

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

### **THE PROMISE**

Romans 4:13-16 "It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression. Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all."

God's law produces wrath and out of His gift of faith you receive your righteousness. Law has no promise attached to it. It is at best a contract conditional upon your obedience. If you obey it perfectly you will earn heaven. If you disobey it, even just one part of it, you will not fulfill your contract and fail to earn heaven.

God's promise to you of everlasting life through faith in His Son Jesus is based upon His undeserved love for you (grace.) As your Father, God can give you whatever gifts He chooses. Because of His love for you He has chosen to make you a promise of the gift of heaven through saving work of Jesus in perfectly keeping His law for you, taking upon Himself your sins to make payment for them through His death on Calvary's cross, and through giving you your victory over death by making His resurrection your own. Because He lives, you will live also. (John 14:19)

Trying to earn your way into heaven by keeping God's law rules out faith and God's promise upon which it rests. Without faith God's promise (the Gospel) is abolished. Trusting in your keeping God's laws to earn heaven is hollow and ineffective. For the Bible says, "There is not a righteous man upon earth who does good and does not sin." (Ecclesiastes 7:20)

All the law can do is raise your awareness of your sins and make you aware of God's wrath toward you because of them. It is out of your faith which God has gifted you that you embrace God's promise of forgiveness of your sins through His Son Jesus Christ. Faith in Christ alone gives you certainty and security that God forgives you and Jesus has earned and won for you a place in heaven. (John 14:6)

Prayer: Grant, Heavenly Father, that every day I live my life filled with Your grace and through faith embrace Jesus as my Lord and Savior. In His name. Amen.

You are the way, through You alone Can we the Father find;  
In You, O Christ, has God revealed His heart and will and mind.

You are the truth; Your Word alone True wisdom can impart;  
You only can inform the mind And purify the heart.

You are the life; the empty tomb Proclaims Your conqu'ring arm,  
And those who put their trust in You Not death nor hell shall harm.

You are the way, the truth, the life; Grant us that way to know,  
That truth to keep, that life to win Whose joys eternal flow.  
(LSB 526)