

OPEN

Would you rather make a visit to the dentist or an IRS agent (*if you had to do one*)? Explain.

LUKE 18:9-14

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and looked down on everyone else: ¹⁰ “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee was standing and praying like this about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I’m not like other people—greedy, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of everything I get.’

¹³ “But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even raise his eyes to heaven but kept striking his chest and saying, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this one went down to his house justified rather than the other; because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

DISCOVER

Parables take earthly examples to teach lessons about God’s kingdom. First, always seek to identify what’s what in the story Jesus tells.

Why do you think we all have a desire to be “right?”

How are relationships affected when one person must always be “right?”

DEEPEN

Parables have something to teach us about the Kingdom of Heaven

Why does Jesus feel the need to tell this parable?

What lesson do we learn about “justification,” from this parable and the posture of one who is justified?

DELIVER

As we engage the Living Word, there is always an opportunity for us to move forward with an application from the reading.

When someone looks down upon you, for whatever reason, how does it make you feel?

Most people are inclined to judge a book by its cover; this was always the case with tax collectors. What mistake would we have made by doing so, in this case?

Is our being justified before God, being made right with Him, something we seek to do and accomplish or is it accomplished for us? Explain.

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NOTES:

PRAY

This is a good time to confess in generalities areas of our life where we often become prideful. This can be followed by reminding ourselves on whose account we have been made right with God. We close with praying we might be given the Christ-centered gift of humility.

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