



# Romans 11 – Piety Reveals False Teachers

Dr. Leon L. Sanders

Romans 2:17-24

# Prologue: Pious Judge

- Judge of Romans would be considered a pious man  
(Ro 2:1-4)
  - Using the force of law to discover and eradicate evil
  - Boundary of evil stopped just short of the judge
  - Judge could view himself as pious, good, when in fact he is guilty of breaking the law and thus...evil
  - Piety *whitewashes* pillars of wickedness leading people into false sense of righteousness (Mt 23:25-28)



# Prologue: Pious Hearers of Law

- Christ in His Sermon on the Mount makes a clear distinction between those who hear and those who do
  - Those who only hear are not called of the Father (Mt 7:21-23)
  - These are *whitewashed* graves of dead bones: unclean (Mt 23:27-28)
- Only those who do the will of the Father, like the Son, will enter the Kingdom; this demonstrates their new nature from the Father (2Co 5:17)

# Tension in Scripture

- The Bible has always had a tension between the word of God and the response of the individual
  - Man attracted to hyperliteralism not contained in the Bible: Eat of the tree...physically die immediately (Ge 3:3-5)
  - Man also attracted to hyper-emotionalism denigrating biblical doctrine in favor of emotions (1Sa 10:5-6)
  - Father is not God of confusion; the spirits of believers are guided by their minds via the Word by the Spirit (1Co 14:26-33)

# Pietism vs Pietism

## Pietism as a Movement

- Promoted emotions over doctrines as superior
- Struggle to understand non-empirical vs empirical
- Over emphasis of either unbalances biblical belief

## Pietism as Faith

- Pietism has imitated faith since sin introduced
- Pietism promotes group morality over salvation
- Government enforces values for its own security



# Jewish Pietism Unmasked

- The only movement that could bring any claim against Christ was Judaism, as it often did (Ac 21:10-14)
  - Law erected barriers only a privileged few could attain
  - Jews did not accept Jesus as Messiah as He did not keep the oral traditions of their Law – Human interpretation
  - Christians often too emotional chasing every wind of changing doctrine rather than resting in the OT (Ep 4:11-16)

# Paul Discusses Error of Judaism

- Paul discusses the central error of Judaism, which they viewed as their central doctrinal pillar – The Law
  - The Law, the ceremonial and civil aspects of the Mosaic Law, made Judah a theocracy
  - Ten Words laid the foundation for the Mosaic Law as it does for all human laws: written on all people's hearts
  - Keeping ceremonial/civil laws does not make one righteous; all are condemned by the Ten Words

# Paul Highlights Jewish Error

- Paul's word usage reveals the pride and failure of the *False Jews* to grasp Christ's salvation message
  - Jews identified directly with God; inseparable from God
  - Truth tied directly to the Law; Jews did not understand Law
  - They boasted they kept the Law, while goyim could not, making them sole heirs of God's salvation; yet, their knowledge of the Law did not reveal Messiah to them

They committed classic logical error of *conflation* confusion the civil/ceremonial law with  
The Ten Words, Moral Law, which God inculcates inside every person  
The Civil/Ceremonial Law only pointed to Christ who would satisfy the Moral Law to die for sin



# Jews Double Down on Law

- Jews continue to double down on their salvation being tied to their knowledge of the Law
  - They claimed to know the will of God though they rejected God's rebuke (Hb 2:1-4)
  - Jews believed that what they approved from the Law, God approved, which placed them above goyim (Mt 16:16-19)
  - Herein is piety: Centers on *your* beliefs supporting *your* morality rather than having God teach you His truth

# Basically Jews Gatekeepers to God

- Paul's use of Messianic prophecy for the Jews shows they saw themselves as true sons of gods: gods (Is 42:1-9)
  - Jesus said they make proselytes twice as deserving of hell as themselves; very successful (Mt 23:13-15)
- Paul's destroys all their claims of goodness in the Law with one statement: Did they teach themselves?

