

## Religion on the Inside

### Scripture Reading — Romans 2:17-29

*A person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. — Romans 2:29*

Every once in a while I get a phone call from someone I don't know who will ask, "Do you do baptisms in your church?" The caller is usually someone who has had a baby and believes that a baby needs to be baptized. They are looking for a church that might do a baptism for them.

I'm glad that there is something positive about our church that leads them to call me. I also value the opportunity to explain what baptism means. Paul was addressing something similar in these verses to the Romans. You can "do the baptism thing," but if all it means is a onetime water sprinkling or immersion, then it's no more than a tradition. It may be religiously correct, but it won't be spiritually what God intends it to be.

There are times when I need to look at the religious things I do, and to ask, "Why am I doing this?" God doesn't ask me to naively follow a tradition; God wants me to follow Jesus. When my connection is more to the tradition than to the comfort and challenge of belonging to Christ, I'm missing something important.

Baptism, like circumcision and obeying commandments, is not about religion. All these are good things, but they are not ends in themselves. Ultimately, they are about belonging to and living for Jesus.

### Prayer

*Lord, you have called me not to religious practice, but to a faith that comes from the inside. Help me to live and grow in the comfort of belonging to you. Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Christianity](#), [Baptism](#), [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Following Jesus](#)

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