



Sunday, September 1, 2019

Pastor Keith Sovà

Intro to Luke 18:9-14

Sometimes, even as Christians, we can consider humility a pleasant “extra” in the Christian life. Many of us think if we know Jesus died for our sins then that is sufficient for salvation, but our posture towards Him and others can still be one of pride or contentment with our own righteousness. The truth is: humility (before God and others) is an essential to the Christian life, not an optional “extra.” Jesus makes it abundantly clear in this passage that the one who will be exalted later (saved) is the one who humbles themselves now.

This is counterintuitive on a number of levels. First, we instinctively try to save face. When we confess our sins, even to a trusted friend, we often hold back parts of the truth for fear that we will not look as great or good in their eyes. Second, we have a gravitational pull to judge others rather than ourselves. We are so much in the habit of either secretly judging, or gossiping about, others that it inhibits us from true humility where we acknowledge our own failures before God and others. Jesus’ remedy to these problems is to tell us the story of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector...

Context

This is one of the more famous parables in Jesus’ teaching ministry because of its close connection to the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which the Apostle Paul develops in much greater detail. However, there are significant implications for this parable in the context of Luke’s Gospel. For instance, while this is a fictional story, Luke quickly reminds the readers that people like the Pharisee really exist (18:18-30) and people like the Tax Collector really exist as well (19:1-10). This has significant implications for how we understand what it means to follow Jesus.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

Read Luke 18:9-14

“His Mercy Is More”

- I. Two Problems (v. 9)
 - a. Self-righteousness

 - b. Disdain for others

- II. Two Prayers (v. 10-13)
 - a. Pharisee

 - b. Tax Collector

- III. Two Pronouncements (v. 14)
 - a. Verdict: The tax collector is justified, and the Pharisee is not

 - b. Principle: Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted

Discuss

- 1) What do you think most people trust in for salvation?
- 2) How would you know whether or not you had a self-righteous attitude?
- 3) Would you say you spend more time thinking about your own standing before God on Judgment Day or judging others in the courtroom of your mind? Why is that?
- 4) How does knowing Jesus' willingness to take your place, suffering the wrath of God for you, impact the way you view Him?
- 5) The only way anyone can be saved is to go to God for mercy and find it in Christ's sacrifice for them. How does this truth impact the urgency with which you evangelize?