

Not
School's out!

Summer lessons from the parables

Main Point

When you approach God your attitude should be AWE-FULL not awesome



To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

Luke 18: 9-10 NIV



The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.

Luke 18: 11-12 NIV



“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Luke 18: 13-14 NIV



The Pharisee - Full of Awesomeness

- ★ Very legalistic and thought following the rules got them closer to God
- ★ Rants about the bad he doesn't do and the good he does
- ★ He thinks he is awesome



I'm the man

The Man

I'M THE MAN



I'm the
man

I'm the man

The Pharisee - The Problem

- ★ No humility
- ★ “Glances at God then contemplates himself”
- ★ No recognition of who he is praying to

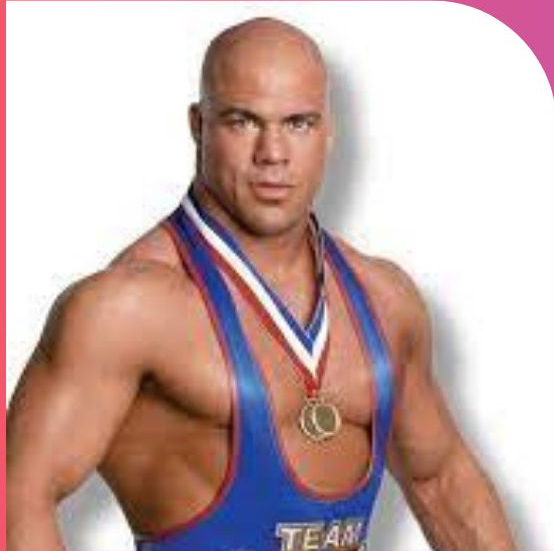


The Tax Collector - Full of Awe

- ★ Cheated people and deemed traitors or oppressors
- ★ Stands at a distance with his head down
- ★ Needs forgiveness and grace but doesn't deserve it
- ★ Approaches with humility and full of awe



Star Struck!!



The Tax Collector - What Happened

- ★ He went home justified
- ★ God exalted him BECAUSE he was humble
- ★ He knew he needed God



Being Like the Pharisee

- ★ Not showing God all the respect He is due
- ★ Comes down to pride
- ★ “Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18)



Applying For a Job



Make your resume stand out.

Being Like the Pharisee

- ★ Do we approach God trying to impress Him?
 - God doesn't need a list of what we've done
- ★ Do we approach God with what we haven't done?
 - This demeans others and God doesn't want that either



Being Like the Tax Collector

- ★ His approach was of awe
- ★ Hard to admit when we've done wrong
 - It means we're not perfect



Deconstructed Omelet



Being Like the Tax Collector

- ★ God doesn't need you to be a perfect omelet, He's cool with you being scrambled eggs
- ★ We don't fail God by needing to ask for His forgiveness
- ★ We succeed because we recognize our need for Him



Being Like the Tax Collector

- ★ Our relationship with God grows when we recognize our need for Him
- ★ “Strengths make you admirable, weaknesses make you relatable” - Carey Nieuwhof
- ★ God gets to know us through our sharing of our struggles with Him



Wrap Up

- ★ We should pray frequently
- ★ Approach God full of awe, amazement, and humility
- ★ Make that approach repetitive
- ★ When we approach God we want our attitude to not be awesome but awe-full



Audio file

[Pharisee and Tax Collector Audio.mp3](#)

