

# Know Yourself

by John Wesley

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of self-reflection, recognizing our own sinfulness, and seeking God's mercy and grace.*

**Scripture:** Luke 18:11

**Topics:** "Humility", "Self-Awareness"

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## Description

John Wesley emphasizes the importance of self-awareness and humility in his sermon 'Know Yourself.' He contrasts the self-righteousness of the Pharisee with the genuine repentance of the tax collector, urging listeners to reflect on their own lives and recognize their need for God's mercy. Wesley highlights that many outside of prison may be just as sinful as those incarcerated, yet they often fail to see their need for a Savior. He encourages honest introspection and the question, 'How goes it with your soul?' to foster a deeper understanding of oneself in relation to God.

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## Transcript

The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: "God, I thank you that I am not like other men-- robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector." Luke 18:11 Just like the Pharisee, we often like to stand apart or to separate ourselves from others. Sometimes we are, like the Pharisee, aware of the sin in others and perhaps even thankful that we are "not like them." But who or what are you like? What do others see in you that they are thankful they do not see in themselves?

Read the last sentence again and spend some time in quiet and honest reflection. One day, after a gospel meeting in a prison, the chief of chaplains of the prisons was discussing with the preacher the wonderful response by the prisoners to the message of the Gospel: "When you deal with prisoners, you do not need to persuade them that they are sinners. Their imprisonment is a proof of it. But there are many out of jail who should be in, and because they are out they argue all is well with them and they need no Savior."

Is everything well with you? "How goes it with your soul" is a question John Wesley encouraged the early Methodist people to ask of each other. Luke says that Jesus told this parable to people who were sure of their own goodness and despised everybody else and in his notes Wesley comments: "he spake this parable - not to hypocrites; the Pharisee here mentioned was no hypocrite, no more than an outward adulterer: but he sincerely trusted in himself that he was righteous, and accordingly told God so, in the prayer which none but God heard.

The publican standing afar off would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven - touched with shame." Do you know yourself in the way the tax collector knew himself? Might I in thy sight appear, As the publican distressed, Stand, not daring to draw near, Smite on my unworthy breast, Groan the sinner's only plea, God, be merciful to me! (98)

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-wesley/know-yourself/>

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