

Class 4 Week of July 6, 2026



The Myth of "Good People": The Raw Truth of the Human Condition

The Deception of the Mirror

If you walk down the street today and ask the average person, "Do you think you are a good person?" almost everyone will answer with a confident "yes." Our culture is obsessed with the idea that humanity is inherently good at heart, that we are born pure, and that we only do bad things when society, poverty, or a bad environment corrupts us. We love to look in the mirror and grade ourselves on a curve, pointing at murderers or criminals to make our own flaws look respectable.

But this comfort is a dangerous lie. If we are completely honest with reality, we don't have to teach a toddler how to lie, how to steal a toy, or how to throw a selfish tantrum. We have to explicitly teach them how to share, how to be kind, and how to tell the truth. Why? Because the problem isn't outside of us. The problem is born inside of us.

The Bible strips away all our self-flattery, looks us dead in the eye, and shatters the myth of the "good person." It does not diagnose humanity as slightly sick or needing a few self-help tips; it diagnoses us as fundamentally corrupted and spiritually dead.

The Uncompromising Diagnosis of the Heart

Let's look at the absolute bottom line of God's assessment of human nature. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God cuts right through our external behavior and exposes the core of who we are:

Jeremiah 17:9 (KJV)

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Notice the wording. The Bible doesn't say your heart is mostly good with a few bad habits. It says your heart is **deceitful above all things**. It is a master manipulator. It tricks you into believing your own excuses. And the text describes it as **desperately wicked**, which in the original language means incurably sick. You cannot fix it, educate it, or reform it.

The Apostle Paul leaves absolutely no room for negotiation or grading on a curve when he summarizes the human condition in his letter to the Romans:

Romans 3:10–12 (KJV)

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Look at how many times God uses the word **none** and **not one**. He doesn't say "except for the nice people." He doesn't say "except for the religious folks." He says **there is none that doeth good, no, not one**. In the eyes of a perfectly holy God, our standard of "goodness" is an absolute failure.

The Bankruptcy of Our Own Righteousness

We often try to fight back against this diagnosis by listing our achievements. We say, "Look at my charity, look at my church attendance, look at how polite I am to my neighbors." But God looks at our best moral achievements without Christ, and He rejects them. The prophet Isaiah states this in raw, offensive terms:

Isaiah 64:6 (KJV)

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

Think about the weight of that statement. It doesn't say our *sins* are like filthy rags; it says our **righteousnesses**—our absolute best days, our highest moral

acts, our most generous donations—are like filthy rags before a holy God. Why? Because they are stained with selfish motives, pride, and a desire to be our own savior.

We do not become sinners because we commit sins; we commit sins because we are born sinners. King David recognized this dark reality about his own birth:

Psalm 51:5 (KJV)

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

The Mirror of the Law

Why did God give us the Ten Commandments if we are too broken to keep them? Many people think the Law is a ladder you climb to get to heaven. They think if they do their best to keep the rules, God will accept them. But Paul destroys this illusion:

Romans 3:20 (KJV)

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

The Law was never given to save you; it was given to condemn your self-righteousness. It is not a ladder; it is a mirror. If you walk into a bathroom and see dirt all over your face, you don't take the mirror off the wall and start rubbing it on your skin to clean yourself. The mirror can only show you the dirt; it cannot wash it away.

Jesus took this mirror and made it even sharper in the Sermon on the Mount. He showed that God doesn't just judge external actions; He judges internal desires:

Mark 7:20–23 (KJV)

"And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit,

lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

Jesus explicitly lists internal sins (like pride, deceit, and evil thoughts) right alongside external ones (like murder and theft), proving that the root of all sin is an already-corrupted heart.

The Danger of Moralism: Makeup on a Corpse

Trying to fix this problem by simply trying harder to be a good person is what religious people can call "moralism." It is the default setting of the human heart, and it is a deadly trap. Jesus reserved His harshest words not for the broken prostitutes or the corrupt tax collectors, but for the moral, religious people who *thought* they were good:

Matthew 23:27 (KJV)

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."

A whited sepulchre is a whitewashed tomb. It looks clean, respectable, and beautiful on the outside. But if you open it up, it is full of rot and death. When we rely on our own goodness, we are just putting makeup on a corpse. You can change your outward manners, you can change your habits and you can join a church, but you cannot change the dead heart inside your chest. You cannot behave your way out of a corrupted nature. As the prophet Ephesians explicitly defines our natural state:

Ephesians 2:1 (KJV)

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;"

Notice it says we were **dead**, not injured. A sick man needs medicine, but a dead man needs a resurrection.

The Necessity of the Cross

If humans were basically good people who just made a few mistakes, then Jesus Christ died for absolutely nothing. If your good deeds, your church attendance, and your charity is what you flaunt in front of others, then you are also stating that you saved yourself instead of Jesus on the cross who is The Truth. Everything that we have is simply opinion in which we glorify.

Look at the great swap that takes place when we stop relying on our own "goodness" and trust in Christ alone:

2 Corinthians 5:21 (KJV)

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Jesus took our rotten, deceitful hearts and our "filthy rag" righteousness, and He bore the punishment for it on the cross. In exchange, He gives us His perfect, flawless righteousness.

The Call to Action: Smash the Ladder

The blunt message of this lesson is to stop trying to be a "good person." Stop trying to climb a moral ladder that you know you can never reach. Smash the ladder. Repent of your self-righteousness, which is the ultimate insult to the cross of Christ.

Let go of your resume, let go of your excuses, and throw yourself entirely on submitting to The Truth of the Word. We close with this last passage reminding us to always remain humble under God:

Luke 18:13 (KJV)

"...God be merciful to me a sinner."