

# LENT DEVOTION

Austin Christian Fellowship of India (ACFI)

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Some people are "righteous in their own eyes" (Proverbs 30:12). It is called "Self-Righteousness" which is totally different from the "Righteousness" that God imputes in a believer's life. Self-Righteousness is the outcome of "deeds of the law" - man made 'dos and don'ts' - (Romans 4:11 and 13--14) and the exhibition of their own 'righteousness' before the eyes of the people to get their appreciation and approval. But the gift of "Righteousness of God" is what God sees and does in a person. It is not the act of man but that of God.

Friends, Self-righteousness builds only 'false hope' in a person. Some are of the opinion that every human being has the potential 'to be like God' or 'become god' by "being" self-righteous and practicing "Self-righteousness" which is absurd. God is the Creator of everything. The creation cannot be or become the Creator.

"Although they knew God, they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore, God gave them over in the sinful desire of their hearts . . ." (Romans 3:22-24a).

The Devil and his fallen angels had fallen prey to that temptation. God is Spirit and man is a spirit-being who can only be in fellowship with God. Thus, the Self-righteousness results in "spiritual blindness and also pride" as it brings in the thought of "I am better than you" - just like the Pharisees, Sadducees, and teachers of the law of Jesus' time had (Matthew 5:20). It also brings in "frustration and shame" inside of the person as he or she fails to keep the "do's and don'ts" before the eyes of the people. Because it is controlled by the 'effort' of that particular human spirit and not by God's Spirit. Even a believer has the tendency to fall into this trap. We read in Romans 7:21: "For I find this law at work: when I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's Law; but I see another law at work in members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am!"

Friends, the true righteousness - "The Righteousness of God - comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe" (Romans 3:22). As I said, it is about how God sees me and works in me (through His Spirit) because of Jesus Christ. So simply put, the Righteousness of God is not only a 'status' (a standing in grace) but also a 'process of becoming (a growth for the) better.' Praise God for His wisdom and power working in our lives.