



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Humility: Have Mercy on Me

Speaker: Rich Villodas, Lead Pastor

Scripture: Luke 18: 9-14

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. 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.'

"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.'

"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: 9-14 (NIV)

Sermon Outline:

The story of the Pharisee and tax collector is about mercy. Jesus takes us into the sanctuary. The Pharisees were religious leaders who wanted to do the same things that the priests did in the sanctuary. The tax collectors were the spies who worked for the Romans in defrauding their families. The Pharisees came to church impressed by themselves. Both the Pharisee and tax collector stood by themselves as they prayed. The difference was that the Pharisee did this because he felt as though he was too good for God, whereas the tax collector felt as though he was too bad for God and others, he was dominated by shame and guilt. The Pharisee looked and talked as though he justified but truly wasn't. The tax collector was justified because of the depth of his need for mercy.

There was a lot of looking down in this passage. The Pharisee looked down at the tax collector. The tax collector looked down at himself. God also looked down – in mercy he looked down on those who needed mercy.

Humility is a proper estimate of yourself -- a right assessment of who you are. We recognize that we are made up of mixtures – love and hate, gifts and limits – and it is because of these mixtures that we need **mercy**. We need mercy because of the mixtures and inconsistencies of our lives. Humble people realize their need for mercy, proud people do not. Proud people don't see their weaknesses and pride kills any opportunity they may have for community.

We often size people up before we meet them, categorizing them into good or evil. There is something innate in us that's makes us compare ourselves (our lives, homes, cars, jobs, etc.) to other, although we should never compare ourselves to others.

How do we cultivate humility in our lives? We ask God to have mercy on us, praying: Lord have mercy on me, a sinner.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday Lead Pastor, Rich Villodas continues his series on humility, showing us how Jesus models a life marked by mercy.

Sermon Questions:

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, did your family compare themselves to other families in your neighborhood, town, church? Did they talk about being superior than people from other backgrounds, cultures?
3. Who do you fill in the blanks with then you say "God, I thank you that I am not like those _____".
4. Where do you find yourself in this story and which of the characters in the story are you most like?

5. Where in your life do you need to change so that you are not needing to compare yourself to others, so that you don't think that you are superior to those people around you?
6. How might your attitude be different if you admitted to yourself, and God, that you needed his mercy on a continual basis?