

THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: LUKE 18:9-14



The STORY

Read the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector in Luke 18:9-14. Look for a picture book to illustrate the story or tell it with the felt board while you read the text.

***Please note:** The discussion questions in the following sections are written to serve as a guide in teaching our youngest children. Three to six year olds are not going to be able to answer these questions like their older brothers and sisters. Please refer to the God's Story Preschool Curriculum Outline for additional ideas.*

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion.

- What is this story about? (The story is about two men praying at the temple.)
- Who are the two men? (One man is a Pharisee, that is kind of like a pastor in Jesus' day and the other man is a tax collector. Most tax collectors cheated people to make themselves rich while they collected taxes for the Romans.)
- Who is Jesus speaking to? (He is addressing this parable to some people who saw themselves as righteous but looked down on others.)

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CRAFT QUESTIONS

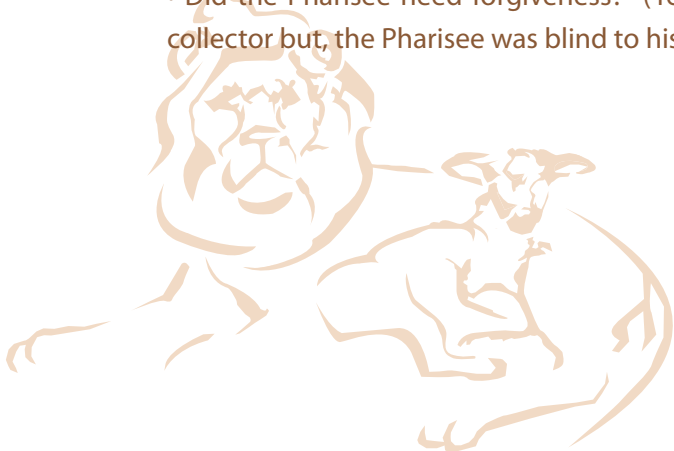
Coloring sheets have been provided that exemplify today's lesson: Pharisee praying proudly while tax collector is in a humble posture. Engage the children by asking:

- Who do you think we are most like, the Pharisee or the tax collector? (There is no correct answer to this question. In fact we could draw parallels to both. At times we might be proud and trusting in outward works. Other times we might be coming under conviction of sin.)
- Which would best describe you? (Accept any answer.)
- What are some ways children can think that they are good on the outside while still being sinful on the inside? (Often children will obey their parents but be angry inside. This is particularly true when there is something they want but are not getting.)

SNACK QUESTIONS

While the children are eating the snack, engage the children by asking:

- How were the two men in the parable different? (The tax collector understood that he was a sinner while the Pharisee thought he was righteous.)
- Why is Jesus telling this story? (Jesus wanted to show that what you are on the outside is not as important as what you are on the inside. The Pharisee was holy on the outside but full of pride on the inside. Though the tax collector was a sinner, he understood his condition and his need of forgiveness.)
- Did the Pharisee need forgiveness? (Yes, the Pharisee needed forgiveness just as much as the tax collector but, the Pharisee was blind to his sinful condition because of his outward obedience.)



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WHERE IS the Gospel?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

The Gospel is available to all men. Jesus clearly taught that not all men perceive their need for the Gospel. Jesus described this condition of man in Matthew 9:12. He compared Himself to a doctor. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick."

The Gospel is the cure for sinners. The Pharisee didn't think he was in need of salvation. Many of Jesus' hearers were like the Pharisee. Jesus was the doctor who could bring healing to their souls, yet they rejected Him.

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

