

Luke 18:9-14 LESSON: HUMBLE FAITH — May 15, 2016

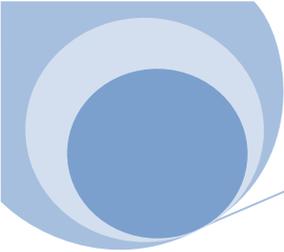
INTRODUCTION:

Chapter 18:1-8 The Parable starts off with *"Men ought always to pray and not faint."* This means that prayer should be persistent; we should persevere in prayer. We are not to faint meaning not to lose heart or give up. Why? Because there are great rewards, for God always answers with the right answer at the right time! **(18:1)**. Jesus goes on to say that there was *"a judge in a city who didn't fear God, and neither regarded man"* **(18:2)**. A widow came to him and wanted him to avenge her of her adversary (her enemy) **(18:3)**. But he would not for a while. That's where that persistent prayer comes in. The judge began to say within himself that he didn't fear God nor regarded man, **(18:4)** YET...*(The end had not yet come; there was another possibility coming)*. Yes, the judge thought he had truly made up his mind before, yet, there was another force at work! He said *"Yet because this widow troubleth me (her persistence troubled him), I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."* This means the judge honored her request because she continued to come and come; plead and plead, and not let him rest. She would not be silent! **(18:5)**. But on the other hand, Jesus calls him an *"unjust judge."* Why? Because he had no fear of God, and cared even less of what men said. He took bribes and gave favors to persons who held position and authority. He didn't care for conscience or law (but he was a judge). Jesus told them to hear what the unjust judge said. Let that sink in **(18:6)**. The unjust judge holds a great lesson for believers. The point is: God avenges His elect (followers of His Son; Believers; Disciples of Christ) who does what? Persevere in prayer; crying out day and night. God is a long-suffering God, for He waits and bears long with unbelievers **(18:7)**. But, God will avenge His elect speedily, meaning in His time He will act suddenly, quickly, and without hesitation. And the thing is: *"will He find faith on the earth?"* A great tragedy will be that few men of faith and prayer will be found when Jesus returns to earth. He's looking for faith, faith that perseveres in prayer **(18:8)**.

LESSON: I. ILLUSTRATION BY WAY OF PARABLE 18:9-10

18:9 **And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:**— Jesus speaks another parable to certain who only *"trusted in themselves that felt secure in their righteousness"* (*self-sufficient; having no need for anyone else; those who feel that they won't be rejected by God because they give themselves to good works*), but they despised others (*to count as nothing and insignificant*).

18:10 **Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.** The scene surrounds two men going up into the temple to pray—one a Pharisee (*a religionist*), and the other a publican (*a tax collector who was a great sinner*).



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

II. TWO ATTITUDES OF PRAYER 18:11-13

18:11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

1. The Pharisee (the religionist) stood and prayed only within himself. There was no true worship or personal communion in it.
 - He thanked God for making him what he was; that he was not as other men are (even naming them) or even as the publican.
 - An "extortionist" would obtain something by threats or force. In dealing with others he considered himself to have always been fair and just, rather than coming across as not being fair or taking advantage of someone.
 - "Unjust" would demonstrate a bad testimony. He considered that he treated all men justly by recognizing and promoting their welfare.
 - An "adulterer" would commit infidelity. He considered himself to be faithful and moral, never going astray in his behavior.
 - And lastly, even as "the publican" who was a tax collector and a sinner. He considered himself to be righteous.

He really thanked God that he was not like any of those persons.

18:12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. The Pharisee made it known that...

- He fasted twice a week and he gave tithes of all his possessions. He said things that he thought God would be pleased about.

He was very serious about this—twice in a week going without food—giving not just ten percent of his income, but ten percent of all that he possessed.

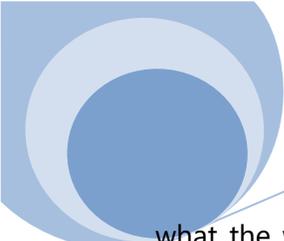
18:13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

2. The publican (tax collector) stood at a distance and would not even lift up his eyes to heaven. He was ashamed and embarrassed by his sin and began to beat his breast saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. He felt he was unworthy to face God. We see this in what he said.
 1. He called himself a sinner.
 2. He cried for mercy.

There were two attitudes projected here: 1) a prideful attitude and an 2) humble attitude.

III. APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE 18:14

18:14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. The major lesson in this parable is justification. Jesus says, "I tell you that this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other." He lets them know that you can't begin to exalt yourself, for you will be brought low; be humbled. But, he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted. The words of Jesus were shocking, contrary to



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what the world teach, and even to the way many believers act. Well, the scandalous sinner is the one justified. Why?

1. Because of what justification means. It means that a person acknowledges his sinfulness and unworthiness, and cries for God to have mercy.
2. Because a proud approach is not heard.

A man's pride shall bring him low; but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit Prov.29:23.

SUMMARY:

¹The people who lived near Jerusalem often went to the temple to pray. The temple was their center of worship. On this occasion, *"Two men went up into the temple to pray"* (v.10). One was a Pharisee, and the other was a Publican (a tax collector). **(18:9-10)**.

When the Pharisee prayed, he told God and everyone who was listening how good he was (v.11-13). He thought he was accepted by God because of what he did or what he did not do. He fasted twice a week, and he tithed everything that came into his possession. Jesus summarized the main principle of the parable: *"For everyone that exalts himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself will be exalted"* (v.14). **(18:11-14)**.

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/the-parable-of-the-pharisee-and-the-tax-collector/>