

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

THEY ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE

Romans 10:18 "But I ask: Did they not hear? Of course they did: "Their voice has gone out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

"Pastor, they had no opportunity to hear the Gospel" said Mary to him and her fellow Bible class attenders. We have been studying Romans 10:8-17 that says "faith comes from hearing and hearing comes from the word of God." How can a person be condemned by God for their unbelief when they never heard the gospel?

Romans 1:20 says, ". . . since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse." God has revealed Himself to the human race through His creation, the human conscience, and His Word. (The natural and revealed knowledge of God.) As stated in a recent devotion "He desires all people to be saved" as quoted from 1 Timothy 2:3-4.

"Hearing" happens in many ways. One does not have to receive some auditory sound in order to hear. God has chosen to reveal Himself to the human race in countless ways. With the many, many ways information is distributed today, there certainly is no excuse for not having heard the word of God. The Bible is translated in virtually every language and dialect that exists. Worship services are beamed around the world. Jesus says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst." (Matthew 18:20)

You are one of the means or ways God's word is spread. You can witness to those around you what has been revealed to you through God's word and confess what you believe. Note what Jesus taught, "No man lights a candle and puts it in a hidden place, nor under a bushel: but upon a candlestick, that they that come in may see the light." (Luke 11:33) He then says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

God is waiting as a loving father patiently seeking the return of his prodigal child. He sees to it that His word is spread through which the invitation to come to Him is issued. By God's grace you have heard His invitation. The Holy Spirit has given you

faith to accept it. He receives you with open, welcoming arms. There are many more yet to come to Him.

Prayer: Thanks for opening my ears and heart to Your Word, dear Father. Grant that I thirst for Your word always until You take me to be with You. Use me to spread Your Word. In Jesus' name. Amen.

God's Word is our great heritage
And shall be ours forever;
To spread its light from age to age
Shall be our chief endeavor.
Through life it guides our way,
In death it is our stay.
Lord, grant, while worlds endure,
We keep its teachings pure
Throughout all generations.
(LSB 582)