

THE GOODNESS OF PEOPLE

John 1:46 ... "And Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.'"

How often have you said or thought, "No one from such-and-such a place is good," or "No person of such-and-such a tribe, religion, or family is good?" Today when parts of our country are plagued with violence and hatred, it is easy to brand an entire people group or geographic area as evil. Jesus' hometown was in the province of Nazareth, which had a bad reputation for producing thieves, bandits and other persons that society considered bad. So, when he began his ministry, some people were suspicious of anything he said, fearing he might be scamming them. Today's verse is a conversation between Philip the disciple, and a man name Nathanael, who was very suspicious of Jesus.

It is obvious that certain places in our country have become centers of insurrection, violence and other bad behavior. If we fall victim to satan's lies, we might conclude that every person living in such places is guilty of bad behavior, then we are also bad; perhaps worse. God created every living person. No one is here accidentally. If you come to the conclusion that every person born in a certain barangay, or every person with a certain last name, or every person choosing to follow a certain religion is bad, then your faith has failed you because it is too weak to comprehend that some people are good despite where they live, what they wear, how they talk, what they eat, or how they worship. This does not mean that those same people are not in need of a Savior. They are. But when you find a good person who needs Christ, he or she should be the target of your love and compassion, not rejection.

In a family that has produced several criminals, or a village known for the laziness of its people, there are probably individuals who are truly good people. But we often label an entire town or people group as bad. We presume that if a young lady is from a purok that harbors criminal elements or drug users, she must be as bad as other members of that village. Teachers may label a child as bad, simply because his or her older sibling was bad. You may know of a man or woman who is treated unfairly, only because his or her spouse did something wrong. A business or hospital might deny service to an entire family because one member of that family cheated them.

I know it is natural to doubt the goodness of someone who comes from a place or people group that has a bad reputation. But every person should have a chance to prove their goodness and to be respected on their own merits. People in Jesus' time were forced to give him a chance. Can we?

Copyright © 2017 Datu Wali Mission Foundation