

“No one is righteous, not even one” Romans chapter 3 verse 10

Paul is quoting the prophet Isaiah. His description of what human beings are like continues for another eight verses and makes pretty grim reading. If you want to feel good about yourself, I suggest you find another passage.

Apparently human beings don't understand, they don't seek God, they have all turned away, no one does good, their words are words of death, they deceive, they curse bitterly, they shed blood, they cause ruin and wretchedness wherever they go, they have no peace and they don't fear God. Nice.

Actually it is clear from observing people that human beings are capable of great good. Although we are by nature fallen from the connection and fellowship with God by which we are supposed to live and thrive, something of the image of God in which we were created remains, enabling us to make healthy choices in our lives and sometimes act for the good of others. We have also been given consciences that, if we do not ignore them and deliberately silence them, can keep us from doing wrong and cause us to do right. Again, many do good things for personal motives. Does this invalidate the good they do?

Paul is not denying this when he says that no one is righteous. He is talking about righteousness towards God, not human self righteousness. It is separation from and disobedience towards God that causes people to do all the things in Paul's unflattering description of humanity, and we can see the validation of it all around us, especially in today's world.

The big problem with the wrong that people do is not so much the damage it does to themselves others and the world in which we live (although it certainly does that, and it matters). The real issue is that sin violates God's holiness and righteousness. That is why our relationship with God is the first and most important thing for people to deal with before they can do any real good. Real good is born out of a love that is generated by God's love in us. That relationship can only be found by turning to him by faith in Jesus Christ

#### Prayer

Father, thank you for those who do good in this world, whatever motives. But I know that in themselves people can do no good thing that has eternal value. Thank you that in Jesus you have opened a door by which I may enter into a saving relationship with you, and that when people do this they connect with your love and goodness. I pray for my friends and loved ones who do not know you, that they might come to the saving faith that can make their lives eternally fruitful. In Jesus' name, amen.

*All these devotionals can be found on our website [inghamitechurch.org](http://inghamitechurch.org) on the 'Resources' page. Click on the link to go there.*