Transcript

We all have important conversations we've had to have with her, with other people. It could be job related. It could be personal, it could be anything but important conversations, our stuff we all encounter, and we all come into them with. Different things. Today, we're going to talk about conversations, but a conversation with God, in essence, prayer, prayer is us talking to God, having a conversation. With God and all of our prayer. No matter what they are are important. They're important to us. They're important to God. Whether you're asking for something big, for guidance on something huge, you're thanking him for something or you're just sitting down and talking to God and shooting the breeze with him. It's important regardless and how we approach God in any prayer really does matter. Our attitude or mindset. Similar to what Ryan was talking about, like what are we coming in with? How are we approaching God? And that's what the parable we're in today is really about all summer we've been going through different parables and today is the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector and basically what we have in this parable before we read it are two very different people. That pray, two very different prayers and approach God in two very different ways. Right. They have very different attitudes when they approach God and what I think ours should be. And I wanna talk about ours before we dive in. When we approach God, our attitude should be awful, not awesome. Our attitude should be awful, not awesome, but. It's not the awful of, like, man, I I should feel terrible every time I go to God. No, not like that. That's going to come up really soon, and this is gonna make a lot more sense when the screen works because how we have awful is not a WF UL. I'll spell it out. For you, it's going to be a W E-F. ULL so awe full full. Ah alright, so we should approach God being full of awe, respect mixed with fear and wonder is how some people define it. I would also add humility to that. All right, so we're going to look at the parable and we're going to see what happens. We're going to read the whole parable and then we're going to break it down. I'll give you a second if you want to open your Bible. Hey, there's the screen. It's loading. That's nothing on any and Becky, that's just the long cable we have to run some issues there, but the the text will be right up there. Here comes it is bookmarked in one of the Bibles on your tables will be in Luke 18 verses 9 through 14. We're going to read the whole thing and then we're going to break it down. So Luke 18 nine through 14, the parable. Of the Pharisee and the tax collector says this to some who were confident of their own righteousness, and looked down on everyone else. Jesus told this parable. 2 men went up to the temple to pray 1A, Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed. God, I thank you, I am not like other. People, robbers, evil doers, adulterers or even this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get, but the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said God have mercy on me, a Sinner. I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, those who humble themselves will be exalted. All right. So we had two very different people. Let's talk about the Pharisee versus the Pharisee. Is the full of awesomeness this guy's got the attitude of I'm awesome. If you're unfamiliar with Pharisees, these would have been people that were very faithful to Jewish law. They were opposed to any sort of Greek or Pagan influence in their lives. They were incredibly legalistic, basically meaning they felt like

you should follow the law of Moses, which would be. The first five books of our Old Testament, where there's all these rules and laws, and you should obey them and not do wrong things. And that's how you get closer to God. That's how you gain favor with God. So this Pharisee he comes to pray, it would have been normal to see a Pharisee come and pray and he prays this prayer now in the context of who the Pharisees were, this prayer makes a ton of sense, right? He's like God, I am not like all the. Bad people. I don't break the rules, I. Don't violate that law. These are all things he abstains from, so he starts there. Then he rants about all the good things he does. He fasts twice a week. This is important in this culture. You require to fast once a week. He fast twice. He does extra credit, right? He's already got a 94. He wants that 100 in his class, right. I couldn't stand those kids. Right. Like just take it and be good. But that's what he does. He also says he tides on all he gets in his culture. You had to tithe a 10% on what you harvested from your field. You did not have to tithe. On, say, your garden vegetables or what you grew maybe closer to the home, but he's saying I'll tithe on all of it. So he did so in his eyes. He is this awesome, awesome guy and he's like God, here's how great I am. Right? I'm the man. That's what he's saying. Both ohh man six 7-8 years ago, there was a song that came out titled I'm the man or titled The Man by Aloe. Black was the. Artist and the. Only part of the song I can ever remember was the chorus where it just says repeatedly. I'm the man. I'm the man. I'm the man. Yes, I am. Yes, I am. Yes, I am. And it just went on and on like this. I don't even know what the rest of the song was. But I'll be honest, that song was on my workout playlist. I was a big runner at the time. I'd get into that last mile and I'd put that song on to be motivated. You can do it. The best go Full disclosure, it was also my alarm clock song when I would wake up early. Sometimes it's like this motivator. You're the best. I may have thrown it on in the car on the way here this morning since I was going to talk about it. It's a terrible song now that I listen back to it because so arrogant, right? It's all about me. I'm the best. Right. I'm the man. I'm. The man. I'm the man. There is no. The sense of humility, but this is the jam that Pharisee would have had in the air pods. As he walks up to pray. Hey, that's what his prayer is like. There is nothing humble about this. It's all about him. Commentator Alfred Plummer describes it like this. He glances at God and then contemplates himself, so he glances at God. He just gives God this quick look. And then it comes back to being all about him. He's got a little bit of awe towards God, right? He walks up to me, recognizes he should talk to him. He's like, hey, guys, here's why I'm. So great and why she give? Me a pat on the back, right? He respects him a little bit, but it's all about him. There is no recognition of who he's praying to, no sense of sin or wrongdoing. Everything he says in his prayer is probably true. He probably abstains from all the things he says he probably does. All the things he says he does. But God already knows that the problem here is in his approach. He's like he he's in the right car, but he's driving in the wrong lane. You know, you gotta be in a car that's gonna get you to God, but he's going about it the completely wrong way. He's going the wrong. Alright, so if the Pharisees way is wrong, is there a right way? Yeah, it's our tax collector. So we have this tax collector. They would have been despised by the Jewish. People they worked for. The Roman government, which the Jews kind of felt like was a threat, Jews, a lot of times, felt like the Roman government just wanted them to be subject to them. So the tax collector, usually they charge the taxes and charge more than what was required to skim money off the top, so they were cheating people. They would have been deemed traitors, oppressors and overall just really bad bad dudes. So these are people the Pharisees would have been proud of not being so the tax collector. Comes to pray. But in a difference, whereas the Pharisee walks right up to God, looks up and talks to him. The Pharisee stands at a distance. He doesn't get too close. He knows he can't get that close to God he stands with. His head down. Because in this time he's actually customarily you would pray with your head up. But he comes head down, he's convicted, he's not worthy. To get that close to

