

The Pharisee And The Publican

Luke 18:9-14

MEMORY VERSE

LUKE 18:14

"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Two bags or boxes, two paper cutout men, tape or glue, a plastic baggy full of old coffee grounds, and filter (or something equally unappealing), and as many small prizes (erasers, pencils, stickers, etc.) as the number of children in your class.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

The Humble Train

Count the number of children in your class. Line up that number of chairs in the center of your classroom. Tell them that the chairs represent a train and the object of the game is to be the conductor. Have the children walk in a single file line around the chairs as you play music or sing a tune. Instruct them to sit in the nearest seat when the music stops. Most of the children will try to get in the front seat. When they are all seated, congratulate the child sitting in the last seat as the conductor of the humble train.

Play again, only this time have the front seat be the conductor's chair. Pretty soon, it should be obvious to the children that the conductor of the humble train is the one who defers to the next person.

Explain that today you will learn about pride and humility. Let the class know that **God honors a humble heart.**

LESSON TIME!

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to see and hear Jesus speak to the great multitudes of people who came to listen to His divine wisdom? Just think how awesome it would be to sit at His feet and marvel at His every word. Without a doubt, He would say something kind and comforting, but would also share with us in His loving way an area in our life that needed to be changed because of sin.

In our lesson today, we get the privilege to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to His words. He is here and so is His word. Like those who listened to Him in the crowds, we will either respond to Him with a humble heart, or walk away filled with pride. Let's look at our lesson today, and see what Jesus has to tell us.

LUKE 18:9

Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others...

Again, we see that Jesus used a parable. Remember that a parable is a story that is cast alongside a truth to help us to understand a truth. This time it reveals the spiritual condition of those who have a heart filled with pride. Jesus wanted to show us that one cannot trust in himself for righteousness and should not look down on others with contempt as the Pharisees did.

Throughout His ministry Jesus continually exposed the self-righteousness and unbelief of the Pharisees. The worst thing anyone could do is to fool themselves into thinking that God will accept them based on how good they are. Because the Pharisees were religious leaders, they thought that they were right and Jesus was wrong. Their pride had blinded them spiritually and their hearts were completely sinful.

Jesus, filled with compassion, continually tried to touch their heart with the truth, so that they could be saved. **God honors a humble heart.** Pride will only separate us from the grace and mercy of God.

LUKE 18:10

"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector."

The people that lived in Jerusalem often went to the temple to pray, for it was the center of their worship (Isaiah 56:7). When Jesus threw the moneychangers out of the temple, He reminded them that the temple was God's house of prayer (Luke 19:46).

Prayer is our way of communication with God. He cherishes our time spent with Him. Prayer in the temple was a common practice during that time, but some came with an attitude of pride, which hindered their relationship with God.

Jesus said, "two men went up to the temple to pray." When God looks at us, He doesn't make a distinction by our wealth, popularity or social status. He sees us with no partiality. Our wealth or status does not impress God. Our humility and a desire to fellowship are what please God.

The Heart of the Matter

Take two bags or boxes and cut a hole big enough to see their contents. In one container put a baggy with old coffee grounds and a used coffee filter, or something equally unappealing. In the other put small prizes. Cover the hole of the container with the ugly contents with a paper cutout man that is decorated beautifully; use glitter or colorful crayons. On the container with the prizes place a paper cutout man that is decorated shabbily. Attach the cutout men so they can be lifted to view the contents of their containers.

Allow the children to peak inside one of the containers one at a time. Instruct them to look inside the container that looks the most appealing. Most of them will look inside the one with the nicely decorated cutout man first.

Reveal to the class the contents of each container. Explain to your class that we cannot judge the contents of a person's heart by their outward appearance. If you would like to you can pass out the small prizes to each child.

A Pharisee and a Publican entered the temple to pray. The Pharisees were religious leaders who hated Publicans, or tax collectors, because the Pharisees considered them sinners (Luke 15:1,2).

LUKE 18:11

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men-- extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.'"

As the Pharisee prayed, he made sure that God and those around him were aware of how good he was compared to others. He considered himself better than the other people; he exalted himself. He used others as his standard of righteousness. He felt he was better than everyone else and thought this made him righteous in God's eyes. We are not to compare ourselves to others but to Jesus. When we do this, we realize how sinful we are and how much we need Jesus. May we look to Jesus alone, the Author and Finisher of our salvation.

