

Too Good to be True!

January 25th & 26th, 2014

Luke 18:9-14

The parable of “The Pharisee and the Tax Collector”

- ❖ This parable is directed to those who trust in themselves to be good and right before God and who treat others with contempt.

Contempt: “The act of despising [to look down on]; the act of viewing or considering and treating as mean, vile, and worthless; ...”¹

The parable is contrasting a Pharisee and a Tax Collector

1. The Pharisee

- ❖ Pharisees numbered about 6,000 at the time of Christ.²
- ❖ Jesus’ strongest words of rebuke were to the Pharisees.
 📖 *Matthew 23:1-7,13-15, 23-28*
- ❖ The Pharisee in this passage of Luke had a high opinion of himself.
 - ↳ He thanked God that he was not like other men who were obviously sinners condemned by God!
 - ↳ He singled out the tax collector, who along with the Pharisee came to the temple to pray!

“The tax collectors were Jews who collected taxes from fellow Jews for the Roman Empire. They made their living by charging an extra amount. Some of them made more than a living. They exacted any amount they could and thus became well to do. They were considered traitors who became wealthy by collaborating with Roman authorities at the expense of their own people.”³

2. The Tax Collector

- ❖ He was very aware of his unworthiness!
 - ↳ He “*would not even lift up his eyes to heaven,*”
 - ↳ He “*beat his breast*” – a sign of sorrow and remorse
- ❖ He called on the mercy of God!
 - ♦ Paul, a Pharisee, realizing his own sinfulness said this... “*Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! ...*” *Romans 7:24-25*
- ❖ He was commended by Jesus!
 - ♦ Jesus said this about the tax collector who relied wholly on the mercy of God, “*this man went down to his house justified, ...*”

“...*For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.*” *Luke 18:14*

Endnotes:

¹ Webster, Noah. *American Dictionary of the English Language (1828 Facsimile Edition)*. San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1989.

² Unger, Merrill Frederick. *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1963. Print.

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