God. And then he beats his chest, which is a sign of cultural sorrow. This is what they did. When you have sorrow in this time and he says, God have mercy on me, a Sinner, he knows he needs God's forgiveness and grace. He didn't deserve it and he knows it. He's like mercy is the only thing I can ask for. In essence, he's saying I have no defense. I know what I've done is wrong and God, I deserve whatever it is you put on me, but have mercy. He knows God has the power to do whatever he wants, so he approaches God with an attitude of humility, with an attitude full of awe towards this powerful. It's almost like in a in a sense, he walks up to God being starstruck with who God is. A while ago, probably about a month ago, was on a group text with Ryan, Chris and Eugene, and it was either Ryan or Chris in the morning sends out a text that former professional wrestler Kurt Angle, who's this guy here, we grew up watching professional wrestling. Think about that what you want. But he was a big deal wrestler. He was actually an Olympic gold medalist, actual wrestler and then got into professional wrestling and turns out he was going to be a mallards game here in Madison to sign autographs and take pictures. And Eugene's like, man, that was my guy when I. Was a kid like that was my favorite. So I got. That's cool. So later on, they afternoon, Fast forward about four or five hours. Eugene, Texas, all guys, I'm pretty sure Kurt Angle is at the Princeton Club working out and I'm there too. So he takes video like from a distance, kind of that creepy like video. He's like, I think he's over there. Shadow boxing. We're like, dude, you have to go talk to him like. Go say he's like I can't. I can't. I can't. Then eventually, later. He sends us this picture. He went and talked to him and he's like he says, it's like I'm not one to get starstruck, but seeing him brought out my inner child, he was starstruck. He was humble. That was his approach. Is like oh man, but I can just get right there. And he got a picture. He's got a picture with one of his childhood heroes. The tax collector approached God almost with this. Star struck humbleness in his mentality. He was humble, he was reverent towards him, not arrogant. And what happened with the tax collector when he does this? His plea was granted. Jesus says he went home justified. Justified as a big word, the apostle Paul uses a lot in his writings, and we'll probably get to some of Paul next year, but basically it's a legal word that would mean right standing. In like a legal sense, he's you are now right with God. He's saying the tax locator went home in right standing. With God, God exalts. With him, because he was humble before God, God vindicated him, cleared him of blame. The key is God did it. The Pharisee tried to do it himself. He tried to exalt himself, justify himself, vindicate himself by. What he did? So what's God say? He's gonna humble him. He needs to be humble. The tax collector was humble and realized he couldn't do it himself. And who could? All powerful, all knowing full of grace. So he approached God with that sense of awe about who he is and asked for mercy and forgiveness, and it was granted, and he went home justified. And that is one of the most comforting and incredible things we can hear that we are right with God. And we have tendencies or can be like both of these characters. We try to look at these parables, take what it says like, OK, how can we relate to them? So how about the Pharisees? How can we? Be like this Pharisee, thinking maybe we're a little too awesome sometimes in essence not showing God the full level of respect and honor he's due. It's not fun to think about how we can be the problematic character in the story, but this happens. And with the Pharisee, I think it really came down to pride. He just wanted to show God how great he was, how awesome. Was Proverbs 1618 a fairly famous proverb says pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. This is an essence to pump yourself up, puff yourself up two gets body slammed back down by Kurt Angle. There except it's God. You try to exalt yourself. And we come back down humbled. I think when I thought about the Pharisees like he tried to sell himself to God, almost like he was applying for a job, he's giving God his resume and his cover letter. Why am I the best candidate for it? Many of us here have had to apply for jobs. Most of us at some point, which you do right, you write. A cover letter. You put together a resume.

