

## Theology Matters

### New Pharisaism is As Bad as Old Pharisaism

Romans 8:1-4

1. **A New Understanding of Sin** (Rom. 5:12ff)

A correct doctrine of sin requires that the Christian knows and understands what God has said (cf. Gen 3:1; Matt. 12:3; 19:4). A biblical doctrine of sin must be dogmatically devoted to following what God has said and not what men say (Isa. 5:20-23). Christians cannot capitulate to the culture when biblical descriptions of sin are challenged, even in the areas of sexuality and racism (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11; James 2:1-13).

2. **A New Understanding of Wisdom** (Ezek. 18:4, 20)

Biblical wisdom begins with and is grounded in the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7). The wisdom of God is foolishness to unbelievers but it is the power of God for believers (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18). Therefore, popularity and consensus are not the most important factors in identifying the wisdom of God (cf. 1 Ki. 19:9-10, 18). Godly wisdom will be rooted and grounded thoroughly in what God has clearly revealed in His Word (2 Tim 2:15) and it will be manifested in peacefulness by those who possess it (Jam. 3:17-18), but it may also be the basis of suffering unjustly at the hands of unrighteous men (cf. 1 Pet. 4:12ff).

3. **A New Understanding of Righteousness** (Rom 8:1-4)

There are only two kinds of religion in the world: religions of self-earned righteousness and the religion of grace given righteousness (Rom. 4:1-4). In order to enter into the presence of God, Jesus indicated that people must possess an impossibly pure and lofty righteousness (cf. Matt 5:20). The only way one may receive this righteousness is by faith in Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21). It is only those who have been born again (John 3:3) who are in a position to actually deal with the sin which once defined them (Matt 15:19; Luke 6:45; James 1:13-15).