**"Ritual vs. Reality"**
Romans 2:25-29

1) What was circumcision meant to signify?

2) To what does Paul tie the relative value of circumcision in verse 25? In other words, what matters where circumcision is concerned?

3) What are some "externals" that we, as Christians, can often put a misplaced or excessive confidence in terms of our relationship with God?

4) According to verses 26-27 what makes circumcision "expendable" or "non-essential"?

5) What is the significance of the language Paul uses in verse 26 where he speaks of "uncircumcision be regarded [reckoned/credited] as circumcision"? (see Rom. 3:28; 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24; 9:8)

6) What radical role reversal does Paul propose in verse 27? (Compare with 2:1-3)

7) What is Paul's intention with respect to the Jews by including the theme of Gentile obedience? (see, for example, Rom. 10:19; 11:11, 14)

8) What are the "dangers" of ritualism?

9) How did the speaker characterize Paul's reference to the uncircumcised law-keeper in verses 26-27—as hypothetical or actual? What support was given?

10) According to Paul in verses 28-29 what really matters?

11) What is it, according to the speaker, that God has always wanted from His people? (see Deuteronomy 10:12-13) Is that what He still wants from His people? Support your answer from the Scripture.

12) Describe the "true circumcision" that Paul identifies in verses 28-29.

13) What Old Testament promises does this reality fulfill? (see Dt. 30:6; Ezek. 36:25-27; Jer. 31:31-34)

14) Paul does not specifically identify who is the "true Jew" in these verses, i.e., those who have receive the "true circumcision." Who are they?

15) What is the ultimate significance of Paul's reference to "his praise is not from men, but from God"? (see Romans 2:7, 10, 16; 1 Cor. 4:5; 1 Pt. 7)

16) How does all that Paul asserts in this section (vv. 25-29) reconcile with what he will soon say in Romans 3:20 that "by works of the Law no flesh shall be justified"?

17) What was the simple cowboy's point when he said, "You ain't got it, 'til you got it inside"?