

Pride vs Humility

Luke 18:9-14

Main Idea:

God sees the heart. Pride closes us off from Him, but humility opens the way to His mercy and grace.

Point 1: We all need God's mercy

- In the parable, the Pharisee compared himself to others, while the tax collector simply confessed his need.
 - Pride says, "I'm fine. At least I'm better than them." Humility says, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner."
 - **Truth:** Pride blinds us to our need, but humility positions us to receive God's grace.
 - **Challenge:** Stop comparing yourself to others. Compare yourself to Christ and call out for His mercy.
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Point 2: Pride opposes God, humility receives God's favor

- The Pharisee's fasting and giving looked righteous, but the heart behind it was pride, not devotion.
 - James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5 remind us: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
 - **Truth:** God is not impressed with religious acts done for self. He desires a humble heart that seeks Him.
 - **Challenge:** Examine your motives. Ask: Am I doing this for God's glory or for my own?
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Point 3: Let God be the one who exalts you

- Jesus ends the parable with a promise: those who humble themselves will be exalted.
 - True honor comes from God, not from self-promotion or comparison.
 - **Truth:** When we walk in humility, God can use us and bless us in ways pride never could.
 - **Challenge:** Give God the glory when He blesses you. Thank Him, and keep walking humbly with Him.
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Reflection:

The Pharisee went home proud, but empty. The tax collector went home humbled, but justified. Which one describes you today?

Devotion 1: The Prayer God Accepts

Scripture:

Luke 18:13 – “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.’”

Reflection:

The Pharisee came with confidence in his own righteousness. The tax collector came with nothing but need. Jesus tells us only one of them went home right with God, and it was the one who cried out for mercy. God is not impressed by religious performance when it is rooted in pride. He is moved by humility and dependence.

Challenge:

When you pray today, strip away excuses and comparisons. Come honestly before God and pray the simple prayer: “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

Devotion 2: Pride or Grace

Scripture:

James 4:6 – “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.”

Reflection:

Pride is not a minor flaw—it places us in direct opposition to God. The Pharisee’s actions looked religious, but his pride kept him far from God. On the other hand, the humble receive grace. Grace flows downhill—it comes to those who bow low before God in honesty and need.

Challenge:

Identify one area of your life where pride may be keeping you from receiving God’s grace. Confess it to Him and ask for a heart of humility.

Devotion 3: Who Gets the Glory?

Scripture:

Luke 18:14 – “For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Reflection:

We often want recognition, but Jesus reminds us that true exaltation belongs to God. When we try to elevate ourselves, pride takes over and distances us from Him. When we humble ourselves, we open the door for God to use us, bless us, and lift us up in His time and in His way.

Challenge:

In your successes today, give God the glory. Thank Him for the opportunities and blessings, and remember He is the one who exalts, not you.