No One is Righteous

By

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Based on the Bible portion: Romans 3: 9-20

The book of Romans is often referred to as the “theology textbook” for its thorough explanation of the Christian life. Unlike Paul’s other letters to churches, Romans was addressed to a congregation he had never met!

In the selected bible portion, Paul the Apostle makes the case that Jews and Gentiles are equally loved by God and also equally susceptible to the powerful forces of sin. Paul laments that everyone (Jew and Gentile) has turned away from the path of righteousness and falls short of God’s standard. Lies, cursing and bitterness are the only things being heard from everyone’s lips at this time. The people referenced in this passage seem to be more eager to bring harm upon others and lack a devout, God-fearing nature.

We might wonder how this behavior of a group of people dating back to 2000 years has any relevance or bearing on us today. This passage ought to remind us how human behavior tends to reflect the same traits since time immemorial. Caught in the daily grind, it is quite natural for us to express bitterness and contempt to various circumstances of life. Lying, cursing, gossiping becomes habitual. Being a casual Christian is probably the norm for many people these days. Here again it’s evident that all mankind are under the guilt of sin, as a burden; and under the government and dominion of sin, as enslaved to it, to work wickedness; till grace restrains or changes them. Great as our advantages are, these texts describe multitudes who call themselves Christians. Their principles and conduct prove that there is no fear of God in their eyes.

So what should be our take away from this passage during the Lenten season?

Let us use this to practice introspection, to identify our flaws. Lent is a time when we should attempt to purge our inner demons and purify ourselves to be deemed righteous in the eyes of God by fasting, prayer, self-denial and penitence. Let us Fast from: Judging others, anger, pessimism, worry, complaining, bitterness, words that pollute……. Fast from everything that takes us away from the path of righteousness.

Righteousness is a state of mind, which can be hard to achieve when confronted with the challenges of daily life. But God Himself provides the only way to overcome sin, “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe” (3:22). Being justified through faith in Jesus, we can consider ourselves “to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Christ our Lord” (6:11).

May this season of Holy Lent draw us closer to the path of righteousness!