

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

YOUR KEEPING GOD'S LAW NEVER LEADS TO YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 3:20 "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin."

Today's devotional verse was a hard one for a Jewish audience to hear. The Jewish religious and moral life revolved around striving to keep not only the Ten Commandments but also over 600 additional laws that were a part of their temple worship and moral life.

Being honest, Romans 3:20 is a difficult passage for you to read and hear because you consider yourself a moral, ethical, religious person. You read the Bible, worship regularly, attend Bible class, receive the Lord's Supper, remember your baptism daily, etc. Yes, you could be more religious and better obey God's word, but compared to so many others in the world, you are doing quite well.

As you take a deep look into your heart, soul and life measuring and weighing your thoughts, words, and activities based upon God's Laws, you know what others may not about you. Your outward activities may look good. You are a religious person with a deep love for Yahweh and His Son Jesus. Then you read a verse in the Bible like Romans 3:20, ". . .no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law . . ." No one includes you, doesn't it?

Upon careful examination of your thoughts, spoken words and daily activities you realize you do not measure up to God's standards. They say you are to perfectly obey all of His Laws without exception. No one can do that, not even you. His Law, St. Paul wrote in verse 20, ". . .makes you conscience of your sin."

This is not what you want to read or know, but it is the truth, isn't it? Using God's Law, it becomes like a mirror reflecting truthfully the times and occasions you have disobeyed God's Laws. Yesterday's verse tells you God holds you accountable for your sins. (Romans 3:19)

Thanks be to God He has given you His Law. Its critical function is to show you your sinful disobedience of Yahweh. It shows you the terrible consequences that come your way because you have failed to obey His Law. It works mightily in your heart and soul to show you your need for one to save You. It prepares you to read and hear the Gospel that tells and assures you that through the faith His Spirit has worked in your heart to believe and trust in Jesus' saving work for you during His

earthly life, His suffering and death on Good Friday and His resurrection on Easter, God gives you Christ's robes of righteousness to wear as your own. Your sins are forgiven and you are no longer accountable to God for them.

Prayer: I lay my sins upon You, dear Jesus, who alone takes them from me giving me Your righteousness. Thanks and praise to You! Amen.

Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love Thee, Truly I'd serve Thee,
Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands,
Robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
He makes our sorr'wing spirit sing.

Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moon light,
Bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels in the sky.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration
Now and forevermore be Thine!
(LSB 537)