The Pharisee was deceived in his heart about prayer. Because he was a religious leader, he was more concerned about how others looked at him than how God saw him. He used prayer as a means of getting public recognition, not as a means of fellowship with God

(Matthew 6:5). This man was nothing more than a hypocrite (an actor) in the eyes of Jesus.

Notice that because the Pharisee's heart was in the wrong place, he wasn't talking to God but with himself. When we are prideful we are only showing that we love ourselves more than God. Pride in our lives will block us from having the relationship with God that He wants us to have.

In our lives we need to look at why we do certain things. Do we pray or read our Bible or even do nice things for others so they can see us? Do we do things so people will praise us? What is in our heart is the most important thing. We need to do things to please God, not to make other people think we are good.

LUKE 18:12

"I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess."

The Pharisee was also fooled about himself because he thought that he was accepted by God based on what he did and didn't do. Though Jews were required to fast only once a year (on the Day of Atonement), he fasted twice a week (Leviticus 16:29). He also tithed all of his possessions, even the tiny herbs in his garden (Matthew 23:23), but Jesus was not impressed.

One of the biggest lies of Satan is to make people think and believe that they must do something to try to live up to God's standard, to be accepted by Him, to get into heaven. But we can only be saved by God's grace which we receive through faith in Jesus, not as a result of what we do (Ephesians 2:8). We will never be able or allowed to brag about what we have done to get to heaven, because without Jesus, we are condemned (Romans 8:1).

LUKE 18:13

"And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'"

Now that we've seen the pride of the Pharisee, Jesus tells us about the Publican, who was a tax collector. A tax collector seemed to always be mentioned along with sinners in the Bible. Publicans often used threats and force to collect taxes for the Roman government, bringing oppression to the people. Sometimes they would misuse their power and collect more than they were supposed to. They were also considered ceremonially unclean because of their continual contact with Gentiles; they often worked on the Sabbath Day. To the Jews they were sinners.

Jesus tells us that the Publican stood at a distance in the Temple, grieved by his sinful condition. Unlike the Pharisee, the Publican didn't want to be noticed as he humbly came to God. His sin had overwhelmed him with sorrow and despair. He couldn't even look up towards Heaven.

Repeatedly beating on his breast, the Publican knew where his greatest problem was, and he called out to God for mercy. How does sin affect you?

Is your heart truly sorry about your sin? We must have a heart that seeks God's mercy and forgiveness with a willingness to repent. We must remember it is God's kindness that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). God desires to lead us to repentance and have us return to Him, because He is faithful to forgive us (1 John 1:9).

God sees everything we do, and He knows if we have a heart that is truly sorry for our sins. The Publican knew the enormity of his sins, and that he stood before a holy and righteous God. **God honors a humble heart.** We will either have an attitude like the Pharisee with his pride or the Publican with his humble heart.

LUKE 18:14

"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

The Pharisee's pride condemned him, but the Publican's humble faith saved him. Jesus declared the Publican justified because he was truly sorry for his sins. The word justified means to be considered righteous by God. Because of his humble heart, realizing his need for forgiveness, the Publican was accepted as right in the sight of God.

The Pharisee and the Publican

Choose a couple of volunteers from your class to act out the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. Instruct the Pharisee to pray a very haughty, proud prayer, paying specific attention to trying to impress the class. Have the Publican beat his chest and cry out; the more humble the better.

Ask your students which child they would most like to have for a friend or spend time with.

What is your attitude towards sin in your life? Do you have the heart of the Pharisee or the Publican? We are all sinners in need of God's saving grace (Romans 3:23-26). You too can be justified and reckoned as righteous by asking Jesus to forgive you and by putting your faith and trust in Him to save you.

It is necessary for us to humble ourselves before God to receive forgiveness, but those who exalt themselves in pride will be brought low, being humbled by God. The Publican's prayer should be our prayer, because we all need God's mercy everyday. **God honors a humble heart.** Don't let pride destroy that blessing.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of humility, thanking the Lord for His forgiveness of sin. If any children have not responded to the gospel, give them an opportunity to do so.



