**“Are You Trusting a Ritual or The Savior?”**

**(Romans 4:9-12)**

**Some of Paul’s readers believed that only those who were circumcised were right with God. Likewise today, many believe that a religious ritual is required for Heaven. This is an error, and our text today can help us better understand…**

1. **The Problem of Religious Rituals (9-10)**
* **Problem Explained (9)**

*“Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only?”*

(Matthew 7:21)

* **Problem Exposed (10)**

*“How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in*

*uncircumcision?*  (Genesis15:6; 16:16; 17:24)

1. **The Purpose of Religious Rituals (11a)**
* **A “Sign”**

 *“And he received the sign of circumcision,…”* (Genesis 17:11; 1:14;

9:12-13; Ex.31:13, 17)

* **A “Seal”**

 *“…a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being*

 *uncircumcised…”* (1 Corinthians 9:2)

1. **The Proof of Religious Rituals (11b-12)**
* **Genuine Heart Change**

 *“that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be*

 *not circumcised…”*  (Deuteronomy 10:16; Psalms 51:6, 10, 17;

 Galatians 5:6; Romans 2:28-29)

* **Genuine Walk of Faith**

*“…but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham…”*

 (Romans 2:25-27; 1 Corinthians 7:19)

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 **Small Group Discussion Guide**

**1. Why is it is so common for people to trust in religious rituals**

 **such as baptism or church membership for their eternal salvation?**

 **Why are they wrong in this thinking?**

**2. What would you say to someone who refused to be baptized after**

 **they were saved because it is “not necessary” to be baptized to get**

 **to Heaven? Our missionary in India, Joseph Samuel, does not**

 **count a person as a convert until they are both saved and baptized.**

 **Do you agree or disagree with his thinking?**

**3. Was there a time in your life when you were trusting in a religious**

 **ritual for salvation instead of Christ alone? How did you come to**

 **understand that this thinking was wrong?**

**4. Was it wrong for the Jews to take so much pride in Abraham and in**

 **circumcision? What are some ways that we can fall into the sin**

 **of arrogance because of our beliefs or religious heritage?**

**5. How would you explain Romans 4:12 to someone? How is**

 **Abraham’s walk of faith an example for us to follow?**

**Small Group Prayer**

**Include a prayer for someone you know who may be trusting in a**

**ritual such as baptism or church membership for their salvation.**

**Digging Deeper:**

**How do the following verses shed light on the meaning of the ritual**

**of circumcision? – Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; 6:10; Psalm 51:6, 10, 17; Romans 2:28-29; 1 Corinthians 7:19; Galatians 5:6; 6:15.**