

What Advantage... Much in Every Way
Romans 3:1-4

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Theme: The Word, value of

Aim: To show that we need to value the Word more and hence study and live it.

1. Peter Solomon, a missionary from India where they endure great poverty was impressed with the wealth of our country. But John Vaughan said that Brother Solomon felt sorry for us for he did not feel our possessions were real advantages.
2. Sometimes we are not aware of what is and is not an advantage.
3. Paul, in Romans 3:1-4, having shown that both Jew and Gentile alike are condemned before God then asks what advantage did the Jew have?

I. What advantage did the Jew have?

A. The Jew of Paul's day could have responded with several answers.

1. There was the Temple with all its glory, Matthew 24:1-2. In it was the presence of God.
2. There was their role as an heir to the promise given to Abraham, Genesis 12:1-3.
3. There was the claim on the Promised Land.
4. There was a magnificent history of prophetic activity.
5. There was a history of God's protection and relationship as God's chosen people.

B. But what did Paul say was their advantage?

1. "To them were committed the oracles of God."
2. Literally the "words" of God."
3. They had been caretakers and had access to what God had spoken over the centuries.

II. Suppose someone were to ask us today what we perceived was our chief advantage here in the good ole USA, what would we say?

A. There might be many responses given to such an inquiry.

1. We might mention the freedoms and prosperity we enjoy here.
2. If we are of a more spiritual mind, we might speak of:
 - a. The great brotherhood of which we are a part.
 - b. The church for which Jesus dies.
 - c. The simplicity and beauty of the worship we enjoy.
 - d. The great and beautiful, yet simple, plan of salvation that saves us.

B. But is it not the case that the chief advantage we enjoy today is the same that Paul said the Jews enjoyed, which is the oracles of God?

1. Not that these other things are really less or unimportant.
2. But which of these things would be a reality without the word?
3. Consider the following passages that pay homage to the Word of God.
 - a. Psalm 119:105.
 - b. Proverbs 1:1-7.
 - c. Isaiah 55:8-11.
 - d. 2 Timothy 3:13-17.
 - e. Hebrews 4:12-13.
 - f. 1 Peter 1:22-25.

III. The lesson is clear.

A. We need to value the Word more.

1. It needs to be more than an ornament on the coffee table. "The Bible and the TV Guide"
2. It needs to be more than a part of our "Sunday go to meeting outfit."
3. Hear the words of some great American leaders concerning the value of the Word

B. If we value the Word more, two things will happen.

1. We will read and study it more, both publicly and privately. Story of Alexander Campbell coming into his father's study and seeing him surrounded by many books, but with only his Bible lying open on the table before him with pen and paper at the ready.
2. We will put it into practice. Luke 6:46, Matthew 7:21-27.

1. What advantage do we have? Much in every way...we have the Oracles of God.
2. But it is of no advantage if we do not hear and obey!

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