



In a recent entry of [*the Conversations*](#), Rev. Dr. Richard Juritsch explained that one of the reasons the Bible sometimes feel harsh is because it honestly records acts of violence done by people. This led to a lengthy discussion over the last few entries on the topic of sin. It also led to another question one of you asked, which the Director of Communications (Dr. T) has invited Rev. Vishal Paul to answer:

Dr. T: Are humans basically good, bad, or both?

Rev. Ochalla: I love the question. And, yes it is a tough question to answer. I think the first reason is that it is culturally appropriate to say ‘Yes, all people are good.’ The next is a misplaced belief that all people are good; and only, those who are bad are the dictator types. And, since there are not many like those, then all people, are automatically placed in the good category, and they don’t deserve God’s wrath. Sometimes we soften the blow ‘by saying that all human beings are good’ although, in the same breath we can add, ‘that does not mean we are perfect.’ Maybe, it is because we would like to give our sinful nature a pass. It could well be that we do not understand the extent of our wickedness.

However, the Holy Scripture are clear, that ‘in sin did my mother conceive me’ (Ps. 51). Yes, we are sinners, by nature the children of wrath (Eph. 2). Again, the Scripture teach us that ‘all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.’ (Rom. 3:23) And, not only have we sinned, we deserve God’s wrath. The Scriptural testimonies and our lived experience give us ample proof, about not only sins, but also their impact on people. WE know how sins impact us, not just the ones that we do but those that are done to us. And we can ignore them, but we cannot escape the reality and impact of sinful deeds (not just our own).

So, if we are all sinners. Is there no hope? Of course, there is. While the Holy Bible talks about sin, however, there are clear testimonies about the remedy for it.

Let me in the first place give the well-known example also called the gospel in a nutshell. 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life' (John 3:16) . And this is just the tips of the proverbial iceberg. The word of God is oozing/overflowing/ filled/ with such examples, where we understand the message of God's salvation for all mankind, through Jesus Christ. The only begotten Son of God who came and died for us while we were yet sinners. It is written about Jesus — that God made Him sin, who knew no sin, that we might become the righteousness of God.' Or again as St. Paul writes, the wage of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So, are we good? No. Is there anyone who is good? Yes. It is Jesus Christ alone. And in Jesus alone is the remedy for our sins. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (Jn. 1:29), even our own. And it does not just stop there, we are also granted God's righteousness (Rom. 1:17). As is written in Hebrews 9:26, 'But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.' (ESV)

Rev. Vishal Kumar Paul currently serves as the Snr. Pastor of the Dual Parish of Risen Christ (Mississauga) and Immanuel Lutheran (Georgetown) Lutheran Church. He is a graduate of Concordia Theological Lutheran Seminary, St. Catharines. He is married to Ashu and the Lord has blessed them with two sons (Aashish Samuel & Vinay Joshua).

Keep tuning in to *the Conversations*, where we journey back to basics and have your questions answered.