

Lent Day 5

Monday March 6, 2017

Reading: [Romans 2:1-16](#)

Reflection

Growing up with my older brother there were times when he and I stood in front of my mother or my father, in trouble. At those time we would attempt to show our own personal virtue by pointing out the other ones vices. Now as a father I've seen the same thing play out with my kids. They claim my attention for correction should be on the other, rather than them because the other person is much worse. Well, it's not just kids that do this.

Lent is a season where Christ followers intentionally examine themselves, and allow themselves to be examined by the Spirit, in order to discover and deal with sin. However, there there is the temptation to never begin this journey; after all, who wants to be reminded they have sin to deal with in their lives? One of the rationales we use to avoid this is to compare ourselves against others. When I measure myself against other people I come up okay, so why should I spend time beating myself up?

Paul says, this won't work. We cannot avoid the judgment of God just by agreeing with him that other people have a problem. The truth that we are avoiding when we do this, is that we are all equally guilty and struggle with sin. What we are measured against is not other people, but God himself. So, of course, we don't measure up. Which is the point. Once we come to that conclusion we can let go of our attempts to justify ourselves and fall on the mercy of God — which is exactly what he is offering up in Jesus Christ.

As a parent, and I'm sure it was true of my parents too, is to have my kids take responsibility for their part in whatever it is that happened. Only then can new action, and new life take place. Until we admit we struggle with sin, we can't be forgiven of it, and we can't be freed from it. If we aren't freed from it then it will be impossible to enjoy the new life and freedom which comes only through Christ.

Prayer

Father, thank you for treating us with justice and mercy. Thank you for exposing our self deception and bringing us face to face with our own failure, but more importantly, with your strength. Amen.