



“Stop Judging Others”

Matt. 7:1; Luke 18:9-14

Sermons Texts: Matt:7:1; Luke 18:11; I Peter 5:6-11

We live in a world, unfortunately, where people feel the need to put other people down in order to feel better about themselves. In today’s sermon it is the ancient story of two men who approach God differently. One was a devout Pharisee. The name “Pharisee” derives from a root that means “pure.”

The Pharisees sought purity in all things—in the way they observed the law, in their unanswering nationalism, and in the care they took to avoid all contacts with the impure. They were a select and elite group – the very pillars of society – and on the side of righteousness in every situation.

In contrast, the tax collectors were at the opposite pole of the social strata. No other occupation was more despised or looked down upon. Whenever a country was conquered, the Romans recruited opportunistic local citizens to collect revenues. This was a dirty business. Nobody likes to pay taxes.

In this parable the Pharisee goes up to the temple to pray. “God, I thank you that I am not like other men: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give a tenth of all of my income.” The tax collector stands afar off, wouldn’t even raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying “God have mercy on a sinner like me.”

Both of these men came to pray, but their approach to God was totally different. One prayed all about virtues and put down or negatively judged others, while he told God how good he was. The other was humble and asked God to find some mercy to forgive him for the life he was living. Matthew teaches us “to not judge others lest we be judged.” (Matt.7:1) None of us has the right to condemn others when we are striving to live the best life that we can live for God. The devout religious man felt that God would hear his prayer and meet his requests if he told him all about his good deeds. The hated tax collector felt unworthy to even ask for anything, but he approached God with humility.

Jesus, in this parable, teaches us in verse 14 that the tax collector went home justified before God. Jesus further adds that “everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the person who humbles him/herself will be exalted. “Please read how Peter explains, this concept of humility in I Peter 5:6-11. He emphasizes the truth that if we humble ourselves before God that He will exalt us when the time is right. In other words we do not have to judge others, put ourselves on a pedestal, or put others down for God to bless us.

Starting this morning, focus on your personal prayer life with God. Do not compare your life as a Christian with others who may be living a different life. Do not judge them, but GET YOUR LIFE RIGHT WITH GOD!!

Pastor Gerald L. Durley