# Law Empowered the Jews

- Because of their special relationship with God and His Law, they are immune from sin {Untruth claim} (Mal 2:7-9)
  - Guide to the blind
  - Light to those in darkness
  - Instructor of the foolish
  - Teacher of children
- They embody *all* truth and knowledge: salvation in Law



# All Religionists are Hypocrites

- Paul brought them into his logical argument to demand: if they teach others, do they teach themselves?
  - Jews teach against stealing; yet, they steal (Mal 3:8-10)
  - Jews teach against adultery; yet, commit adultery (Mal 2:10-16)
  - Jews teach against idols; yet; worship idols (Ez 8:5-18)
  - Though Jews boast in the Law; it was by breaking the Law that God's name was blasphemed (Ez 36:20; 2Pe 2:1-3)

# Paul's Indictment – Guilty

- Paul proves Jews guilty of breaking the very Law they claim proved them to be God's people
  - Rather than praise cultural nomism; Paul destroys it because it does not work; as did Stephen (Ac 7)
  - If cultural nomism worked then Paul would have had to praise them for *keeping the Law*; however, salvation is not based on keeping the Law as one born in sin has already violated the Law: Already has a death sentence (Ep 2:1-3)

# Jewish Error Common Error

- Jews believed they were born righteous and became sinners by doing sins; this is a common belief amongst the lost
  - Yet, one is not born innocent, but in sin (Ps 51:5)
  - God delights in truth in the soul and to teach the sinful heart wisdom of God's salvation {Humility} (Ps 51:6)
  - One cannot teach one who is not looking for wisdom (Mt 7:7-11)



# Jews Not Looking for Salvation

- Christ could not teach majority of Jews salvation as they were not looking for it: they were *good* enough
  - They expected God to come to them *praising* them for achieving His difficult task of learning His truth (Ge 3:5)
  - They believed they were on earth to teach the goyim how to live while their behavior was excused since they were already good enough
  - They had no mercy, compassion or love for the lost

Jews believed they were to dominate those who were not Jews which is the dream of all lost religions

God did not come to dominate but to liberate from the burden of sin

Lost never believes in equality while the saved preach the humility needed to approach a sinless God

# Jesus Rejected by Common Jews

- Jesus returned to Nazareth where He was raised to announce His gospel {Good News} to them (Lk 4:16-30)
  - *Their* Messiah would come as a divine conqueror putting Jews in control of the goyim
  - They had no use for a Messiah that demanded they repent and be saved: cultural nomism
  - They then tried to kill their Messiah; eventually Jews would kill Messiah when their time of mercy ended

# Jews Not Rejected for Sinners

- Notice, Jesus had not rejected the Jews because they were worse or *special* sinners more than others, though they had greater responsibility as they had God's words
  - Consistently they proved themselves no better than anyone else; yet, they refused to recognize their sin
  - Jews rejected because they refused to repent, to throw themselves on God's mercy and accept His salvation



# Paul Makes This Distinction

- Paul wants the Gentiles to understand that the Jews do not have a special relationship with God based on something other than salvation; Jews very claim
  - Paul destroyed their claim from their own scriptures
  - If they had a special relationship with God, then they would have received God and the Son whom He sent
  - This admonishment also looks ahead to the Church

# Pietism Never Died

- Though Judaism became a back-water faith until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the pietism it fostered remained alive
  - As churches became apostate, they became pietistic, using force to promote their doctrine above God's
  - Reformation was supposed to breakaway from pietism; yet, it embraced pietism forcing Europe into wars over who shall reign: Catholic god or Protestant god

# Pietism in Politics

- American politics have been rife with pietism since our inception
  - First Great Awakening–Laid framework for rebellion
  - Second Great Awakening–Laid framework for Civil War
  - Third Great Awakening–Made Democrats into pietists
  - Fourth Great Awakening–Made non-Christians pietists
  - All these movements used force of the state, not gospel



# Paul Dispatched Judaism

- Since Paul has dispatched how Judaism defined itself, and how others should understand Judaism, he must now define Judaism
  - Today's Jews cannot consistently define who or what constitutes a Jew; but Paul will clearly define Judaism
- Christians must understand that the gospel is both doctrinal knowledge {Bible} and emotions; yet, our knowledge **leads** feelings to know the Son (1Co 14:26-32)