"Jesus spoke a parable about a Pharisee and a tax collector."
Luke 18:9-14

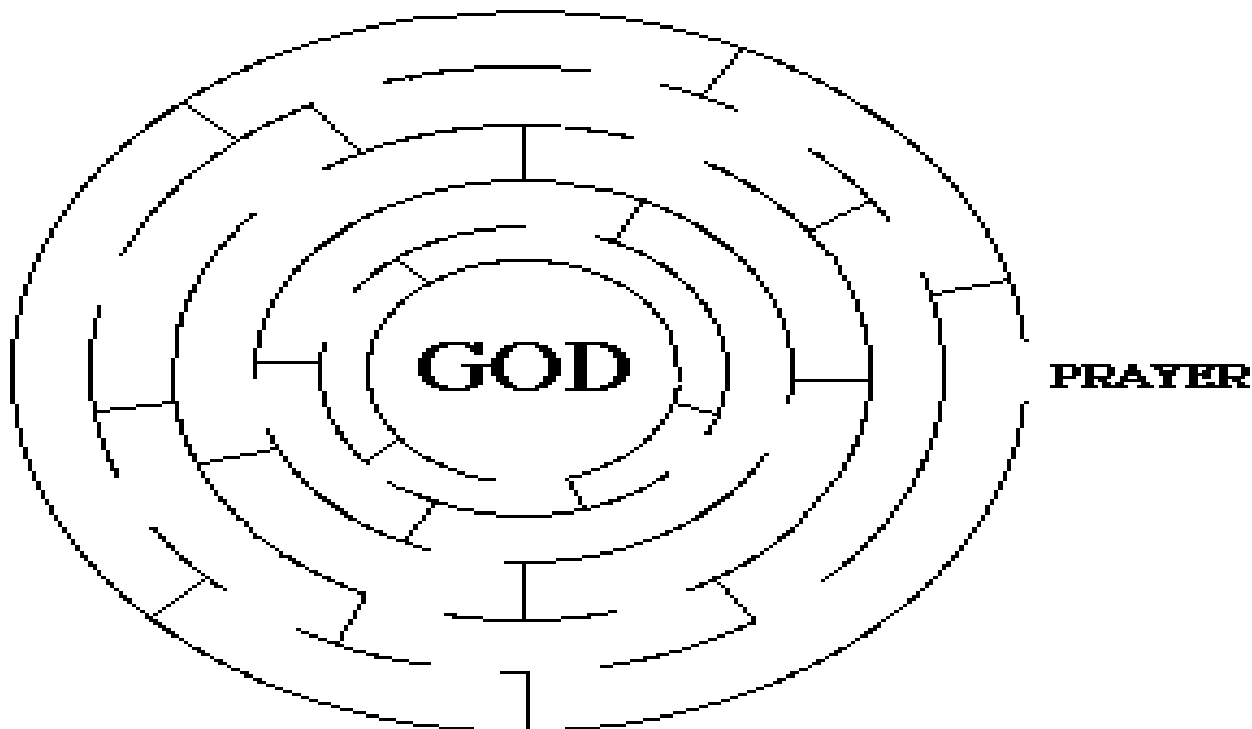
THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

(LUKE 18:9-14)

A M V E U Z G C E Y L Z K Q I
D N O B G C W I L L P S S S P
Y E D H F L P N M R V T Y S K
I T U B W F L E S M I H H O R
B L E D E A B A S E D V U E E
L M D V Y N C P H E G G M Z E
O E E N I W O C Y B Y W B H N
B Z T P F C V Y Y V Q D L P A
U E L Y B W U B R T D K E E I
P I A G H A I C M E O A S U P
W I B O S T L A B E V G B V Q
C D E N L Z P B B O O E F F W
P Z D W F L E S M I H S L I I
R P W Y A S N P P J K A K U L
F Z E Z E D S R R Q P U I H L

FIND THE WORDS OF THE VERSE BELOW IN THE PUZZLE ABOVE

"Everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." LUKE 18:14



The Pharisee and the Publican

(Luke 18:9-14)

MEMORY VERSE:

"...for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." LUKE 18:14

TRUE OR FALSE:

1. "Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." LUKE 18:9

TRUE OR FALSE

FILL IN THE BLANK:

2. "Two men went up to the _____ to pray..." LUKE 18:10

TRUE OR FALSE:

3. "...one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector." LUKE 18:10

TRUE OR FALSE

FILL IN THE BLANK:

4. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with _____, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men...'" LUKE 18:11

TRUE OR FALSE:

5. "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'" LUKE 18:13

TRUE OR FALSE

6. "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other..." LUKE 18:14

TRUE OR FALSE

FILL IN THE BLANK:

7. "...for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who _____ himself will be exalted." LUKE 18:14

