



Romans

Right With God

Boasting Is A No-No

Lesson Twenty-One

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

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Boasting Is A No-No

Paul accused the Jews of boasting about their law in chapter two, verses 17 and 23. And now, he says that bragging is a no-no, even for the Jews. Read Romans 3:27-31.

Boasting is “excluded.” It is not allowed. Boasting was excluded the moment grace took charge at the cross of Jesus. From that point on, all anyone could say is that through God’s grace we are made free...through His grace alone.

Paul brings back the questioner who asks, “What law excludes boasting? Is it works?” Let’s think about it this way: Keeping the Law, what Moses wrote down in the first five books of the Bible, as well as doing good deeds (works), are things you do. They are part of living as a religious person. People often brag about their religion and their good deeds. So, neither keeping the law nor doing other good things keeps us from boasting.

What Paul found was that faith doesn’t allow boasting. The religion of law has been replaced by a religion of faith. This new religion is based on the birth, perfect life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. It does prohibit boasting.*

Let’s be careful not to misunderstand Paul. Good deeds are important in the faith religion. Jesus began His ministry explaining that He had come to do things. He sent His disciples out to do things. He left us a commission to do things. Paul will tell us in chapter twelve that we are to live our Christian life like a sacrifice *in service* to God. (Romans 12:1, 2)

But, doing things doesn’t make us children of God. We become children of God by faith. (See Romans 10:9, 10—Student Worksheet)

In verse 28, Paul says that his religious group, Christians, insist that works of the Law have no power to save us from sin. Justification, the Bible word for being *made right* by God, happens when a person trusts (has faith in) God. That faith includes believing that God is who He said He is, and is doing what He said He would do.” Our justification is by faith alone, a free gift of God. It is something that we can do absolutely nothing to deserve.

Next, Paul argues with the idea that God was for the Jews only. It is not a reasonable argument. He asks, if there is only one God, would that one God choose only one small group of people to bless? Is He not the God of the Gentiles also? His response to his own question is, “Yes!” Paul says in Galatians 3:28, that all are one in Christ, including Jews and Greeks. Paul’s God is inclusive...He loves and wants to have a relationship with everyone.

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We see in verse thirty the completion of what Paul said in verse 29. There is one faith, there is one God to whom we are led by faith and this applies to everyone.

Verse thirty-one introduces the questioner again who asks, “Does faith do away with the Law?” Paul responds with exclamation, “Not at all!” Jesus said that He came to fulfill the Law, not to destroy it. (Matthew 5:17). When we look back at the Law through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we understand it as it could not be understood before.

We see that what the writers of the Law and the prophets promised about Jesus was exactly right. And now, with God’s Holy Spirit living in us, we have the power to live up to God’s expectations, revealed in the Law, and in doing this, we establish or confirm (affirm) the Law. We have by faith the righteousness of God which is even better than the Law. And, it is all ours by simply believing...bragging is not appropriate. Boasting is a no-no!

Scripture Memory: “For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.” Romans 3:28

*Underlined statements in this Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.

For the Teacher:

Lesson Goal: To discourage students from thinking that they can “work” their way into God’s grace.

1. The word “excluded” in the 27th verse is in the Greek aorist tense. It would mean: excluded in the past and excluded for all time...once for all. The word “boasting” here indicates not what is said, but the very act of boasting. Boasting like this challenges God’s glory. It puts humans in the place of God. There is an old story that goes like this: “The Feast of Mercy was on, and the damsel Grace was at the door, admitting everyone who came on the ground of mercy alone. Old Mr. Boasting, in a high hat and fine suit, presented himself. ‘Oh,’ said Grace, as she quickly shut the door in his face, ‘There is no room for you here! The people here are feasting on the free gifts of God.’ So Mr. Boasting was shut out.”

2. In verse twenty-nine, Paul uses the argument of monotheism. Monotheists insist that there is only one God. They follow the first commandment, stated in Exodus 20:3, “You shall have no other gods before me.” They follow the *Shema* recorded in Deuteronomy 6:4-9. Verse four says, “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!” Paul asks “Is God the God of the Jews only?” The rabbis had a thought on this. One of their teachings speaks for God, “I am God over all earth’s creatures, yet I have associated My name only with you; for I am not called the God of the idolaters, but the God of Israel.” So the Jewish leaders did believe that God was for them alone.

3. Faith must have an object. Faith is not faith unless there is something or someone to trust or rely on. There is no such thing as blind faith. When you take someone’s word for something, you are trusting...you have faith in... the person making the statement in which you trust.

4. Faith, unlike works, draws us to God, makes God’s power available, and creates in us works that will live forever. James 2:18 “You can no more show me your works apart from your faith than I can show you my faith apart from my works. Faith and works, works and faith, fit together hand in glove.” *The Message*

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Student Worksheet

Boasting Is A No-No

=This new religion is based on the _____, perfect life, _____, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. It does _____ boasting.

=Doing things doesn't make us children of _____. We become children of God by _____.

=Christians insist that works of the Law have no power to _____ us from sin. Justification, the Bible word for being *made right* by God, happens when a person has _____ in God.

=There is one faith, there is one _____ to whom we are led by faith and it applies to everyone.

=Jesus said that He came to fulfill the _____, not to _____ it. (Matthew 5:17)

=We see that what the writers of the Law and the _____ promised about Jesus was exactly _____. And now, with God's _____ living in us, we have the _____ to live up to God's expectations, revealed in the _____, and in doing this, we establish or confirm (affirm) the _____.

Scripture Memory: "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law." Romans 3:28

A Roman Road to Salvation:

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Everyone is a sinner and needs salvation.

Romans 6:23a "For the wages of sin is death." The law of God is unchangeable. If someone sins the penalty must be paid, the payment is death.

Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us." God loves us so much, according to John 3:16, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

Romans 6:23b "But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The penalty for sin is spiritual death, but God, through the death of Jesus on the cross, took the penalty for the sins of all people, and now everyone can have eternal life. See also, II Corinthians 5:21

Romans 10:9, 10 "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." To personally receive the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus, you trust God to be what He says He is. Believing that "God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead" is to accept all that the Bible says about God and His Son, Jesus. Then you speak (confess) the words, "Jesus is Lord," as a statement of faith. Believing "with your heart" means that you believe with your mind and with everything that you are.

Romans 10:13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." You have the promise of God Himself that if you do what Romans 10:9, 10 says, you will become God's child and have eternal life.

Romans 12:1, 2 "I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Becoming a Christian is a life-long act of faith and worship.