

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Two men pray in the temple. The Pharisee boasts about his righteousness; the tax collector humbly begs for mercy. Jesus says the humble man went home justified.

Luke 18:9-14

CHARACTERS: Jesus, Pharisee, Tax collector

THEMES: Humility, Pride, Prayer, God's mercy

TO SOME WHO were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable:

'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: "God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get."

But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.'

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