

## **'A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME**

### **WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT?**

Romans 3:9 "What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin."

Superiority – inferiority. Greatest – worst. Tall – short. Your sinful human nature desires you to be superior, greater, taller, smarter, the best, etc. These are comparative words, aren't they? Making comparisons is part of life in this world.

In today's devotional verse Paul asks the question, "Do we have any advantage?" In effect, the answer to this question requires making comparisons. In this case the subject under discussion by Paul is delving into your spiritual life. Are you morally superior, better, purer, than others?

Paul's answer is, "Not at all." Every human being is under the influence and power of sin and the Devil who is the father of sin. Solomon addressed this issue in Ecclesiastes 7:20, "there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins." Jesus taught, ". . . out of a person's heart. . . evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person." (Mark 7:21-23) The instigator of sin is Satan, "The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning." (1 John 3:8)

"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God." (1 John 3:8-9) Though Satan strives to lead you into sin through seduction and deception, God sent His Son Jesus to battle Satan's devious plans for you so you are able to overcome him. You are not superior to other human beings but Jesus is.

You are a conqueror over Satan through Jesus. (Romans 8:37) No one, not even Satan, is ". . . able to separate us (you) from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our (your) Lord." (Romans 8:39)

Prayer: Jesus, through Your presence in my heart enable me to overcome sin, Satan, and this evil world. In Your name I ask this. Amen.

May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfill And do on earth our Father's will  
As angels do above; Still walk in Christ, the living way,  
With all Thy children and obey The law of Christian love.

So may we join Thy name to bless Thy grace adore, Thy pow'r confess,  
From sin and strife to flee. One is our calling, one our name,  
The end of all our hopes the same, A crown of life with Thee.

Spirit of life, of love and peace, Unite our hearts, our joy increase,  
Thy gracious help supply. To each of us the blessing give  
In Christian fellowship to live, In joyful hope to die.  
(LSB 698)