

LENT DEVOTION

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"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). God uses a believer as an "instrument of His righteousness" in the world to exalt any nation! A believer wherever he/she is placed is exhorted to serve his/her generation faithfully - just like David. "Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free" (Ephesians 6:8). God saved us, "not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy" (Titus 3:5) and we ought to be careful in doing what is good. These things which are excellent and profitable to everyone" (Titus 3:8). God has a greater purpose for imputing His righteousness into the believer - not for the self-glory of the believer but to serve others and to do what is right and good. "Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody" (Romans 12:17). "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms" (2 Peter 4:10).

Thus, the privilege of a believer, as a righteous person, is so different from that of a natural-person who is self-righteous. Irrespective of the circumstances and people a believer always does what is right in the sight and standards of the Lord. There are three kinds of people in the world. Some do what is right in their own eyes for their own selfish reasons and gain - just like the robbers in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25--37). They are their own law for themselves. Second kind of people do what is right according to the situation and to get the praise of the people - just like the Priest and the Levite in the parable. They would have been praised by other people for their faithfulness in their job at the Temple and being there on time. They wanted to play it safe so that they can go to their work on time and mind their own business. They do not care about what is happening to the other person. They are right in the eyes of other people in that particular situation but not what is right in God's sight. A believer ought to surpass the righteousness of other self-righteous ones and go a "second-mile" - just like the Samaritan - and always do what God's Standards of righteousness requires at all times and situations. God wants to exhibit His righteousness through the believer and that is one of the reason for God to impute His righteousness into the believer. Such a responsibility enables the believer to have an "awesome experience" throughout his/her life on the earth!