

Contrast in Prayers

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Gray

Introduction

1. Luke 18:9-14
2. The first part of this chapter has to do with prayer
 - a. The first parable teaches persistence in prayer
 - b. The second parable teaches the proper attitude in our prayers
3. The two men in our parable went into the court of the temple to pray
 - a. Thus these men were Jews
 - b. Both of these men were in a covenant relationship with God
4. The purpose of the parable under consideration is humility James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:6
 - a. Jesus manifested this attitude when he washed the disciples feet John 13
5. Let us notice the contrast of this parable and make application to our lives

II Discussion

1. The Two men
 - a. The Pharisee were the strictest, narrowest and most legalistic sect of the Jews
 - i. This group was often associated with other groups in their opposition to Jesus
 - ii. Jesus gave this group His most scathing words Matthew 23
 - iii. Some Pharisee became followers of Christ John 3:1; Philipians 3:5
 - iv. The Pharisee in our parable was deeply religious,
 - v. He prayed, sincere, moral, upright, kept his marriage vows, was not an extortioner, gave
 - vi. Just because a person has all these great attributes that does not make him justified in the sight of God Matthew 7:21; Acts 17:22; Acts 10:1-3
 - b. The Publican
 - i. The publicans were Jewish officers of the Roman government, and their job was collect taxes for Rome.
 - ii. They were hated by the Jews because they collected taxes and sometimes were dishonest
 - iii. Many did come to John the Baptist to submit to his baptism Luke 3:12 therefore not all were evil
 - iv. Matthew and Zacchaeus were both publicans
2. Two Prayers
 - a. Pharisee's Prayer
 - i. More of a boast than a prayer
 - ii. His use of personal pronouns
 - iii. This was announcement of his supposed qualities
 - iv. His only mention of any one else was to mention how much better he was than them
 - v. He received nothing because he asked for nothing
 - vi. He stood, meaning he struck a pose, assumed an attitude and stood where he could be seen by others!
 - b. Publican's prayer
 - i. He stood "afar off" and he would not lift his eyes toward heaven
 - ii. His prayer was only seven words long; a prayer does not have to be eternal to be effective.
 - iii. He was conscious of his own sins 1 John 1:9
 - iv. His only plea was for mercy

3. Two results
 - a. The Pharisee's results
 - i. He prayed thus with himself
 - ii. He felt no need, no sin and sought no forgiveness 1 John 1:9
 - iii. He went back home in the same state he came into the temple
 - iv. He was an example of the very ones for whom this parable was given
 - b. The Publican's results
 - i. God knew his heart, heard his prayer, and was declared justified
 - ii. God used his prayer to make a powerful point to those who heard this parable.

III Conclusion

1. Our standing before God is not based upon a list of good things we have done, but of our attitude. Psalm 51:7
2. God resist the proud and gives grace to the humble 1 Peter 5:5
3. True prayer is opening our hearts and lives to God and asking for His blessings. Philippians 4:6
4. We can come to worship and leave the same was we came in, or we can change, the choice is ours and is all dependent upon our attitude.
5. Of these two men which represents our attitude?
6. If we need to change now is the time to do it

Song for this lesson: I need thee every hour

Sources: Tom Miller sermon at Karns' 9/25/05; Coffman commentary on Luke; Notes on the parables by G. Roy; Wiersbee in Logos