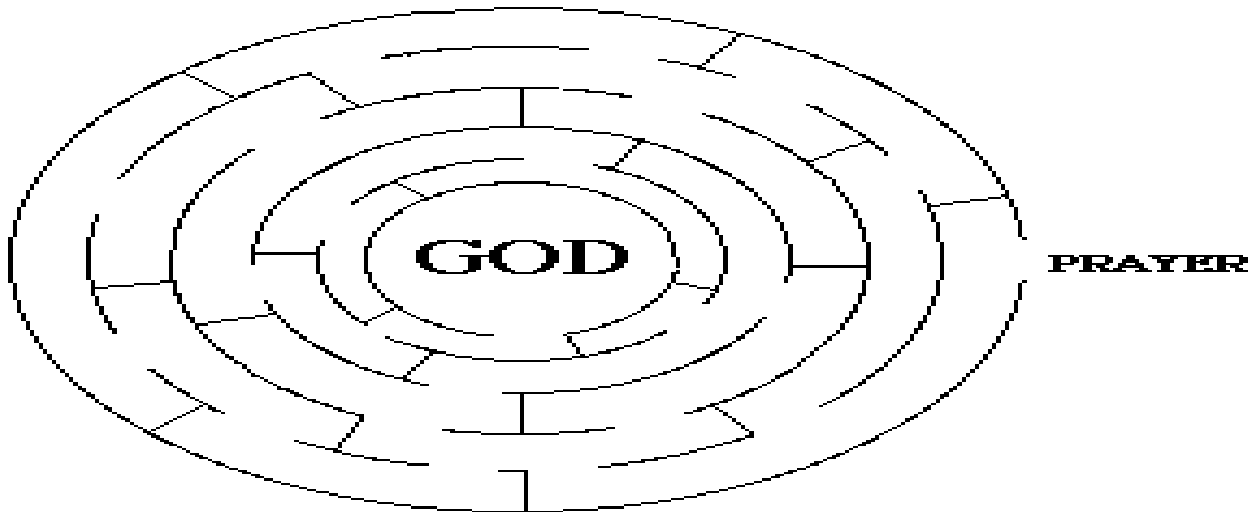
THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN

(LUKE 18:9-14)

