
GROUP DISCUSSION

Who do you most identify with spiritually in the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector, the Pharisee who was legalistic and rigid in his relationship to God, or the tax collector who felt he always fell short in his relationship with God.

Read: Luke 18:1-17

The first parable of Jesus, 18:1-8 is an argument from lesser to greater. If a lesser human judge gives a begging woman attention, how much more attention will the greater God give us when we ask? Vs. 8 Jesus asks the question, "...when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" Jesus is saying, God will never stop answering prayers but will people stop praying and asking? How often do you pray and are you expecting God to be a Santa Claus or are you praying to stay in relationship and connection with God?

The second parable of Jesus, 18:9-14 is a companion parable to the first. The first parable asks WILL "you stay connected to God in relationship," the second parable asks "are you willing to be humble in your relationship to God?" What is real humility and why is it so important in our relationship to God?

The last statement by Jesus involves access to Jesus and His Kingdom. He says the only way to be connected to God's Kingdom is to be as mindful of your need for God as a child is mindful of their need for parents.

What are some of the differences between having parents, not having parents, having 1 parent? How connected do you feel to your parents? How has how your parents treatment of you affected your parenting? In what ways do you parent like your parents parented in a healthy way? In what ways are you thankful for your parents? For what do you think your parents wanted to be remembered? For what do you want your children to remember you?

In what ways, actions, or attitudes are the Pharisee and the tax collector alike? If you could say, "Good job!" to the Pharisee for what would you praise him? If you do the same for the tax collector what would you say? If you were to correct the Pharisee what 1 piece of advice would you give him? The same with the tax collector.

Family Time: Use the object lesson that Roseanna used on Sunday with the what's in the bag. Take a bag or box and put: a Bible, a candy bar (one for each person), a piece of paper and pencil, and a Tell your kids it's important to have God in your life. Pull out the Bible and talk about how this is how God talks with us. Read Psalm 119:8-10 and talk about the Words of God being sweet while taking out the candy bar and allowing them to eat it. (Please participate!) Then pull out the paper and pencil and ask them to write down 3 things they appreciate about God being with them. Put those up on the refrigerator or wherever you keep important documents and throughout the week ask them if there's anything they'd like to add to their list.