

# Sin and Condemnation: The World's need to get right with God

(60)

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[Romans 1:18-3:20](#)

(Continuation from 03/12/17)

## D. God's Case against the Religionist (Jew), [Romans 2:17-29](#)

[\(Romans 2:17-29\)](#) **Introduction— Religionist— Jew:** this passage is an excellent study of the Christian religionist or church member as well as of the Jew.

God's case against the Christian religionist **includes four points.**

1. **The religionist professes religion (v.17-20).**
2. **The religionist fails to live what he professes (v.21-24).**
3. **The religionist believes that a ritual (circumcision) is the way to secure God's approval (v.25-27).**
4. **The religionist misses the whole point: a true religionist is a man who is righteous inwardly (v.28-29).**

### 1. [\(Romans 2:17-20\)](#) **Religionists:** the religionist (Jew) professes religion.

**Romans 2:17-20 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup>“But if you bear the name “Jew” and rely upon the Law and boast in God,  
<sup>18</sup>and know *His* will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law,  
<sup>19</sup>and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,  
<sup>20</sup>a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth.”

### DEEPER STUDY # 1

[\(Romans 2:17-29\)](#) **Religionists:** a religionist is a person who is interested in religion and professes religion. It was because of the Jews' extreme interest in religion that they were looked upon as the epitome of religionists. However, most people are considered religious and profess some religion regardless of nationality. Therefore, most people can be called religionists.

There are **two classes of religionists.**

1. There are those who feel they are *good enough* for God as they are, that they are doing enough good for God to accept them. They cannot believe that God would reject them when they

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stand face to face with Him. True, they do wrong, but not that much wrong, not enough for God to reject and condemn them for eternity. These persons go about living as they wish, worshipping God only enough to satisfy their consciences. The vast, vast majority of people are in this class of self-righteousness. Few men believe they will be rejected by God and refused entrance into heaven. They feel they have *enough goodness* to make them acceptable to God.

**Titus 3:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup>“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.”

**Proverbs 20:6 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup>“Many a man proclaims his own loyalty, But who can find a trustworthy man?”

**Proverbs 30:12 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup>“There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes, Yet is not washed from his filthiness.”

2. There are those who have a sensitive conscience and feel the need to give themselves to *good works* as much as is humanly possible. They work and do good in order to secure the favor of God. They believe that good works is what it takes to make them righteous and to build them up in the eyes of God. Therefore, they labor all their lives trying to build up virtue and merit before God. They try their best to make themselves acceptable to God.

**Romans 3:20 (NASB)**

<sup>20</sup>“Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law *comes* the knowledge of sin.”

**Galatians 2:16 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup>“Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.”

**Ephesians 2:8-9 (NASB)**

<sup>8</sup>“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;

<sup>9</sup>not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Note that a genuine believer is not being classified as a religionist. **The reason is pointed:** the true believer does not follow a religion; he follows Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is alive; He is living in another world—the spiritual world, the spiritual dimension of being. The believer is in touch with Him daily, communicating through the Holy Spirit and prayer. What the believer does is follow Christ; he lives the life of Jesus Christ, not the rules of a religion. Therefore, the genuine believer is a disciple of Christ, not of religion.

**Galatians 2:20 (NASB)**

<sup>20</sup>“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

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**Ephesians 2:22 (NASB)**

<sup>22</sup>“In whom **[Christ]** you also are being built together into a dwelling **[habitation]** of God in the Spirit.”

**1 Corinthians 3:16 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup>“Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?”

**1 Corinthians 6:19 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup>“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?”

**Philippians 1:21 (NASB)**

<sup>21</sup>“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

**Colossians 1:27 (NASB)**

<sup>27</sup>“To whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

**1 John 3:24 (NASB)**

<sup>24</sup>“The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.”

**Revelation 3:20 (NASB)**

<sup>20</sup>“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”

Do you remember last week when we discussed point # 7:

7. The religionist is sure he is a light to those in darkness ([Romans 2:19](#)).

**Romans 2:19 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup>“And are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in **darkness**.”

The word “darkness” (*skotei*) means “those who stumble about searching for the light, but are unable to find it”. The religionist feels he has found the light; therefore, he is a light to those who are searching for it. However, the religionist makes a serious mistake. Religion is not the light of the world—Jesus Christ is. (See [Deeper Study # 2—John 8:12](#) see below for more discussion)

**John 9:41 (NASB)**

<sup>41</sup>“Jesus said to them, “If you were **blind**, you would have no sin; but since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

**Revelation 3:17 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup>“Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and **blind** and naked.”

## DEEPER STUDY # 2

**John 8:12 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup>“Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

**(John 8:12) Light:** Jesus is said to be the *Light of men* (**John 1:4**) and the *Light of the world* (**John 8:12; John 9:5; John 12:46**).

**John 1:4 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup>“In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.”

**John 8:12 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup>“Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

**John 9:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup>“While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”

**John 12:46 (NASB)**

<sup>46</sup>“I have come *as* Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.”

It is possible for the Light, Jesus Himself, to be *in men* (**John 11:10**; cp. **Colossians 1:27**), and for men to become children of Light (**John 12:34-36**).

**John 11:10 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup>“But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

**Colossians 1:27 (NASB)**

<sup>27</sup>“To whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

**John 12:34-36 (NASB)**

<sup>34</sup>“The crowd then answered Him, “We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?”

<sup>35</sup>So Jesus said to them, “For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

<sup>36</sup> While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.” These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.”

Apparently, Jesus used the word *light* often. John uses the word about **twenty-one (21) times**.

### What is meant by calling Jesus the Light?

1. Jesus, the Light, is light by nature. Light is what He is within Himself, within His being, His nature, His essence, His character. Scripture says.....
  - a. that “**God is Light**” (**1 John 1:5**);

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- b. that Jesus is “**the image of the invisible God**” ([Colossians 1:15](#));
- c. therefore, “**Jesus is Light.**” He is “**the Light of the world.**”

2. Jesus, the Light, tells us that He is holy, righteous, and pure. Light is the symbol of purity and holiness. Light means the absence of darkness and blindness; it has no spots of darkness or blackness, nor of sin and shame.

3. Jesus, the Light, reveals. His light shows clearly the nature, the meaning, and the destiny of all things. His light shines in, spots, opens up, identifies, illuminates, and shows things as they really are. The light of Jesus Christ shows the truth about the world and man and God. The light of Jesus Christ reveals that He loves and cares for man and wants man to love and care for Him.

4. Jesus, the Light, guides. His light allows a man to walk out of darkness. Man no longer has to grope, grasp, and stumble about trying to find his way through life. The path of life can now be clearly seen.

5. Jesus, the Light, does away with darkness and with chaos. His light routs, wipes out, strips away and erases the darkness. The empty chaos of creation was routed by the light given by God ([Genesis 1:3](#)). Jesus Christ is the Light that can save man from chaos ([John 14:1](#), [John 14:17](#); [John 12:46](#); [John 16:33](#)).

Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Light of the world at the great Feast of Tabernacles ([John 7:2](#)).

[John 7:2 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>2</sup>“Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near.”

The very first ceremony of the Feast holds great significance for Jesus' claim. It was called “**The Illumination of the Temple**” and was held in the Court of the Women.

The center of the Court was surrounded by large sections of stadium-like seats. In the open space of the Court sat four huge candelabra. When darkness fell the candelabra were lit, and the elders danced and led the people in singing psalms before the Lord all night. The brilliance and glow from the burning flames of the huge candelabra were said to be so bright that the light could be seen throughout the whole city. It was against this background that Jesus cried out, “**I am the Light of the world.**”