

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN Page 1 of 2



Passages to Study: Luke 18:9-14.

Read with the class: Luke 18:9-14.

Texts for memorization:

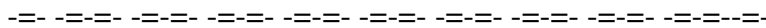
Younger: Luke 18:13 “The publican smote upon his breast saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Older Luke 18:13



OBJECTIVES: To show that:

1. Even when a person has behaved correctly, this does not put him/her into an acceptable condition before God.
2. One’s own opinion of oneself is not valid in God’s eyes.
3. God’s holiness rejects human attempts for justification.
4. God’s pardon is given on the basis of Christ’s sacrifice.



SCENE No. 1. VISUAL AIDS. At the temple entrance, figures of Christ teaching a group of persons while two men go up into the temple to pray.

DEVELOPMENT:

- The Lord Jesus was talking to the people in general but had the Pharisees especially in mind. They were very proud religious leaders who supposed they had a high level of spirituality before God.
- These people trusted in themselves. They considered themselves righteous and thought that their righteousness was sufficient to gain God’s favour.

Sug. Ask the students which of them think their lives are acceptable to God.

Obs. Young people do not have a very clear concept of what sin is and of how offensive it is before God. If they have not committed certain sins they might consider “serious”, they can deceive themselves into thinking that their lives are more or less in order.

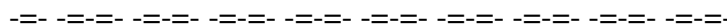
- The Lord knew the hearts of each one of them and knew that the Pharisees, especially, despised others.

Apl. There is nothing the Lord does not know.

- With such a high opinion of themselves, the Pharisees put themselves in the place of a judge rather than that of sinner.
- Trusting in oneself leads one to reject God and the salvation He provides.
- One who trusts in himself does not trust in Christ, the only Saviour. His faith is in himself.

Sug. Try to describe the scene in such a way that the students catch the tension that would be felt as the Lord spoke of a Pharisee and a publican, well known figures of the times.

- Since he thought of himself as righteous, the Pharisee did not come to God as a needy sinner.
- Salvation is not for good people, but for sinners.



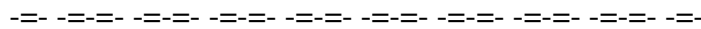
THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN Page 2 of 2



SCENE No. 2. VISUAL AIDS. Inside the temple, figures of the Pharisee standing near the altar and of the publican with his head hanging down. A cut-out of a heart can be placed above each one, with a list of sins written on them, some of the same for both men and other who are different.

DEVELOPMENT:

- The Pharisee speaks of his good works.
- Sug.** Count out loud with the class how many times the Pharisee says “**T**” in his prayer.
- The Pharisee of this parable ought to have compared himself with God’s requirements for holiness, for He demands total purity; otherwise, the person is not acceptable to Him.
- The Pharisee deceives himself, thinking he is speaking with God, but his prayer goes no higher than the roof, for he “prayed thus with himself”.
- The publican would not even lift his eyes up to heaven, showing that his attitude of heart was different to that of the Pharisee.
- The publican does not refer to himself as one of many sinners, as if comparing himself with them. He speaks only of himself, without concern about whether others were sinners or not.
- He realizes that he is responsible for his own sin in the eyes of a holy God.
- Sug.** It is important to clarify for the students that each one is responsible for **HIS OWN** sin and that the fact that others are sinners too does not change one’s own guiltiness.
- To “be merciful” means that God is being asked to be satisfied with the value of the offering on the altar at the time. To be propitious is to be satisfied with what is being offered..
- Only because of the value of the sacrifice could expiation be made for sin’s forgiveness.
- At the hour of sacrifice in the temple, the publican was confessing his sin and identifying himself with the sacrifice made for sin. The Pharisee had not taken it into account.
- The sacrifice was of an innocent animal.
- God’s eye saw the sacrifice and appreciated its value.
- God accepted the blood of the substitute shed in place of the sinner.
- Cns.** God is propitious to the repentant sinner today for He is satisfied with the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus at Calvary.



SCENE No. 3 VISUAL AIDS. (CEF has cartoon style figures that are very appealing, of the Pharisee standing inside a large figure “**T**” and an additional figure of the publican). A black heart can be placed nearby, with a full bill titled “List of sins of Mr. Pharisee requiring payment” above his head. The Pharisee’s bill is unpaid. Over the head of the publican is a clean bill titled “List of sins of Mr. Publican requiring payment”. The words “**JUSTIFIED - NONE**” is stamped on it, for there is no record kept of his past.

DEVELOPMENT:

- The Lord Jesus stressed that the sinner who recognizes and confesses his sin is accepted before God. This person draws near to God in a humble and repentant spirit.
- Contrary to what an onlooker might think, it is the publican who goes down to his house justified rather than the other man.
- To be justified means that God has nothing against you.
- This justification is a gift of God, not earned nor received through any personal merit.
- God can justify only on the basis of the merits of His Son and the sacrifice that He made for sin at Calvary.
- The publican was justified on the basis of the sacrifice of a lamb offered upon the altar, pointing to the sacrifice of Christ which was about to take place.

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