

The Real Thing

April 15, 2018

Thank you so much for choosing to worship with us today. We are thrilled that you are here!

*A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God.
Roman 2:28-29*

A majority of people in the US would call themselves a "Christian." A Gallup poll from December 2017 shows that 70% of Americans identify as Christian. While that number has seen a decline over the past 5-7 years, it is still an overwhelming majority. But what makes someone a Christian – a follower of Jesus.

In Romans, Paul spends some time discussing the merits of being a Jew. He sights several benefits but then makes the statement above in verses 28-29 of chapter 3. It would seem the Jews had staked their claim on their heritage of being a Jew in name (outwardly) rather than being a Jew in life (inwardly). He even calls out the act of circumcision, which created their identity.

It makes one wonder whether we have done the same thing today. We stake our claim as Christians on the outward appearances of specific acts, works, or events that determine our legitimacy.

A partial list of our version of circumcision:

- Baptism;
- Lord's Supper (communion);
- Church attendance;
- Mission trips;
- Giving to charity;
- Worship style;
- Name on the door.

The issue today is the same issue as in Romans. If we are not convicted in our hearts for the purposes of Christ and His will then we are not really Christians. Paul's words paraphrased – "A person is not a Christian who is one only outwardly, nor is _____ merely outward and physical. No, a person is a Christian who is one inwardly; and _____ is a conviction of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code."

Open your heart to the Spirit in all you do today!

All Things for Christ,
Michael