

All Have Sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 3: 9 – 24

1) Are Christians better than Muslims or anyone else of another religion?

- We so often hear Christians criticising or even judging Muslims – and others – when Jesus did not judge us when we were still sinners.
 - John 3: 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him
 - Romans 5: 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- It is easy to forget where we have come from and that we were once objects of wrath and are only saved because of God's grace and not because of our own righteousness.
 - If God did not judge us but extended His grace to us then surely we ought not to judge others – as wicked as some of them may be – but extend grace to them that they may be saved.
- Paul was a grace giver because he recognised his own condition
 - 1 Timothy 1: 15 – 16 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life
 - Rather than being judgmental of those who are not yet saved Paul looks at himself and says "If God can save me then surely He can save anyone".
 - He sees himself being an instrument of God's grace in the hand of God for the salvation of others.

2) Zealous for God but without knowledge

- Romans 10: 1 – 3 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness
- In their sinful state people try and establish their own standard of righteousness.
 - The Muslims have their own set of laws
 - The Hindus have their ethics
 - The Jews hold onto the Law of Moses
 - The secular people hold onto political correctness
- Let us have the desire to see people saved
 - Hear Paul's passion for the Jews in this
 - They are zealous for God but without knowledge.
- We cannot judge someone who is zealous without knowledge – we need to give them the knowledge
 - No one can be called "hardened to the Gospel" until they have heard it in an understandable way and given the opportunity to respond.
 - We have the responsibility to give knowledge of the Gospel through the preaching of the Gospel

- Leave all judgement to God. That is His responsibility, not ours.

3) Good sinners and bad sinners – What is God’s view?

- We tend to differentiate between sinners with a concept of “good sinners” and “bad sinners”.
- The “Good sinner”
 - The good sinner is the unbeliever who comes to church every week even though he has not believed in Jesus as his Lord and Saviour
 - He may have a good job and is a relatively clean living person
 - We already trust them to do things in the church
 - We have the idea that they will make a great Christian when they believe
- The “bad sinner”
 - The bad sinner is the Muslim or alcoholic or drug addict
 - We don’t seem to have a problem judging him and everyone feels quite uncomfortable if he sits next to you in church as you wonder if he should even be here.
 - There is no way you are going to trust him in the church
- What is God’s view?
 - All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
 - There is no such thing as the good sinner and the bad sinner.
 - The good clean living man sitting in church every week who has not believed in Jesus Christ is as much under the wrath of God as the Muslim, alcoholic or drug addict who has not believed in Jesus Christ

Let us change our thinking, recognising God’s grace and extend it to all people without partiality