

Doers of the Law (Romans 2)

Deeds are the evidence for (or against) genuine faith.

Counterfeit believers alienate people from God.

We are to exhibit the spirit of the law, rather than only its letter.

1. The highest form of hypocrisy is found in those who condemn others for the very sins they themselves commit.
Note the indirect implication: The church at Rome is infected with self-righteous hypocrites.
2. Counterfeits may pass undetected by men, but God's judgment will expose the truth. (**Ro 2:16**)
3. The highest form of self-deception is found in judgmental lawbreakers who think they themselves are exempt from God's judgment. (**Mt 7:1,2, 2Co 5:10**)
Note the indirect implication: The church at Rome is infected with malignant sin.
4. God's blessings and patience should lead to repentance, rather than being misinterpreted as signs that everything is OK. (**2Pe 3:9**)
5. Although the wrath of God is delayed, it will surely come upon those who do not repent. (**Rev 6:15-17, Rev 14:19, Rev 19:15**)
6. Deeds are the evidence for (or against) genuine faith. (**2Co 5:10, Jas 2:17-26, Rev 20:11,12**)
Works do not save us. (**Gal 2:16, Eph 2:8,9**)
We are saved by faith in Jesus. (**Ac 16:30,31, Ro 5:1,9**)
Genuine faith is always evidenced by works. (**Mt 7:16-23**)
- 7,10. A converted heart produces good works, and this genuine faith in Jesus results in eternal life.
- 8,9. An unconverted heart produces sinful works, and their rejection of Jesus results in anguish and destruction. (**1Jn 5:12**)
11. All people get identical, just treatment from God.
Recall verses 9 and 10:
The Jew is mentioned first, because they represent those to whom God first sent His Son.
The Gentile is mentioned second, because they represent everyone else--to whom God also sent His Son.
Note the indirect implication: Neither religious heritage nor church membership result in differential treatment from God.
12. Not having explicit (written) access to the law of God (the 10 commandments) in no way diminishes its timeless, universal authority. (**Ps 19:7, Ps 111:7,8, Isa 42:21**)
Note: That the 10 commandments are referred to here is evident by comparing verses 20 through 22 (**Ro 2:20-22**).
13. The act of hearing the law, in itself, makes no one just. (compare **Eze 33:31,32**)
It is only through faith in Jesus that we are justified. (**Gal 2:16**)
But, genuine faith in Jesus always results in willfull, loving obedience to His commandments. (**Ps 119:97-104, Jn 14:15,21, 1Jn 5:3**)
It is in this faithful/fruitful sense that genuine Christians are characterized as "**doers of the law**".
- 14,15. God makes His law known to everyone through their conscience (via the Holy Spirit), regardless of whether or not they have the written law. (compare **Heb 8:10,11, Heb 10:15,16**)
Note: This in no way lessens the importance of God's written word (the Bible). (**Ps 12:6,7, Ps 119:89, Isa 40:8, Mt 4:4, Mt 24:35, Jn 17:17, 1Pe 1:23**)

Note: Throughout the world, demonic forces are engaged in a work of confusing and misleading people about right and wrong, with attacks focused on God's moral law. They promote moral relativism--where there is no absolute moral code, where right and wrong varies from person to person.

They promote works as a means of salvation--which are selfish, hollow works at best. (compare **Isa 64:6**)

They promote faith without works--which is a lukewarm faith at best. (compare **Rev 3:15,16**)

16. In the final judgment, the secrets of individuals will be revealed.

Secrets, both good and evil, will be brought to light. (**Ecc 12:14**)

The secret sins of the wicked will be exposed to their shame. (**Rev 20:12-15**)

Note the indirect implication: Secret sins are hidden behind external piety.

The unseen good deeds of the righteous will be recognized as fruits of their faithfulness. (**Mal 3:16**, compare **Mt 6:3,4**)

The sins of those who have repented and received forgiveness through Jesus will not be mentioned. (**Isa 43:25**, **Eze 18:21,22**)

Jesus will be the Judge.

The following characteristics uniquely qualify Jesus to judge the world:

Because He came in the flesh, He understands human temptation and struggle. (**Heb 4:15**)

Because He overcame the world, He understands true holiness. (**Jn 16:33**)

Because He sacrificed His life for the world, He is worthy to judge that world. (**Rev 5:9**)

He knows which persons have a personal relationship with Him. (**Jn 17:3**)

17. Note the indirect implication: Being "called" a Jew implies an external, superficial appearance, without internal substance.

Note the indirect implication: Resting in the law implies a passive relationship to it, void of practical application.

Note the indirect implication: Using God as a subject for boasting implies a proud and arrogant attitude.

18. Note the indirect implication: Approval of the law implies only an external affirmation, without a working realization.

19. Members of the church at Rome are fully confident that they are spiritual leaders, viewing their followers, in comparison, as blind. (compare **Mt 15:14**)

20. Members of the church at Rome think of themselves as instructors and teachers, viewing their students, in comparison, as fools and babies.

Note the indirect implication: They have only the form of knowledge and truth (the "letter" of the law), rather than the key to knowledge and truth (the Spirit).

(compare **Jn 14:26**, **Jn 16:13**, **Ro 2:29**, **Col 2:2,3**)

21. These supposed teachers should first teach themselves. (**Mt 7:3-5**)

22-23. These supposed spiritual pillars are in actuality calloused lawbreakers, deceived by their own mask of spirituality. (compare **2Co 11:13-15**, **Rev 18:1-5**)

24. All the while thinking they represent Christ, through their proud spiritual stench they have prevented countless unbelievers from even considering Christ.

25. Circumcision is an external symbol of an internal consecration; without the inner commitment, a person is no different from an uncircumcised unbeliever. (compare **Dt 10:16**, **Dt 30:6**, **Jer 4:4**)

Note here that the evidence for true circumcision is stated to be obedience to the law of God (the 10 commandments). (compare **Heb 8:10**)

26. On the contrary, those who keep the righteousness of the law, although they be uncircumcised, they are numbered among those who are truly circumcised.

Note: It is impossible for anyone to keep God's law without the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (Spirit of Christ - **Ro 8:7-9**). (compare **Jn 15:4,5**)

27. Self-righteous lawbreakers who look down in judgement on others are implicitly judged by the righteous acts of some of the very people they condemn.

28. Neither external formality nor family lineage have anything to do with true spirituality. (compare **2Ti 3:1-5**)

29. Spiritual Israel consists of all genuine Christians, who follow Christ in the spirit, rather than the letter of the law. (**2Co 3:5,6**)

The concept here of "the letter" refers to a detailed, granular perspective that is blind to major themes. (compare **Mt 23:23**)
