
The Gift of Christmas: *The Word is Near*

"For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. (6) But the righteousness based on faith says, "Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down) (7) or "Who will descend into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). (8) But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim)" (Rom 10:5-8).

A Word or Two Before Opening Gifts:

Pastoral Christmas Gifts:

A Gift of Instruction: The righteousness based on law while appearing to stand in stark contrast to the the righteousness based on faith, in truth shares with it an important element that should be seen as complementary.

A Gift of Warning: The righteousness based on law is fulfilled only by meeting the strictness of the laws demands while the righteousness based on faith finds its sources in gracious gospel promises.

A Gift of Encouragement: The righteousness based on law leaves man to his own resources and standing on his own works, while the righteousness based on faith points man to resources in the works of another.

A Gift of Challenge: The righteousness bases on law though retaining validity in the witness of the church, must be coupled with the good news of gospel promises as the church's central proclamation and the only real hope of mankind.