

Long Story Short: What Jesus Had to Say About Self-Righteousness

Psalm 31: 14-19

Luke 18: 9-14

Reflect

- In your own words define self-righteousness?
- What is it about self-righteous people that you can't stand?
- Why do you think it is so hard to see self-righteousness in ourselves?
- What do you think is the antidote to self-righteous behavior?

Read Your Bible

- Psalm 31: 14-19
- Luke 18: 9-14

Apply God's Word to Your Life

1. In your opinion what is wrong with the Pharisees' prayer?
2. Is righteousness, (doing what is right in God's eyes), comparing ourselves to other people or to what God expects of us? Discuss the difference.
3. Why do you think we tend to compare ourselves to others than to what God expects of us?
4. Look at how the tax collector prayed. What is it about his prayer that Jesus said made Him right in God's eyes?
5. What makes you righteous in God's eyes?
6. The Psalmist begins with a statement of trust in God. How is the brokenness of this world and your life linked to a lack of trust in God and a primary trust in self?
7. How does trusting God above all other things remove our self-righteous tendencies and work to make you a righteous person?

Nobody likes a self-righteous person except a self-righteous person. When we are self-centered our focus is me, myself and I. I tend to compare myself to others in a way that makes me come out smelling like a rose. The truth is before God I am in great need. I am a sinner who can not even begin to justify myself before a holy God, (go ahead and try to do it right now, but you must be perfect in everything you have ever said or done in your whole life. Ok how did you do?). Righteousness comes from knowing who I am and who God is and placing my trust in the work of God to forgive and transform my life. That begins with confession and doing your soul business with God daily. This attitude begins to let God do His work in you to move you from a self-righteous "Pharisee" to a righteous person whose life revolves around trusting God. And others will see this holy work in you and you will give glory to God in this way.

Pray

O God have mercy on me when I compare myself to others, so I make look good rather than comparing myself to what You want me to be and become. I confess I need your grace and favor to flow into my life for I have no hope of being a righteous person without Your aid. I look to the cross of Christ. He is my righteousness. He makes me right with you and I put my faith and trust in Him alone. Do your work in me Lord that I might reflect your righteousness in all I do and say with my life. In the holy and righteous name of Jesus I pray. Amen.