BIG SHOTS BEWARE! *Luke 18:9-14*

Luke 18:9-14 (New Living Translation)

⁹ Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: ¹⁰ "Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: 'I thank you, God, that I am not a sinner like everyone else. For I don't cheat, I don't sin, and I don't commit adultery. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! ¹² I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.'

Luke 18:9-14 (New Living Translation)

¹³ "But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.' ¹⁴ I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." 1) Applications for heaven have no blanks for my achievements, offices held or perfect attendance in Sunday school.

2) No need to stand at heaven's gate with your glowing resume...it all comes down to walking through the 'Jesus Door'.

3) It is either 'full of myself' or 'my only plea: Jesus died for me".



Self-Esteem Is Mighty Fine Indeed

It's good to know our strengths, our value to the organization and our level of skill.

Getting along in the world means having a healthy self-image.

Your glowing achievements, degrees earned and promotions...sure they are important.

Resumes matter, for sure.



But When It Comes To Our Relationship With God... Our Achievement Means Little

 Perhaps the Pharisee's words of service (fasting and tithing) were all true.

Perhaps the tax collector was a rascal.

 The real issue was that of understanding our unworthiness... despite comparisons and extreme compliance.

 Before God everything is stripped away and our sin is exposed and obvious.



A Matter Of Contrast, Not Comparison

 The judge is heartless...irritated at requests for help. God is not.

She is a burden, a nuisance. We are not.

If such a wretch can be moved to action...how much more, God



Getting To Heaven Is Not About Climbing, Personal Holiness Or Obedience

• The Apostle Paul made this point so well. -- Philippians 3:1-9

 Confidence in the flesh: my pedigree, performance, perfection or compliance.

"A righteousness of my own" is worthless
...it makes the cross of no avail.

 "Unless your righteousness goes beyond that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of Heaven". --Matt 5:20 Daily We Must Be Fully Aware Of How It Is That We Can Walk With God...faith In Jesus

Righteousness that comes from God is by faith.
--Philippians 3:9

There is not room for arrogance, since we are all sinners, saved by grace.

This doesn't mean that I stop working for God.
But my work doesn't save me.



The Pharisee And Publican Have Much To Teach Us

Arrogance is a sure-fire sign that we don't get it
...that our salvation is a gift not a wage. --Romans 6:23

It is difficult to pull free of self-absorption.

Stop comparing yourself to others
...it is arrogance at its worst.

Jesus chose the remorseful tax-collector to be the poster child of humility. Don't let it go to your head, mister!



We Come To God With Empty Hands ...It Is The Only Way!

• To be grateful for the cross. --Galatians 6:14

Appreciative of the only 'status' that counts:
To be 'In Christ'. --Philippians 3:8,9

 If there is another way to God, such as my compliance and hard work, Jesus' death was quite unnecessary. --Galatians 2:20, 21



So What Will It Be?

"Oh God, you are so lucky to have me on your team."

"Oh God, be merciful to me ...a sinner!"



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I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

I trust him as my Lord and Savior.



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