

We are all sinners in the eyes of the omnipotent God¹, who is full of justice and mercy in a way that we cannot understand very well. The Psalmist felt the impact of this, which made him feel weak², and we also may think that our sinful condition is a burden too heavy for us to carry.

We may be sinners, but that does not mean that we are truly evil from God's perspective. He is the ultimate Goodness, and even though we are sinners and act sometimes as enemies, God still loves us³.

We are truly far from Him in our essentially infinitesimal "goodness"⁴. I don't think that God would have sent his Son to earth to die for us if he did not see a spark of good⁵ there that He knew could be worked with. We are indeed not very good, but within each of us is a great capacity for good. And sometimes there is that spark of goodness that God can see.

I can imagine God looking down on His creation, and the people that inhabit it. In the spiritual darkness that descended on the world due to the fall of man, He would be able to visualize tiny flashes of light – the sign of sparks of goodness for activities that people were carrying out⁶. Such activities include the simple acts of kindness that are equivalent to serving the Christ⁷ (and thus God). The strongest flashes would be emitted by those who, like Christ, sacrificed themselves for others. Indeed, as Christ is the light of the world (and thus of life)⁸, His flash completely outshines any others; it would be overpoweringly dazzling (except, of course, to God).

I think that God is so pleased at this view, because He loves goodness so much. It is true that there is so much blackness on earth; but it only makes the contrast greater when the sparks occur. He loves to see people struggling to do what's right.

We are not to despair about our failures, for it is God's grace that will see us through. That grace enables us to bear this burden of knowledge and go on, growing to be more and more like Him and having the joyous life that he meant for us all to have as Christians⁹.

But God will only work through us when we recognize our weakness for sin, for His power is made perfect in weakness¹⁰. God made the universe from nothing, and it is not until we become nothing that he can make anything out of us¹¹. This weakness of ours can be lived with if we understand the working of the tremendous grace of God. He can fan that spark into a flame¹²! Our real strength is only through Him¹³.

1. 'For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.' Romans 3:23
2. 'For my iniquities have gone over my head; they weigh like a burden too heavy for me.' Psalms 38:4
3. See Romans 3:10-18
4. "“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.” Matthew 15:8
5. See my story “Flashes in the Night”
6. “As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. ‘I tell you the truth,’ he said, ‘this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on.’” Luke 21:1-4
7. see Matthew 25:31-40
8. “When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12
9. I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10
10. 'my power is made perfect in weakness', 2 Corinthians 12:9
11. A slightly modified version of a quote by Martin Luther.
12. Consider these scriptures: “See, it is I who created the blacksmith who fans the coals into flame and forges a weapon fit for its work ...” Isaiah 54:16a, and “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God...”, 2 Timothy 1:6.
13. “I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:13