A lot of it's online. Now you're filling out all this stuff, but in essence. You're trying to highlight everything you would bring to a company you're trying to tell them why you'd be a good fit for the job. My first job out of college was actually recruiting for a staffing company, so I spent my days looking at Resumes and we would look for very certain buzzwords or skill sets or experiences on these resumes that would then get us to call the employee and try to get them hired. It was supposed to grab our attention and impress us with what they had. So do we approach God trying to impress him? In essence, we try to give God our verbal resume and we have this tendency, right? I know it because I've experienced it and done it. We go to God and say God, alright, I went to church on Sunday. I went to my small group during the week. I read my Bible and I volunteered at the Community Center. I did it. These are all good things. I think you should do them. I believe God thinks you should do. But trying to gain God's approval, God's favor, God's grace, by doing this thing does not work. That will fall short. It's not what happens. We can't earn it. God doesn't need your resume because he already knows your whole body of work. You don't have to come to him with a list of what you've done. All right, so we can't earn it by what we do. Can we kind of slide in? With what we? Didn't do right. Say God, I'm not as bad as that dude, right? I don't swear as much. Drink as much. Look at bad stuff on the Internet or cheat people like that person does. I'm not like them. Right? So if here's the cutoff, maybe I make it and they don't, right? Does that work? No, God doesn't want this either, because what we're doing when we get into this mode is demeaning other people and God doesn't want us to do that. We don't earn God's favor by who? We aren't. So when we do either thing. Either trying to impress God with, in essence our resume towards him or knock down others. God says we'll be humbled and we need to be humbled when we do this. Because what does humility do? It helps us recognize our need for God, our need to be like the tax collector in his approach and his attitude. Now what he did with his job, he did wrong with his job, but in his attitude and his. Approach to God. The approach of the tax collector was awe. He was filled with amazement and humility towards God. He knew he had done wrong, he knew it and he recognized it and admitted it. It is hard to admit when we've done something wrong. It means we've messed up or it means we're not perfect. I've talked often times about how I like to cook and I love food and I watch like cooking shows a lot of these and the food in the plate is always really well, like nicely constructed and put together on the plate. But sometimes when it doesn't go how they want, something kind of falls apart. They don't say that they call it deconstructed, right? That's a big word. It's a deconstructed this. I think about this with an omelette. Right. Stacy can make a great omelet. I cannot. She made omelets yesterday. Kind of like this picture, right? It's all nicely put together. There's this great meat and cheese and all this stuff on the inside. It's delicious. But I was thinking about it scrambled eggs, which I make like a boss or nothing but a deconstructed omelette. OK, all that good stuff is still there all the same. Ingredients in the flavors, but it's a little messy. It's a little broken up. It's not perfect. All the same parts, but it's imperfect approach. God like you're not perfect. God doesn't need you to be a perfect omelet. He's totally cool with you being scrambled eggs. He just is. You don't have to also feel awful about yourself for being scrambled up, but being off who he is, God doesn't care that you're not perfect. He doesn't expect you to be perfect. He doesn't need you to be perfect. What he wants is humility us to come to him, remembering that we need him, that we need a God, that we can tell what we've done wrong to you and that will then provide mercy, grace and forgiveness. When we ask for it. And sometimes I know I've got caught in the trap of when I have to ask God for forgiveness. I can feel like it's such a negative because it means I screwed up and have done something wrong. But it's not a failure, right? I think. OK, I failed God because I need to ask for forgiveness. No, that's actually partially success because I'm recognizing that I need God's forgiveness. What I did isn't successful. But knowing that I

