

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

JUST AS IF I NEVER SINNED

Romans 3:27-28 "Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law."

We love to keep score. We keep score when playing games to determine who wins. The team with the most runs or points wins. We also keep score in other areas of our life such as the three boys on the playground arguing who is the tallest, biggest, or fastest. In the adult world there is also score keeping such as who has the highest title at the company, who makes the Forbes 400 wealthiest list each year, whose home is the largest or whose car can go the fastest.

Your Old Adam also wants to keep score. It causes you to keep a tally sheet of the good things you do. To how many poor people did you give food? How many times did you mow your aging neighbor's yard for free? Do you contribute your used items to the Vietnam Veterans, Goodwill, or the Salvation Army? Come Thanksgiving, have you manned the community free thanksgiving dinner to feed the poor and disadvantaged?

Keeping score is a diversionary tactic of Satan. He wants you to keep score of the good things you do to make yourself feel good, but more importantly to believe that your tally sheet of good works will merit you God's approval. He wants you to believe that the more good things you do the better is your chance of entering heaven when you die.

Romans 3:27 asks, "Where is your boasting?" This question is connected to your "tally sheet of good works." Note the answer given, "It is excluded!" God does not look at tally sheets. The next verse debunks the tally sheet, replacing your works with faith in Jesus Christ. You are justified, declared sinless by God based upon the faith He has given you in His Son Jesus.

God is the one who justifies you. He is the One who declares you sinless based upon His GRACE and the saving work of His Son Jesus. When He justifies you, He says to you it is "just as if you never sinned."

Prayer: O Lord, grant me faith to receive Your gift of forgiveness for Jesus' sake. Amen

If Your beloved Son, O God, Had not to earth descended
And in our mortal flesh and blood Had not sin's power ended,
Then this poor wretched soul of mine in hell eternally would pine
Because of my transgression.

But now I find sweet peace and rest; Despair no more reigns o'er me.
No more am I by sin oppressed, For Christ has borne sin for me.
Upon the cross for me He died That, reconciled, I might abide
With You, my God, forever.

I trust in Him with all my heart; Now all my sorrow ceases.
His words abiding peace impart; His blood from guilt releases.
Free grace through Him I now obtain; He washes me from ev'ry stain,
And pure I stand before Him.

All righteousness by works is vain; The Law brings condemnation.
True righteousness by faith I gain; Christ's work is my salvation.
His death, that perfect sacrifice, Has paid the all-sufficient price;
In Him my hope is anchored.

My guilt, O Father, You have laid On Christ, Your Son, my Savior.
Lord Jesus, You my debt have paid And gained for me God's favor.
O Holy Spirit, Fount of grace, The good in me to You I trace;
In faith and hope preserve me.

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