

## Pharisee and Tax Collector

When I was a young man my mother told me that I should always let others “toot my horn”. This means that when you brag about yourself you usually don’t impress anyone. The other people think less of you. Humble, humble humble is the way to be.

There is a parable about a Pharisee and a tax collector. Let’s read the parable that Jesus shared and it should explain itself. You can follow along in Luke 18: 9 – 14.

<sup>9</sup>To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: <sup>10</sup>“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

<sup>13</sup>“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

<sup>14</sup>“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.”

Pretty simple to understand. The Pharisee prayed out loud so men nearby could hear him. He was bragging and wanted the men to admire him and think he was all that and a bag of chips. The tax collector who stood nearby spoke quietly to God and asked for mercy because he was a sinner and not worthy of God’s grace.

I love this short and yet powerful statement by Christ in this passage. “He who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.” This means that if you brag, God will not look favorably upon you. If you are humble and seek God first and His grace and mercy, He may show favor to you.

**Scripture:** Luke 18: 9 – 14

### Questions:

1. Was the Pharisee humble?
2. Was the tax collector humble?
3. Who might God show favor upon?
4. Who made a big show of giving?
5. Who asked God for mercy?

### Next Steps:

Think of a time you gave something to someone or did something for someone else. Then think back, did I do it because it was a good thing to do or did I seek a thank you so I could feel good

about myself. Learn that character and integrity is when you do something good when no one is looking.