... Let's notice to whom He is speaking...

- He really is trying to make sure the Jewish people are addressed here...
- There was a real problem amongst Jews...
- They thought that they had this place of safety with God b/c they had the laws of God
- **They had begun to use the law, not as a way to God by faith...**
  - Rather... they used the law to exalt themselves above others...
  - The law had become a way for them to act externally as if they were higher
  - They had become a big bunch of hypocrites
- **They used the law... not to boast of God's greatness... But to boast of their own...**
  - For having received it... for understanding it... and for following it...
- **Now... let us not forget... that although His primary focus are the Jewish Teachers...**
  - The warning is for all of us..

#### ➤ The Warning is for all of us who teach...

- Look at the examples He uses...
  - **1) they relied on the law and boasted in God**
    - ◆ They say... Hey... we live by the Bible... God is great...
  - **2) they knew his will and approved what is excellent...**
    - ◆ They could tell you what God's plan was and agreed with God's good teachings
  - **3) they were instructed from the Bible**
    - ◆ meaning they had been taught from the Bible... (the part they had)
  - **4) they were a guide to the blind**
    - ◆ they helped guide people who didn't know God... toward God
  - **5) they were a light in the darkness**
    - ◆ this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine...
      - they thought of themselves as lights in a dark world
  - **6) they thought of themselves as instructors of the foolish**

- ◆ so... in many ways they felt like they could correct the wrong thoughts of fools
- ◆ A fool was someone who did not fear God...
  - someone who did not listen to God's Word
  - who said, there is no God
- **7) they considered themselves teachers of children**
  - ◆ so... if it were young people... or people who knew little of God's Word
  - ◆ They considered themselves to know enough to teach and instruct
- **8) they had the law...** which was the embodiment of knowledge and truth
  - ◆ Finally He says... that they possessed the embodiment of knowledge and truth
    - In the law of God...
    - Knowledge and truth... which are amazing things to possess...
    - Are embodied... or the form of..
    - I think He means they can hold in their hands knowledge and truth...
      - And then place it in their hearts...
      - And have knowledge and truth within themselves from the law...
- **I don't know about you...** but we are in the same exact situation as the Jews...
  - We have the Word of God in the Bible...
- **Are we not all teachers in some sense....?**
  - I do not think he is only thinking about Rabbi's here...
  - I think He is painting with a broader brush...
- **So.... Do You Teach Yourself?**
  - **First...** what is clear here is that his audience knows the Word of God...
    - They knew some things about the Word of God
      - ◆ And they taught some things about the Word of God
      - ◆ I would dare say that many of us in here know much of the Word of God...
  - **Paul isn't questioning that... He is questioning what they are doing with it...**
  - **You who teach others, do you teach yourself?**
    - The idea here is... if we tell others about God, or who God is, or what God says
      - ◆ What God expects... etc...
      - ◆ Do we also **live** that out?
    - **Paul isn't just asking... do you teach yourself...**
      - ◆ He is asking... do you **obey** also...
        - He has just said it is the doers of the law that are right in God's eyes
    - **Are we instructing ourselves...?**
      - ◆ The word has the sense: to impart skills
      - ◆ Do we impart skills to ourselves?
    - **Jesus said:**
      - ◆ **Matt 23:3<sup>3</sup> so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.**
    - **God said through the Psalmist:**
      - ◆ **Psalm 50:16-17 But to the wicked God says: "What right have you to recite my statutes or take my covenant on your lips? <sup>17</sup> For you hate discipline, and you cast my words behind you.**
  - **It is not enough:**
    - To hear God's Word... to memorize God's Word... to teach His Word...
    - To have it written and hung all over your home...
    - It is not enough to say... man... I love God's Word...
    - It is not enough to come to church every week of the year...
  - **Are we **applying** what we are learning?**

- **This year...** we have looked at some weighty topics...
  - ◆ We started the year considering the idea of **consecrating** ourselves before God
- **We looked at:**
  - ◆ **Romans 12:1-2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup>Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
- **Then... we looked at**
  - ◆ **Colossians 3:1-2** If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup>Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.
- **A few weeks ago God was kind enough to break into our hearts with:**
  - ◆ **Romans 2:4-5** Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? <sup>5</sup>But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.
- **Are we instructing ourselves... are we obeying? Are we any different?**
  - What are we doing with God's kind and powerful and authoritative Words of instruction toward us

