

Title: A Contemporary Consideration of a New Testament Parable

Passage: Luke 18: 9-14

Draft Summary:

I. Persons and Place of the Parable

(Pharisee, tax collector; temple)

II. The Plea of the Parable

(God, be merciful to me, a sinner!)

III. The Promise of the Parable

(I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.)

Possible Discussion Questions:

- How may you identify with the Pharisee? Where may pride be easy to sneak into your life?
- How may you be more like the tax collector? How may you instill more humility and thankfulness of God's mercy?
- What next steps will you take in response to the sermon?

EXPOSITION

Introduction

- parable found only in book of Luke in the Bible.

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

- why a parable? Parable = something to case alongside (stories that tell a proud truth)

Passage:

Luke 18:9-14

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

I. Persons and Place of the Parable

A. Who

Two men

- men = a human being (can be any one of us)

The Pharisee

- conservative believers of that time who lived separately from those around them.
- They were theologically correct (God exists, who controls all things, a resurrection of the dead, existence of angels and demons).

Philippians 3:5

circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;

- Pharisee = in that world, meant as a compliment due to perceived excellence and perfection
- But Pharisees were also hypocrites.

Matthew 23:27

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness.

tax collector

- they collected taxes for the Roman government.
- They were despised because they had license to extort money from others, which many did.
- In many eyes, they were viewed as not worthy of forgiveness for their position and acts.

Mark 2:16-17

And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?” And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

- in contrast, Jesus ministered to tax collectors

B. Where

Location: Temple

- a place of instruction, cleanings of sin.
- A place where the Pharisee would have been welcome but where the tax collector would not have been.

II. The Plea of the Parable

Two people in the world: (which reflects all religions of the world):

- one who is able to achieve a right relationship with God.
 - You can do something to be right with God.
- Or you cannot.

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other.

- Question: what made the difference?

But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast,

- beat his breast = sign of sincere sorrow, sadness, and contrition.

Luke 23:48

And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle [Jesus' crucifixion], when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts.

saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'

- humble heart plea for mercy

Psalms 51:7-12

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

Psalms 51:17

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

- like the tax collector, David's plea for God's mercy and embrace of His mercy in light of his own sin

1 John 4:10

In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

- God has so dealt with sin that He can show mercy to the sinner.

Acts 4:12

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

Hebrews 4:16

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Habakkuk 2:4

"Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, but the righteous shall live by his faith.

- pride = what the Pharisee had that the tax collector did not have.
- Question: is there any pride within you?

III. The Promise of the Parable

Luke 18:14

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Psalms 30:1-5

I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up and have not let my foes rejoice over me.

O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.

O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;

you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.

Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.

For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

2 Corinthians 13:5

Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

- Question: Who do you identify with - the Pharisee or the tax collector?
- Pharisee = do you stop repenting for any and all sin?
 - Instead have pride and a deceived heart?
- Tax Collector = open every door and space of your heart to God in confession and repentance
 - Have the joy of justification, being right with God?