

The Pharisee and the Publican Luke 18:9-14

by R.A. Torrey

The Pharisee and the Publican teach us that true humility and repentance are necessary for a right relationship with God.

Scripture: Luke 18:9

Topics: "Humility", "Prayer"

Description

R.A. Torrey explores the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, emphasizing the stark contrast between self-righteousness and genuine humility in prayer. The Pharisee, who boasts of his virtues and looks down on others, is ultimately rejected by God, while the Publican, who acknowledges his sinfulness and pleads for mercy, is justified. Torrey highlights that true prayer should be humble and focused on seeking God's mercy rather than self-promotion. The sermon teaches that self-righteousness blinds individuals to their faults, while humility opens the door to God's grace. Ultimately, it is the humble heart that finds favor with God.

Transcript

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. The Pharisee, vv. 9-12

To whom was this parable spoken. Have we any people of this class nowadays? Are they found in the churches or out of them? What other parable was aimed against this class? (15:29, 30.) What sort of an opinion do men who despise others usually have of themselves? How do they get such a good opinion of themselves (vv. 11, 12)? What sort of a man invariably is the man who despises everybody else? If a man has no confidence in any one else, in whom does he always have a great deal of confidence? Is he worthy of it?

Who are the two characters of the parable? How was the Pharisee regarded by the men of our Lord's time? How was the publican regarded? (Matt. 9:10, 11.)

What was the character of the Pharisee's prayer? Was God very much impressed with the virtues which he paraded before Him? Had he any real thought of God? With what two things was he chiefly occupied as he prayed? How many persons in his estimation were in the same class with himself? (v. 11, R. V.) Do we ever find men nowadays whose whole fund of admiration is exhausted upon themselves? Who else

beside themselves admires such men? How does God regard them? (16:15.) What was entirely lacking in the Pharisee's prayer? Was there any real thanksgiving? Do men in our day ever make prayer a pretext for parading their own virtues? Is such prayer likely to be answered? What was the Pharisee doing as he prayed? What evidence is there that he was looking around for some one to act as a dark background for his own shining virtues (v. 11)? Was he a moral man? A religious man? A large giver? Orthodox? A saved man? What is the practical lesson then?

2. The Publican, vv. 13, 14

What one thing occupied the publican's mind in his prayer? Why had he no time to think of other people's sins? How many men in his estimation were in the same class as himself? (v. 13, Greek, and R. V. margin.) Have we any instance in the Bible of a self-satisfied Pharisee who was brought to the place the publican took? (1 Tim. 1:15.) What was his one petition? What did he rest upon as the ground upon which he was to receive mercy? (R. V. margin.) Had he been a good man? Was he saved? What is the practical lesson?

Of the two men which would a Jew have thought would win God's favor? Which really won it? How did the publican go down to his house? What does "justified" mean? How did the Pharisee go down to his house? Why was the publican justified? But the Pharisee unjustified? What is all any one needs to do to get pardon? What is the general principle Christ announces? Is it found elsewhere in the Bible? If we want then to get up, what must we first do? (Compare Phil. 2:9, etc.)

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. God

Hears prayer, justifies great sinners, pardons the penitent, damns the self-righteous, 13, 14.

2. Man

Self-righteous, blind to his own faults, open-eyed to others' faults, 11; in need of pardon, 14.

3. Prevailing Prayer

(1). To whom to pray--God, 13.

(2). How to pray--humbly, earnestly, definitely, personally, briefly, 13.

(3). For what to pray--mercy, 13.

(4). For whom to pray--yourself, 13.

4. How to Be Lost and How to Be Saved

(1). The Pharisee highly esteemed by self and by others, moral, religious, orthodox, generous, but he refused to take the sinner's place and was lost, 11; the publican despised by self and by others, sinful, 13; but he took the sinner's place, sought mercy, rested on the blood, and was saved, 14.

(2). The Pharisee justified himself and God condemned him, 11, 12, 14; the publican condemned himself and God justified him, 13, 14.

(3). The publican came to God and talked of his sins, and God forgave him, 13, 14; the Pharisee came to God and talked of his virtues, and God sent him away empty, 11, 12, 14.

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