

Bernard of Clairvaux (1160)

12 Steps Towards Consuming Pride vs. 12 Steps Towards Freeing Humility

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|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Curiosity
God | 1. Filled with wonder/awe of |
| 2. Levity of mind | 2. God's will, not my will |
| 3. Giddiness | 3. Obedience |
| 4. Boasting | 4. Patient endurance when
resistance tries to frustrate |
| 5. Self-exaltation
caused | 5. Realization of the hurts
by our selfish heart |
| 6. Self-conceit | 6. Acceptance of "What Is" |
| 7. Presumption | 7. Self-aware (no delusions) |
| 8. Self-justification | 8. Consideration of others
(regard for the common rule) |
| 9. Hypocritical confession | 9. Ability to be silent, quite
presence |
| 10. Revolt | 10. Emotionally strong
Not fragile, or easily hurt
Stable & able |
| 11. Freedom to sin | 11. Less anxious, calm speech |
| 12. HABITUAL SIN | 12. CONGRUITY inside & out
Not Hypocritical at PEACE |

What is it that God requires? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

Dear God ... I CONFESS THE PRESUMPTIONS & PRIDES OF MY LIFE. I AM SORRY THAT I SO OFTEN TRY TO EXERT "MY WILL" OVER OTHERS & OVER YOU ... ESSENTIALLY, DIMINISHING YOU & THOSE WHOM YOU LOVE ... HELP ME TO RESPECT & TO SEE OTHERS AS YOU SEE THEM...WORKING TO LIFT THEM UP TOWARDS YOUR LOVE & GRACE. DEAR GOD ... MAKE ME LIKE "NEW WINE." IN JESUS' MIGHTY NAME, AMEN.

8-4-19 PARABLES OF JESUS # 7 THE PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE & THE TAX COLLECTOR – LUKE 18:9-14 "IT'S HARD TO BE HUMBLE"

I remember a song from my 'earlier' years by Mac Davis, "ITS HARD TO BE HUMBLE". ... great lyrics ☺ ... here's the chorus:

Oh Lord, it's hard to be humble ... when you're perfect in every way ... I can't wait to look in the mirror ... 'cause I get better look-in each day ... to know me is to love me ... I must be quite the guy ... oh Lord, it is hard to be humble ... BUT I am doing the best that I can!

Hmmmmmm For a more contemporary character ... perhaps GASTON ... from the Disney movie ***Beauty & the Beast*** ... Gaston was the picture of fitness and thought very well about himself ... SELF-CONSUMPTION and PRIDE best characterize the character of Gaston
So to the Pharisee ...

Luke 18:9-14: ⁹ *To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ 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. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'*

¹³ *"BUT the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but rather, he beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'*

¹⁴ *"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."*

Today's parable --- the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector contrasts two different men ... with two very different hearts ...makes an IMPORTANT ASSERTION --- **"RIGHTEOUS ACTS WITHOUT COMPASSION AND LOVE ARE NOT CONSIDERED RIGHTEOUS BY GOD"**

HUMILITY before God is VERY IMPORTANT ... and FAITH = KEY

Whoaaaaa!!!! This is certainly contrary to the conventional wisdom of the time of Jesus ministry. The religious establishment had taught almost 2,000 years that God judged us according to our actions ... and our piety towards God ... righteous (and acceptability before God) was

all that mattered ... in other words ... IF WE FOLLOW THE RULES ... AND IF WE LOOK THE PART --- GOD WILL EMBRACE US!

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS?

IS THIS A PERSPECTIVE THAT IS RELEVANT TODAY?

MAIN POINT: **WHEN WE EXCLUDE ANYONE FROM GOD'S GRACE, WE RUN THE RISK OF EXCLUDING OURSELVES FROM GOD. GOD HONORS AND UPLIFTS THE HUMBLE BUT REJECTS THE PRESUMPTIONS OF THE PROUD.** Hmmmmmm Let's think about the relevance of this....

DO YOU EVER LOOK DOWN YOUR NOSE AT PEOPLE FOR ANY REASON AND THINK THAT YOU MAY BE BETTER THAN THEM?

- + LIFESTYLE? + FAMILY OR CLAN?
- + A SORTED PAST? + PARENTING STYLE?
- + REPUTATIONS? + APPEARANCES of "SUCCESS"

- + PEOPLE WHO VALUE PUNCTUALITY, WORK PRIORITIES & STYLE OR RELATIONSHIPS DIFFERENT THAN YOU?

- + PEOPLE WHO ATTEND DIFFERENT CHURCHES THAN YOU OR PERHAPS THEY DO NOT ATTEND CHURCH AT ALL

- + PEOPLE WHO SMOKE, DRINK, OR USE COLORFUL LANGUAGE?

- + DISREGARD SOME OF THE ASPECTS OF CHURCH & LIFE THAT YOU VALUE? MUSIC? LITURGIES? FORMAL VS CASUAL?

This list can go on for a long time and in many different directions ... the point is, **we all have a natural tendency to generalize, judge and compare others according to our bias and values ... JESUS USES TODAY'S PARABLE TO CONTINUE HIS TEACHING TO THE DISCIPLES ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF "WHAT'S IN THE HEART" VERSUS "HOW WE'RE TRYING TO 'LOOK GOOD' BEFORE GOD & THOSE AROUND US"** ...

IS THE CULTURE OF THE 1st CENTURY BENT TOWARDS "OUTWARD" APPEARANCES VERSUS THE REAL SUBSTANCE OF THE PERSON?

According to Dr. Luke --- Immediately following the Parable of the PERSISTING WIDOW --- reminding us to pray persistently AND posing the question, **"when the Son of Man comes, will Jesus find faith on earth?"**

Luke is bringing highlight to "what is true faith" = to walk humbly !!!!

Luke now shares a "common everyday event" and TURNS THE TABLES ON CONVENTIONAL WISDOM ... **I LOVE JESUS!!!!**

JESUS seeks to reset the disciple's values ... GOD LOVES & RESPONDS to the GENUINE HEART ... RATHER THAN THE PRETENSE & PRESUMPTION OF the APPEARANCES of THAT THIS WORLD EXALTS

PHARISEES = the highly regarded & respected class of Judaism

TAX COLLECTORS = the scourge

Why would Jesus highlight that the tax collector went home 'justified' before God?

Main Point:

1. **GOD HONORS AND UPLIFTS THE HUMBLE BUT REJECTS THE PRESUMPTIONS OF THE PROUD.**

2. **GOD EXAMINES OUR HEARTS – GOD CARES ABOUT WHAT'S ON THE "INSIDE" --- GOD CARES ABOUT OUR HEART & SOUL**

PRIDE: vanity, conceit, narcissism, unreasonable delight in one's positions & deeds

C.S. Lewis "A proud man is always looking down on things and people, and of course as long as you are looking down, you cannot find God because God is always above you."

HUMBLE: not proud, not assertive ... deferring and recognizing of others rather than self ... "down to earth"

Humility comes when you know who you are – YOU ARE A CHILD OF GOD

- + not equal with God but loved by God!
 - + not a doormat but a child of God!
 - + at peace with 'who you are' as a child of God
 - + enabled to think of others and of God
1. JESUS LIKES SINNERS BECAUSE THEY STILL HAVE ROOM TO GROW
 2. JESUS LIKES SINNERS BECAUSE THEY DO NOT LOOK DOWN ON OTHERS
 3. JESUS LIKES SINNERS BECAUSE THEY KNOW THEY MUST DEPEND ON GOD
 4. JESUS LIKES SINNERS BECAUSE THERE IS NO ONE ELSE TO LIKE