

## DEAR THEO

**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE // PART 16 (Ch. 18)**

Rajendra Pillai | Damascus Road Community Church

March 28-29, 2020

**SERMON NOTES:**

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.”

~ Luke 18:9-10

Right away, it is clear to the audience that the hero of this story is the Pharisee. He is the good guy. He does everything right. The tax collector is the villain. They were traitors. They cheated people. They were the unrighteous ones.

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.”

~ Luke 18:11-12

False righteousness always leads to **contempt** for others.

**Notes: The Pharisee**


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“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**.””

~ Luke 18:13

He knows he doesn't belong there. He knows he is the unclean one. He knows he is a failure, a sinner, a misfit at the temple.

**Notes: The Tax Collector**

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“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.”

~ Luke 18:14

We have this human tendency to think we know how to be good, how to keep the scorecards in our favor, and we know there are bad people out there, and we are not them. And sometimes we need a story like this to help us realize there is none righteous when it comes to comparing ourselves with God's righteousness.

**Notes: The Twist in the Story**

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Luke tells us Jesus set His face to go to Jerusalem. In the next two weeks we will be talking about what happened when He arrived in Jerusalem. This same Jesus will die on the cross to bring us a new kind of righteousness that we could not attain.

And if we listen to this story and think, thank God, I am not like that Pharisee, then that's a problem, because that would make us the Pharisee, that would be missing the point of the story.

True righteousness always leads to **compassion** for others.

Truth is, both the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, they both need Jesus. There is hope for the tax collector, yes, but there is also hope for the Pharisee, if only he would turn to Jesus and recognize he doesn't have to continue to live under the weight of his own making. There is freedom in Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free,  
nor is there male and female, for you are **all one in Christ Jesus**.

~ Galatians 3:28

### **Notes: The New Community**

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I may not know a lot of things, but I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord! First of all, He loves you. Secondly, He loves you. Thirdly, He loves you.

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## SMALL GROUP RESOURCE PAGE

Each small group is different.  
Feel free to adjust and use what best fits your group.

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### WARM UP:

- What is the most awkward prayer you've ever heard?
- What are some pros and cons of growing up *in* the church? What pros and cons of *not* growing up in the church?

### ENGAGE:

- What was most impactful to you from this weekend's service?
- Read through Luke 18:9-14.

### APPLY:

- How and why were the two prayers different physically?
- How and why were the two prayers different verbally?
- Contrast the two types of righteousness Rajendra talked about in his sermon. What is the end result of each kind in its impact on others we come in contact with?

### PRAY:

- Spend some time individually before the Lord, seeking to hear what God is saying about what we are studying these days. Close with Galatians 3:28-29 as a benediction.

### GOING DEEPER:

- Suggested resource – *Luke for Everyone* by N.T. Wright
- If you are not in a Small Group, there's at least one that needs you! Get started at [damascus.com/groups](http://damascus.com/groups)

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