



## DAY 15

Sunday, December 16

(Candle of Joy)

## ROMANS 3:21–26

*“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”*

—Romans 3:23

## All

by Andrew and Sophia.

Andrew and Sophia are Park Street Church’s missionaries to East Asia.

It is easy for us who believe to look at the sinful secular world and point a finger at its blatant rejection of Christ. We sometimes marginalize those outside the church without thinking, but as we search our own hearts, could it be that we have also missed the point? Do we secretly trust our good behavior and service to move God’s blessings upon us? Are we easily angered when God does not meet our expectations or shield us from difficult circumstances?

In God’s eyes, all have sinned, irrespective of their belief system. There is no difference in his eyes because sin is not so much a failure to comply with a set of rules, but a distortion of our relationship with him. Sin is a disease that makes us think we can be god. It displaces God from his throne in our hearts so that we cannot submit to his absolute rule. It disillusions us into thinking that we know better than him and that we are not always accountable for our decisions. Sin can be manifested through disobedience or by a completely pious life. The former rebels against God by disregarding his laws and the latter tries to manipulate God into compliance by obeying them. Both have pulled God off his throne in our lives. That’s why we all need Jesus.

Jesus came to show us our predicament and to be our righteousness. He showed us what our lives should be before the true God, and he lived the life we cannot live: a life completely obedient and dependent on the Father, both within and without. Jesus offered his perfect, sinless life in exchange for ours by dying a sinner’s death. Thus, in trusting him and allowing his life to replace ours, we can live again in right relationship with God. Only through Christ are we able to joyfully let God be God and cease striving to be what we can never be. Only through Christ can our sins be truly dealt with and our rebellious hearts reformed.

### RESPOND:

**DO:** Ask yourself which sort of sinner you are: the rebellious one or the pious one.

**PRAY:** Praise God that the penalty for all your sin has been paid in full by Jesus.

