



THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

Luke 18:9-14

Dear Parents,

Jesus was making His way to Jerusalem—the place where everything written about the Son of Man would be accomplished. (See Luke 18:31-33.) Jesus moved between towns and villages, teaching Pharisees and scribes, tax collectors and sinners, and His own disciples along the way. Luke 18:9-14 describes a parable Jesus told to a specific group: “to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and looked down on everyone else” (Luke 18:9).

The parable presents two men who went up to the temple complex to pray. The first, a Pharisee, was proud and believed he was righteous because of his own deeds. He stood up and prayed, thanking God that he was not as sinful as other people.

The second, a tax collector, humbly acknowledged his sin and asked God for mercy. Jesus explained that the tax collector—and not the Pharisee—went home justified.

Christ Connection

The tax collector knew he needed God to forgive him, and he cried out to God. Everyone is a sinner who needs forgiveness. Jesus took the punishment for our sin by dying on the cross. We can cry out to God like the tax collector and because of Jesus, God will forgive us.

As you talk with your kids, explain that God rejects the proud but gives grace to the humble. (See Jas. 4:6.) The sin of pride keeps us from Jesus. Pride is thinking we are better than we really are. Someone with the attitude of the Pharisee sees no need for Jesus. The Pharisee focused on sins he had avoided rather than confessing his sin, but the tax collector knew he had no standing before a righteous God. He asked for mercy, and God was merciful to him.

God did not look at the Pharisee—nor does He ever look at us—and say, “Wow, that’s impressive.” God sees us for who we really are: sinners in need of forgiveness. Jesus took the punishment for our sin by dying on the cross. God wants everyone to be saved (see 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9), and we can come to Him with nothing but empty hands of faith. We can cry out to God like the tax collector and because of Jesus, God will forgive us.

Check this session’s Activity Page and Big Picture Card as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- Babies and Toddlers
 - Jesus told stories about God.
 - Jesus told a story about people needing God’s forgiveness.
 - The tax collector asked God to forgive him.
 - God forgives us through His Son, Jesus.
- Preschool
 - Why did Jesus tell stories? Jesus told stories to teach people about God.
 - Jesus taught about being humble.
- Kids
 - Why did Jesus tell parables? Jesus told parables to teach people about God and His kingdom.
 - God rejects the proud but gives grace to the humble.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

- Mark 6:34

NEXT WEEK

- “The Wicked Tenants” (Matthew 21:33-45)



Our Vision for Children

At Harlan Baptist Church we take seriously the Lord’s command to “bring [our children] up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

We envision a church culture or atmosphere that reflects that of Moses’ instruction to God’s people as they prepared to enter into the Promised Land as found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

In fact, Psalm 78 sets forth the very desire of our heart, that our children would hope in the Lord and not forget the God who gives them life.

Therefore, it is our desire to partner with parents in seeing our children come to faith in Christ and prepare them for life-long obedience to His Word.

At Harlan Baptist, we use a number of different methods and teaching styles to achieve these desired goals.

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