

July 7, 2019

Sermon Title: The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Text: Luke 18:9-14

Discussion Questions:

- The Parable of The Pharisee and The Tax Collector starts off as a classic good guy vs. bad guy story but ends up with a twist ending. What is your favorite story that has a twist ending?
- Be honest: Which guy are you most like—the Pharisee or the Tax Collector? Why? Which one of these two guys would most likely be accepted here at King Street Church? Why?
- What was something that stood out to you from the message and why?
- Pastor John talked about the three boxes and used them to interpret the passage. What do each of the boxes represent (*Order, Disorder, and Reorder*)? What does it mean to be in order? What does it mean to be in disorder? What does it mean to be in reorder?
- Has there ever been a time in your life that you have been in disorder (something happened that disrupted the basic thinking that you grew up with)? Share about that time. How did you feel during that time of disorder? What caused you to get out of it or did you? Are you still in that time right now?
- Is there an area of your life that has been reordered (you see things as they really are)? If so, how has that impacted your life? How has it helped you in your relationship with Jesus? How has it helped you live out your faith?

Examination Questions:

Read **Luke 18:9-14**

- Who did Jesus target this parable's teaching towards (18:9)?
- Do you think this problem of self-righteous people is as much a problem today as back then? Explain.
- Discuss some of the main differences which these men approached God. (ex. how they prayed, where they stood, posture, what was said, etc...) What do these things show about each of their true character?
- Why do you think the Pharisee prayed the way that he did?
- Why would it be "acceptable" for the Pharisee to talk about himself in the way that he does?
- The Pharisee seems to have a lot of confidence in himself and his own accomplishments. In what areas of your life do you have confidence in yourself? Is this good or bad in light of this parable?
- How do you stay focused on God's work in you instead of your achievements? What are some practices that help you keep the focus on God?
- Why do you think the Tax Collector prayed the way that he did?
- Which one of the two prayers do you relate to the most? Why?

- Jesus gives a surprise ending to this story. Everyone thought the Pharisee was the righteous man. Why does the tax collector in this story go home “justified” (vs14), rather than the Pharisee?
- What does it mean to be “justified” before God?
- In what ways does this parable impact your perspective on what it means to be righteous? Is a person seen as righteous by his ways or by his faith in Jesus Christ? Compare Romans 2-3 and James 2:14-26.
- This parable is connected to the following two (Luke 18:15-17 and Luke 18:18-30) and each of these three emphasize our inability to save ourselves. Read what Paul writes in Philippians 3:2-11 to fight against that mindset. Paying close attention to Philippians 3:7-11, what things are most important in relation with God. Also, consider, who is responsible for these things: you or God?
- Robert Farrar Capon says, “*For Jesus came to raise the dead. Not to reform the reformable, not to improve the improvable.*” What point is Capon trying to get across? What does it mean for us if we just want Jesus to reform or improve us? What does it mean for Jesus to raise us from the dead? Which one are you: Are you improvable/reformable or are you dead? Depending on which one you pick, how does that impact your need for Jesus?

Application:

If what Jesus says in this parable is true, I want you to reflect on these following questions:

- 1. What is one thing you believed about God that may need to shift?**
- 2. What is one thing you believed about yourself that you may need to shift?**
- 3. What is one thing about how you live that you may need to shift?**

As you group closes today, I want you to pray the following prayer together:

Lord Jesus,

Thank You that we don't have to be all cleaned up and perfect to come to You.

Thank You for your love and forgiveness.

We thank You for accepting us no matter what we have done.

Help us to be willing, like the tax collector, to ask for and receive the mercy You so freely give.

Amen.