

SEEK GOD'S APPROVAL

ROMANS 2:17-29

How did you see God working in your life this week? (Romans 1:11, 12)

BACKGROUND: The Jew believed that he was saved simply because he was a Jew. He obeyed God's Law not to achieve salvation but because he thought that obedience would "keep him saved." (See the introductory background.)

NOT BY PRESUMPTION. "For Paul again insists that it is not the possession (or the hearing) of God's law and covenant that matters—it is the doing." Douglas J. Moo, Encountering the Book of Romans, p. 51. It's not church membership, church attendance, or human effort that earns or keeps salvation. In a personal relationship with Jesus, God works in the heart and life of the believer revealing God's grace, giving him faith to believe, assurance of salvation, and an attitude of giving glory to the Lord. (**Romans 2:17-24, fn 2:17ff, fn 2:21, 22, fn 2:24, Romans 9:30-10:4, fn 9:31-33, Romans 11:6, fn 11:6**) *How is it false presumption to think that your eternal security depends on your church membership, attendance, and work?*

WITH A NEW HEART. Trying to make your old life and old heart look good to yourself and others is possible. However, God's approval is not earned in this way. God does not just repair old lives and old hearts. He gives new hearts, new lives, and new beginnings to those who trust Him. (**Romans 2:25-29, fn 2:28, 29, Ezekiel 36:24-27, fn 36:25-27, Romans 10:9-13, fn 10:8-12, II Corinthians 5:17, fn 5:17**) *Why do you think God gives His children new hearts?*

BY THE SPIRIT. If you belong to Jesus, your life is empowered by His Spirit who lives in you. The life filled with the Spirit has God's approval because it is the very life of His Son. (**Romans 2:29, Romans 7:6, fn 7:6[1st], fn 7:6[2nd], II Corinthians 3:1-6, fn 3:6, John 14:15-21, fn 14:17ff**) *What is God's purpose for the Holy Spirit? How does God's Spirit work in your life?*

Check up—Are you praying with your spouse and your family? Group—Pray for personal requests and bond together by fellowshipping together.