

Different

Description

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Luke 18:9-17

One of these things is not like the other. There is a difference between them, although both men have come to the temple to pray, that is as far as the similarity went. The differences apparent on the outside (one man was a religious heavyweight, the other man was a tax collector/sinner), it was the differences on the inside of their hearts that counted.

Jesus shared his prayer with his disciples (chapter 11) teaching them the foundation of communicating with God. Jesus's prayer focuses on God, centering God in the middle of the prayer. The prayer of the Pharisee could not be anymore different: it focused on himself and his own self-righteousness.

Then the tax collector—a filthy sinner in the eyes of the religious community—also prays. He humbly lays down his life before God, crying out for mercy. He acknowledges God as the only one who could do anything about it.

How do you approach God? Be careful not to get caught up in the appearances of religious belief. Trying to stand on your own righteousness is bound for ruin. Embrace the cry of the tax collector and throw yourself on the mercy of God.

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