need God, I need to ask for his forgiveness. And when we remember this need, when we. Rely on him. Our relationship with God, girls, we talk a lot about growing our relationship with God, continuing our relationship with God. I'm a huge believer in this, that our relationship with God should grow and get stronger every day, and I think we get to know him more and he gets to know us more when we share struggles and weaknesses, think about personal relationships. I think they can grow when we share struggle and weakness, author and Pastor Carrie Neuhoff has a quote that says strengths make you admirable, but your weaknesses make you relatable. We can relate to people that struggle like we do. I know I do with friends of mine when we have the same struggles. We can relate to each other, and that relationship grows because we work through it together. I think this happens with God. He gets to know us when we talk to him about our weaknesses and our sins and we continue to know him through the grace and forgiveness that he offers. That's a gift that he gives back to us that we really need, like, think about a gift you've ever got that was just super needed. Our second car, the car Stacy drives, was a Gift. We were kind of in a .0 man years ago. When the car she had was falling apart, we couldn't afford to fix it. We really couldn't afford a new one. And kind of in that same time, my grandma had passed away and my grandpa on that side wasn't driving anymore. He was older, was living in assisted living, so they had a car and we're like, OK, we might be able to buy that from him. So my dad calls me one day, like, oh, we're getting it all worked out. You're getting the car and I'm like, OK, what's the cost? And he's like, it's free. We have to pay for it. We needed a better car. And we got it for free and it's powerful and humbling and meaningful. Think about gifts like that, because that's what God does when he gives us his grace and his forgiveness. It's something we need and we can't get it anywhere else. It's unique and it's one-of-a-kind that is one-of-a-kind grace, forgiveness and mercy and we get it by approaching God. With humility and a sense of awe and who he is, and recognizing by where we are in our lives and asking for forgiveness and grace when we need it. So I want us to be people that do pray frequently, right approach God frequently all the time, every day and try to make that approach to God full of awe, full of amazement, full of humility. Remember who he is. And then make that approach repetitive. The more we do things, the more we get into that practice, the more it becomes the normal attitude when we. Come to God. So then approach, God, we want that attitude to not be awesome like the PHARISEE, but like the tax collector and be ah, full let's. Gotta thank you for this parable guide just for this lesson. In these few verses. But how we come to you in prayer, God, and I pray that we would be. Full of awe towards you, God and who you are in in your power, God in Your Majesty, but also in your love, in your grace, that we would see all of those things when we approach you, and we would come with humility, with amazement. And God, we would just come to you with honesty about whatever is going on in our lives, God. And we need grace, forgiveness. We would talk to you about that. And God, I thank you that when we do come to you, you're there to listen. And you're there to kind of reach out to us and offer that grace. We thank you again for this morning. God, in your name.