

April 18, 2021

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

WATCH this week's Bible Story Video: link on our website: www.goodshepherdholmen.org

2nd - 4th GRADES

READ this week's story in your Bible: Luke 18: 9-14

Jesus often told parables to help the people understand about the kingdom of God. A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Jesus told today's parable to people who thought that they deserved to go to heaven- he told this parable to warn them. These people thought they were keeping God's commandments so well that God would take them to heaven for being good. (This would require them to be perfectly sinless, and only Jesus is sinless.) They also looked down on others because they thought they were much better than other people. Jesus wanted to make these people see how they really looked in God's sight.

There were two men in Jesus' parable: a Pharisee and a tax collector. The Pharisees thought they could keep God's law and earn salvation. The Pharisee was a proud man and prayed where everyone could see him. He talked about how he was not a terrible sinner like other people and bragged about the good things he did. The Pharisee depended on his own ability to save himself and please God.

Sometimes when we hear about someone who has died, people who knew that person might say he or she must be in heaven because of being such a wonderful, kind person. Even wonderful, kind people are sinful and deserve the punishment of hell. No amount of good deeds that we could do could begin to pay for our sins! The ONLY way we can be saved is through faith in Jesus who earned forgiveness for our sins on the cross. So people who are wonderful and kind go to heaven only if they have faith in Jesus. People who have faith in Jesus often do kind things to show their love for him. That's how you can show your faith as well. We do these good things not to try to get into heaven but to show our love and thanks to God for saving us!

The prayer of the tax collector was completely different. He stood in a corner showing he did not feel worthy to stand in the presence of God. He bowed his head and beat his chest to show his sadness and his shame over his sins. He relied fully on God for his forgiveness. He confessed his sins. God also wants each of us to admit our sins and to be sorry for them. As we confess our sins to God, God doesn't want us to be afraid. He wants us to trust that, through Jesus, our sins are forgiven. Which man was forgiven by God? The tax collector. The Pharisee did not see himself as a sinner so he saw no need for God's forgiveness. He did not have faith in Jesus as his Savior.

Jesus says that he will honor everyone who humbles themselves. When we humble ourselves, we are sorry for our sins and trust in God's forgiveness. God honors us with the free gifts of faith and eternal life in heaven.

Dear God, we confess that we sin every day. Thank you for forgiving our sins for Jesus' sake. Help us always trust in you for forgiveness. Amen

Two Men Pray Worksheet Answers: 1.temple, 2.God, 3.Pharisee, 4.proud, 6.good, 7.sinful, 8.tax, 9.steal, 11.two, 12.food, 15.marcy, 16.sinned, 19.faith, 20.Savior, 21.cross, 22.free, 24.eternally.

Want to share your artwork with us?

Email a picture of your Sunday School craft to office@gsholmen.org

*We will be showing pictures sent to us on the Church Screens during announcements

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Bible Passage Chain Craft: The sins we commit are like chains that enslave us. Jesus broke those chains for us with his suffering and death on the cross. Now we have forgiveness and are no longer chained to our sinful lives. Use the paper strips provided and write a bible passage on each one (see the list below). Make a paper chain by interlocking each strip with the previous link and gluing or stapling the ends of each strip. You can remove a link each day to look up and discuss with your family.

Psalm 85:2
Psalm 103:3
Psalm 103:4
Acts 13:38
Ephesians 1:7
Hebrews 8:12
1 John 1:9
Numbers 14:19
Nehemiah 9:17b
Psalm 51:9
Psalm 86:5
Jeremiah 31:34b
Daniel 9:9
Micah 7:18
Mark 2:7
Mark 11:25
Luke 11:4
Luke 23:34
Ephesians 4:32
Colossians 2:13b
Colossians 3:13
Titus 3:5

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