

Mercy

6-16-19

Luke 18:9–14 (ESV)

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

The gospels Matthew, Mark, John, and especially Luke can be very difficult to understand and reconciled with other NT teaching. First of all, we must remember that Jesus’ teachings in the gospels are before HIS Crucifixion and Resurrection. Therefore, HIS teachings are at the same time substantiating the OT teaching and preparing the way for fulfillment in NT. Also while OT Law sets a high standard, Jesus sets and even higher standard, which includes not only what we do but also what we think. In fact Jesus’ teachings revealed a standard impossible to be kept by one’s own human efforts. Jesus revealed we couldn’t save ourselves by our own effort and our need for a Savior.

In a way the gospels are the transitioning from the OT to the NT. Therefore at this point, **this is a very important parable! By this parable Jesus reconciles the Old Testament, the Four Gospels especially Luke, and the New Testament Truth.**

Luke 18:9 (ESV)

He also told this parable to some who **“trusted in themselves”** that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:

“Trusted in themselves” is a key point identifying the error of religion. These are those who “work” diligently for their right standing with God. Paul identifies these religious rule keepers.

Romans 10:3 (ESV)

For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.

Not understanding God’s perfect standard, they established their own standard of measurement through self-effort.

Jesus gives us an example the self identified righteous and sinner:

Luke 18:10 (ESV)

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

The problem with the religious or rule keepers:

Luke 18:11–12 (ESV)

The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’

The religious prided themselves in keeping the Law. However, the Law was not intended to rate ourselves by achievement, but it was intended to reveal that we fell short of God’s perfection.

Romans 3:19 (ESV)

Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, **so that** every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.

Romans 3:20 (ESV)

For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

For the tax collector, the Law did what it was suppose to do!

Luke 18:13 (ESV)

But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’

The tax collector recognized his need and asked God to be merciful. Mercy is key! A closer look at this word is quite revealing. Be Merciful means *be propitious*: make reconciliation. Derivatives from this word include expiate, propitiate, and atone.

- **Expiate – to pay the penalty!**
- **Propitiate – an atoning sacrifice or turn away wrath by an offering!**
- **Atone – reconcile, apply satisfaction!**

This word is used to identify the work of Christ.

Romans 3:24–25 (ESV)

(Salvation is by) Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom **God put forward** as a propitiation by his blood,

In the RSV, expiation is used. Look at this verse when the expanded definition of merciful is used; expiate, propitiate, and atone!

Romans 3:24–25 (ESV)

(Salvation is by) Christ Jesus whom **God put forward** to pay the penalty for us, to reconcile us, and turn away wrath from us by Jesus' blood when HE was crucified!

Now we can grasp what the tax collector is saying!

Luke 18:13 (ESV)

But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful (expiate, propitiate, and atone) for me, a sinner!'

This parable is fascinating! The entire Christian faith is based on the humble receiving of this revelation. Look at what Jesus says about the tax collector!

Luke 18:14 (ESV)

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

This doctrine is Clarified and Confirmed throughout the entire NT.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (ESV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And **this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,** ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Prophetic Team

Hear from the Holy Spirit to change the current situation or impact the future.