

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

TO WHOM CAN GOD GIVE A GIFT?

Romans 5:15 "But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!"

For many the court system is a mystery. For example, two people commit what appears to be the same crime. When the justice process is completed, one of the two is sentenced with a long prison sentence. The other is declared not guilty. Commercial media goes ballistic! The outcomes of the two trials becomes a major discussion on social media sights for months upon months. The central point of discussion is over fairness.

The fairness of how God deals with sin has been, remains and probably will continue to be a major topic of discussion. When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden God had warned them of the consequences of eating the forbidden fruit. When He entered the garden seeking them out, Adam and Eve hid. They hid because they knew they had disobeyed God. They understood the punishment He had told them they would receive for their disobedience. Was it fair or was it grace that God did not cause Adam and Eve to die on the spot?

St. Paul states in Romans 5:15 that the gift is not like the trespass. God, out of His grace, gives gifts sinners do not deserve. So, is God fair? Shouldn't He bring down the full force of His Law upon lawbreakers? Isn't that the way you think when a horrendous crime has occurred. You, along with most of your fellow citizens, want the judge and jury to throw the book at the guilty party.

"God's gift," His undeserved love, forgiveness, and eternal life in heaven through His Son Jesus, does not bring death to the guilty party. Because of His grace, His gift of His Son Jesus and faith in Him, God gives life to those who deserve to die eternally.

God's punishment is what you deserve. You, like all of your fellow human beings, have sinned. His word says, "the wages of your sin is death." But that same verse continues, "but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (See Romans 6:23) Fairness is not the issue! "God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow(s) to the many!" (Romans 5:15)

Prayer: Heavenly Father, though my sins are as scarlet you have made me whiter than snow. Thank You for Your gracious gift of faith in Your Son, forgiveness, and everlasting life. Amen.

As rebels, Lord, who foolishly have wandered
Far from Your love—
Unfed, unclean, unclothed—
Dare we recall Your wealth so rashly squandered,
Dare hope to glean that bounty which we loathed?

Still we return, our contrite words rehearsing,
Speech, that within
Your warm embrace soon dies;
All of our guilt, our shame, our pain reversing
As tears of joy and welcome fill Your eyes.

A fest of love for us You are preparing;
We who were lost,
You give an honored place!
“Come, eat; come, drink, and be no more despairing—
Here taste again the treasures of My grace.”
(LSB 611)