

## **20230507 Circumcision of the heart**

(Understanding the Gospel series Part 4)

Romans 2:6-11, 28-29

6 God “will repay each person according to what they have done.”

7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.

8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

9 There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile;

10 but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

11 For God does not show favoritism.

28 A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical.

29 No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person’s praise is not from other people, but from God.

### **Romans 1:32**

32 Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them;

### **Shocking reality to religious people**

#### **Romans 2:1**

1 You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.

The point God is making through Paul here is very clear. God’s final evaluation and verdict will be based, **NOT ON OUR EXTERNAL PRIVILEGES, BUT ON OUR INTERNAL TRANSFORMATION WHICH MUST BE DISPLAYED BY OUR EXTERNAL BEHAVIORS.**

#### **Matthew 7:21**

21 Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’

#### **Spiritual reality check for Jewish people (religious people and moralists)**

#### **Romans 2:2-3**

2 And we know that God, in his justice, will punish anyone who does such things.

3 Since you judge others for doing these things, why do you think you can avoid God’s judgment when you do the same things?

### **GENUINE BIBLICAL FAITH FROM ROMANS 2**

#### **1. Only because God is patient.**

#### **Romans 2:4-5**

4 Don’t you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can’t you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?

5 But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. **For a day of anger is coming, when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.**

## 2. The standard of God's judgement: What we have done

### Romans 2:6

6 He will judge everyone according to what they have done.

- Who's the judge? God through Jesus Christ
- Who are going to be judged? Everyone.
- What is the standard of God's judgment? According to what we have done!

**How will our action be evaluated by Jesus Christ for judgment? Our actions will be evaluated based on our knowledge.**

### Romans 2:12-16

12 When the Gentiles sin, they will be destroyed, even though they never had God's written law. And the Jews, who do have God's law, will be judged by that law when they fail to obey it.

13 For merely listening to the law doesn't make us right with God. It is obeying the law that makes us right in his sight.

14 Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it.

15 They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.

16 And this is the message I proclaim—that the day is coming when God, through Christ Jesus, will judge everyone's secret life.

### Luke 12:47 – 48

47 The servant who knows the master's will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be beaten with many blows.

48 But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

**What's important is not how much we know, but how much we practice what we already know in true spirituality.**

### Romans 2:25-27

25 The Jewish ceremony of circumcision has value only if you obey God's law. But if you don't obey God's law, you are no better off than an uncircumcised Gentile.

26 And if the Gentiles obey God's law, won't God declare them to be his own people?

27 In fact, uncircumcised Gentiles who keep God's law will condemn you Jews who are circumcised and possess God's law but don't obey it.

**3. Circumcision of the heart: When our internal transformation is genuine, then our external life shows it automatically by loving God and loving others.**

### Genuine biblical spirituality

**(1) What is not: Our spiritual life has nothing to do with the natural influences.**

### Romans 2:28

28 For you are not a true Jew just because you were born of Jewish parents or because you have gone through the ceremony of circumcision.

**(2) What is: The true spiritual life begins when our heart is right with God.**

### Romans 2:29

29 No, **a true Jew is one whose heart is right with God**. And true circumcision is not merely obeying the letter of the law; rather, **it is a change of heart produced by the Spirit**. And a person with **a changed heart seeks praise from God**, not from people.

**A. It is a matter of our heart.**

**Ezekiel 36:26**

26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

**B. The transformation of our heart is the work of the Spirit of God.**

**John 6:63**

63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you - they are full of the Spirit and life.

**John 3:6**

6 Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

**John 6:29**

29 ...The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.

**John 8:31**

31 ...If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Dwelling in God's truth. That's what biblical faith looks like in our life, and the result comes as the fruition of our joyous obedience to the will of God.

**C. The transformed heart obeys God's will with joy.**

Paul says (v29),

"And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people."

**Isaiah 53:6b**

"...The LORD has laid on Jesus Christ the iniquity of us all."

Therefore,

We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. (Romans 5)