

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

### **FOR WHOM IS THEIR FORGIVENESS**

Romans 4:9-12 “Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham’s faith was credited to him as righteousness. Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! And he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. And he is then also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.”

St. Paul continues discussing “blessedness” in the verses following yesterday’s devotional verses. He said in verses seven and eight blessedness is God’s forgiveness of sins. Today, he asks the question, who are the recipients of this blessedness, this forgiveness of sins?

Lest you forget, Paul was contending with a group of Jews who said that in addition to faith in Jesus one also had to be circumcised to receive God’s forgiveness of their sins. In today’s verses Paul says this group is guilty of teaching God’s word incorrectly. The “rite of circumcision” is not what determines whether one does or does not receive God’s forgiveness of their sins.

Paul argues that Abraham was a believer and forgiven of his sins before he was circumcised. It was not the circumcision that garnered him God’s forgiveness. Note his words, “he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. It was not after, but before! And So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.”

It is not because you are a member of a church, have been baptized, read your Bible, pray daily that your sins are forgiven. NO! Rather it is because out of God’s undeserved love you received faith to accept Jesus’ sacrifice in payment for your sins, that your sins are forgiven. Your baptism, reading God’s word, confessing, and repenting of your sins are all means through which the Holy Spirit works faith in your heart to receive God’s blessings.

Prayer: Grant me, O Lord, the assurance that by Your grace and Your gift of faith in Jesus I am forgiven of all my sins. In His name. Amen.

O Savior, precious Savior, Whom yet unseen we love;  
O name of might and favor, All other names above,  
We worship Thee, we bless Thee, To Thee, O Christ, we sing;  
We praise Thee and confess Thee, our holy Lord and King.

O bringer of salvation, Who wondrously has wrought  
Thyself the revelation Of love beyond our thought  
We worship Thee, we bless Thee, To Thee, O Christ, we sing;  
We praise Thee and confess Thee, Our gracious Lord and King.

In Thee all fullness dwelleth, All grace and pow'r divine;  
The glory that excelleth, O Son of God, is Thine.  
We worship Thee, we bless Thee, To Thee, O Christ, we sing;  
We praise Thee and confess Thee, our glorious Lord and King.

O grant the consummation Of this our song above  
In endless adoration And everlasting love;  
Then shall we praise and bless Thee Where perfect praises ring,  
And evermore confess Thee, Our Savior and our King!  
(LSB 527)