

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

### **WHAT WE BELIEVE, TEACH AND CONFESS**

Romans 3:21 "But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify."

A Christian believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Christians teach the Word of God that reveals God's plan of salvation as well as God's Law. And, Christians confess (declare, give a statement of faith) publicly, openly to anyone who will listen regarding what they believe.

During the time of the Reformation, Luther and those who worked with him to draw people back to the Holy Scriptures and their teachings, especially the message of the gospel, composed a number of written confessions of faith. One of those is The Apology of the Augsburg Confession. Article IV of the Apology, which is the most critical statement of this confession, states that no one is righteous because of their good works or as it states "from works of the Law." Quoting from Article IV, "Therefore men cannot keep the law by their own strength, and they are all under sin and subject to eternal wrath and death. On this account the law cannot free us from sin or justify us, but the promise of the forgiveness of sins and justification was given because of Christ." (Ap IV 40)

This confession, this statement of faith and belief, is drawn from today's devotional verse, Romans chapter three verse 21. This verse says your righteousness is apart from your keeping/obeying God's law. The latter part of this verse says that God's plan for your righteousness (sinlessness) is revealed to you through the pages of Holy Scripture ("the Law and the Prophets.")

Paul's point in this verse is your righteousness (sinlessness) is endowed to you by God out of His righteousness. It is not by your good works, your efforts, your perfect obedience of God's Law, but is revealed to you through the pen of Holy writers of the Torah (Old Testament.) Paul has already pointed to the source in Romans 1:16-17, ". . .the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith. . ."

It is by God's loving gift of faith to you in His Son Jesus you receive Jesus' righteousness as your own. By God's grace, through faith in Jesus you are saved.

Prayer: Thank You Father for Your gift to me of faith in Your Son Jesus and through this gift that I am righteous, sinless in Your sight. In His name. Amen.

Thy works, not mine, O Christ, Speak gladness to this heart;  
They tell me all is done, They bid my fear depart.

Refrain: To whom save Thee, Who canst alone For sin atone, Lord, shall I  
flee?

Thy wounds, not mine, O Christ, Can heal my bruised soul;  
Thy stripes, not mine, contain The balm that makes me whole. Refrain:

Thy cross, not mine, O Christ, Has borne the crushing load  
Of sins that none could bear But the incarnate God. Refrain:

Thy death, not mine, O Christ, Has paid the ransom due;  
Ten thousand deaths like mine Would have been all too few. Refrain:

Thy righteousness, O Christ, Alone can cover me;  
No righteousness avails Save that which is of Thee. Refrain:  
(LSB 565)