## ❖ 2) Do You Dishonor God by Your Deeds?

- **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.**
- **Here... Paul list three major sins...**
  - Stealing, adultery, robbing temples... idol worship...
  - But... I think you could throw any sin in here you want...
  - The point remains the same...
    - Do you do the opposite of what you say?
  - **He has already made the point that they judge those who do various sins...**
    - Then they do the exact same kinds of things...
    - Not every sinner is the same... but all sin has the same result...
    - **It dishonors God...**
- **Dishonor means:** to bring shame on someone or fail to respect someone
  - Jews, Christians, all people are made to honor God
  - We as Christians are especially meant to bring honor to God...
  - Honor is **respect** toward God... it is **esteeming** God greatly
  - Dishonor is when we fail to honor God
- **O.T. Example from the people of Israel...**
  - **In Ezekiel 16...** Here, we find God's complaint against Jerusalem in graphic terms
    - In the first part of the chapter, the Lord speaks of finding his people as if they were a helpless, abandoned baby.
    - Caring for them, they grew up well. As a father would have done for his daughter, the Lord **"clothed [Jerusalem] with colorful garments"** (16:10)
    - and gave her many other lavish gifts.
    - Thus, he says, **"Among the nations you were famous for your beauty.**
    - **It was perfect because of the splendor that I had given you"** (16:14).
    - But Jerusalem did not use God's gifts for good, but rather for evil.

- For example, the Lord says, "You took some of your clothing to make colorful shrines and prostituted yourself in them" (16:16).
  - ◆ And they did so much worse... walking away from their Father
- God then asks this question... "How sick is your heart?"

➤ **Also... King David...**

- Sinned with Bathsheba...
- After the sin and cover up were over...
- David is confronted by the prophet Nathan...
- And Nathan tells David
  - 2 Samuel 12:9 'Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight?

➤ **David had despised God's word...**

- very similar to dishonoring God by breaking His commands...
- it means to hate... to want to get away from

➤ **Are We Dishonoring God by our actions?**

- Ask yourself this question...
  - just pick a sin that you already know from God you shouldn't
  - Are you despising God's Word by doing evil?

❖ **3) Is God Blasphemed Because of You?**

- <sup>24</sup>For, as it is written, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

➤ **Notice this:** there is a direct correlation b/w so called followers of God dishonoring God...
 

- And the blaspheming of God by unbelievers...

➤ **Blaspheme – slandered... spoken against...**

- Therefore His name is dishonored...
- This is the direct result of believers dishonoring God...
  - By doing the opposite of what they tell others to do...

➤ **How is this done?**

- Anytime we disregard what we know God has said...
- When we ignore His instructions
- When we ignore God
- When our lifestyle looks like the world...
- The world then mocks our so called God...
- Even when God is disciplining us because of our failures

➤ **This is really really important...**

- **Because there is no more important thing to God... than the glory of His name...**
  - Isaiah 48:9-11 *For my name's sake I defer my anger, for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.*
  - Yet he saved them *for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power.* Psalm 106:7-8
  - For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth." (Romans 9:17)
  - *I acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out.* (Ezekiel 20:14)
  - Ezekiel 36:22 Thus says the Lord God, It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but *for the sake of my holy name...*

- **If there was something more important that I had noticed I would tell you...**
  - So, if God's name is so important to Him... It should be important to us...
- **Honoring God is also how we bring people to God...**
  - **Matthew 5:16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."**
- **This is our ultimate purpose:**
  - To bring honor to God by mirroring His image in our lives...
  - This is our purpose...
  - We certainly do not want to do the opposite...
    - **Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, every one who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory. (Isaiah 43:6-7)**
- **We were not made to bring shame to the name of God**
- **Is how you live causing others to bring disgrace upon God...**
  - Oh... you claim to be a Christian but...
    - You do not trust God in tough times
    - You slander and gossip other people
    - You do not love your wife or husband
    - You do not serve your wife or husband
    - You are selfish... you do not put others before yourself
    - You have a filthy mouth
    - You are greedy and do not give to God
  - **What does your lifestyle say about you?**

❖ **1) Should we run from being teachers and instructors and leaders?**

❖ **The Lesson to Be Learned...**

- It is not that we run from being people that are a light...
- The lesson is... We are all guilty before God...
- The lesson is also... Once we come to know God... let's live in such a way...
- **That:**
  - 1) **We are always teaching ourselves**
  - 2) **We are never dishonoring God with our deeds**
  - 3) **No one blasphemes the name of God because of us**

❖ **Invitation**