

You Need His Mercy Too...



Introduction

In this lesson, we look at the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector. This is a story that Jesus told to help all of us understand that no matter where we are in our walk with Christ, that we, too, are in need of self-improvement. Because we all need to improve, we should be especially careful when critiquing others and their walk with the Lord. Let us learn what Jesus intended in this great Bible story...

How would you describe this man?



*You don't want to be
like him do you?*

- Arrogant
- Full of himself
- Stuffy
- Critical
- Judging
- Looks down on others
- Pompous
- Self-Righteous



When we think too highly of our own standing with God and look down upon others, He is not pleased with us...

Background on the Pharisee and Tax Collector

- **THE PHARISEES**
- Most influential party among the Jews
- Self-righteous
- Stood in high-esteem
- Strict observance of Jewish traditions and laws
- Hypocrites
- **TAX COLLECTORS**
- Greedy
- Dishonest
- Thieves
- Were considered traitors by the Jews
- Could stop you and tax you on the spot for what you were carrying

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

- Luke 18: 9-14
 - Verse 9: *To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable...*
 - Verse 11: The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself... ***Thank you, God, that I am not like them...***

When you look at their sins, do you say, “Thank you, God, that I am not like them...”



The reality is that we often look at other people's transgressions against God and His Word and then see ourselves as being better and living better.

Matthew 7: 1-5

- Do not judge, or you too will be judged
- For with the measure you use (when you judge others), it will be measured to you (you will then be judged by the same standard)
- Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye
- You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye and then you can see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye

*We can be concerned about others
who need to get their lives together,
but we should not judge them...*

Luke 18: 12-13

- The Pharisee boasts that he fasts and gives a tenth of all he gets...
- But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven and beat his breast and said, "*God have mercy on me a sinner*".
 - The tax collector showed humility, while the Pharisee was self-righteous

Even when we improve our lives with God, we must realize that we are still human and prone to making mistakes. We should never consider ourselves as being in perfect in obeying God's Law. We are all a work in progress.

*We are all imperfect and need
mercy from God...*

Romans 3: 23

I John 1: 8-10

Proverbs 28: 13

Be Humble

- Luke 18: 14
- He who exalts himself will be humbled
- He who humbles himself will be exalted
- Some ways you can humble yourself before God
 - Confession/repentance
 - Not needing recognition or credit
 - Giving God the glory for the good circumstances in your life
 - Acknowledging God's greatness and power

It's really about our **attitude...**

- What should our attitude be like towards others who are not living right?
- What should our attitude be regarding our own righteousness?

Lessons Learned

- When we see those who are not attempting to live as God would have them to, we should attempt to correct and encourage them. Do not judge them because you, too, have flaws and faults as it relates to your relationship with God
- When we look at our own walk with God, we should remember that we are a work in progress and have not “arrived”. We, too, need God’s forgiveness and mercy in our own lives