

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

*A Bible Parable Re-enactment Skit by CedarS Bible Park Ranger, Lauren Cornthwaite
[With “APPS”—Application Ideas & questions at the end by Warren Huff]*

Bible Verses: Luke 18:9-14

Characters:

Narrator

Pharisee

Tax Collector

Crowd of onlookers

Narrator: Alright, listen up everyone! Who here has ever gossiped about or judged someone? You don't have to answer out loud, but I want you to think about that while I tell you this story.

Two men went up into the temple to pray; one was a Pharisee, (**crowd of onlookers goes “yay”**) and the other was a publican (**crowd of onlookers goes “boo”**). The Pharisee threw himself down and prayed in a loud voice:

Pharisee: God, I thank you, that I am not like other people, extortionists (**crowd gasps**), unjust (**crowd shake their heads**), adulterers (**crowd: boo!**), or even like this publican! (**crowd claps**). I fast twice, hear that TWICE a week, and pay taxes on everything that I own. (**crowd claps again**)

Narrator: (Shakes his head at the onlookers) I'm not done yet, save your applause for the end! (clears throat) Anyway, the publican, standing farther away from the crowd, was so humbled by God that he did would not look up from the floor. He beat his hands against his chest and said:

Tax Collector: God, be merciful to me, because I am a sinner.

Narrator: I'm telling you, the tax collector went home justified rather than the Pharisee, for everyone that praises himself will be brought down, and those who are humble will be exalted.

So before you begin to judge others or listen to mean spirited gossip or put-downs, think about this parable that Jesus gave to us. Humbly know that God's grace alone saves us, not our own accomplishments, and that even Jesus said “I of mine own self can do nothing”

Possible “APPs” for this parable—Application Ideas, discussion questions & actions:

Stop Bullying & Gossip: Do you (or anyone you know) ever put others down (like the Pharisee) so as to look better themselves? Jesus' message is that God doesn't judge by appearances and doesn't group us into “insiders” and “outsiders”. He loves all and favors those who are so “at the end of their rope” that they absolutely know their need for God.

Boost true happiness & Stop exclusivity: What Beatitudes did the tax collector fulfill? (Matt. 5:3-11) How could you be more inclusive & “break up cliques”? (S&H 239:7)