E N D V Y B Q A V Z Y D B C R T Z H Z W R A T Q T I T S Q R
 B Z V G K U B K Q S B F H U K P P V I T A B N B L O B I U B
 S C U J Y L Z I D V O H C V Z M E E J D F F B U R B H L S V
 W U B T T N P Y D M J L O N L S B L Z C W L U W F E Q N O S
 Q Z S F P Z Q T D O C D Y V B D L C T V V I Q D F O A D K D
 O H S G S H L F V N V I K M I Q I J T S B H D Y Z N E G S R
 R Z O J J R A Z F G G P E U V H A I I U Q V Y N R R D W J F
 G M V W V A L B L I W E O O V E I T J L L I W K F L B E F N
 C U Z J D A L C E C H M N B T N R B I K J M C P M B B O H W
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 G D C G T Y S L M E B L S M Y T E I E F A Y Y Q L D Z A C V
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 K V O A F H A N H P B S N Q M L E K B D B S S O I Z A Z L W
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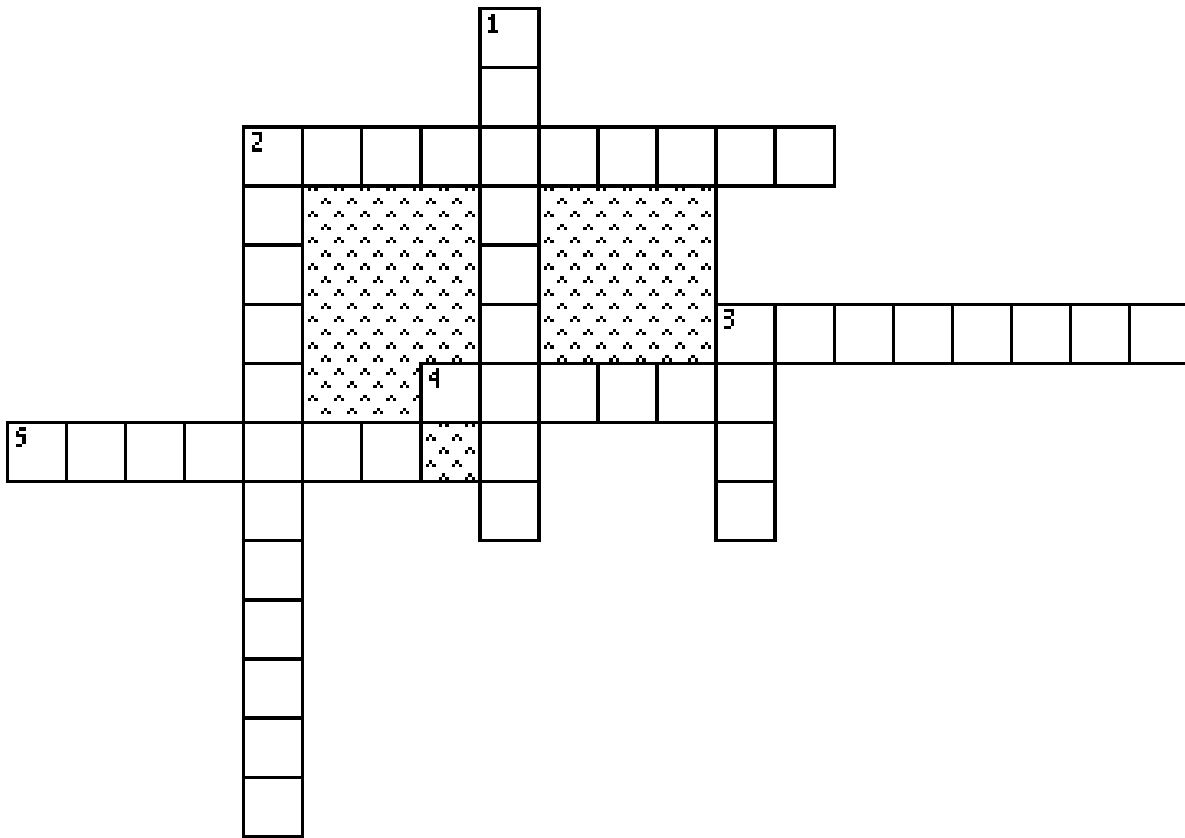
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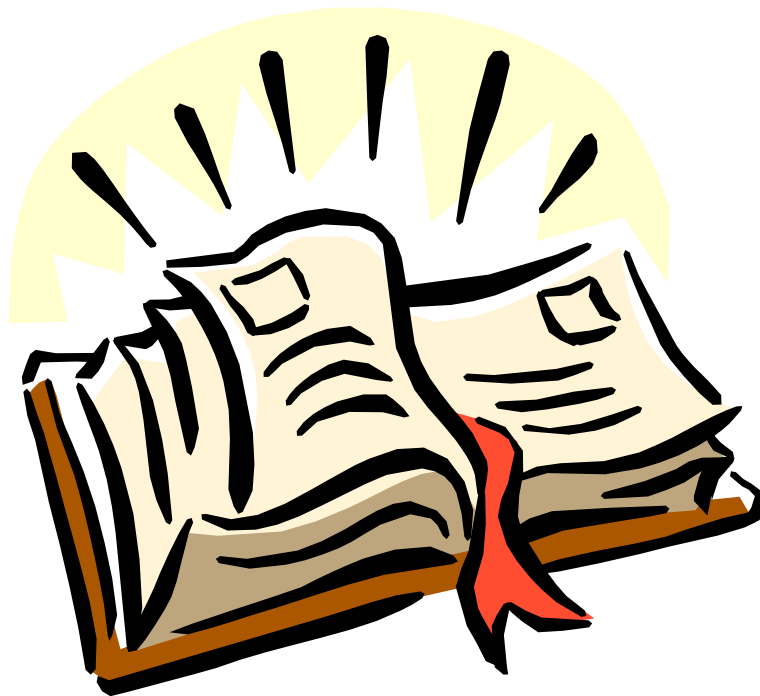


- 2 ACROSS "Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in _____ that they were righteous, and despised others." **LUKE 18:9**
- 3 DOWN "Two men went up to the temple to _____." **LUKE 18:10**
- 2 DOWN "...one a Pharisee and the other a _____." **LUKE 18:10**
- 3 ACROSS "The _____ stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men...'" **LUKE 18:11**
- 4 ACROSS "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a _____!'" **LUKE 18:13**
- 1 DOWN "I tell you, this man went down to his house _____ rather than the other..." **LUKE 18:14**
- 5 ACROSS "...for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who _____ himself will be exalted." **LUKE 18:14**

**"Then a voice came from
heaven, 'You are My beloved
Son, in whom I am well
pleased.'"**

Mark 1:11

Bible Time for Kids!



CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF:

**LESSON TITLE: The Pharisee and the
Publican**

THEME: God honors a humble heart!

SCRIPTURE: Luke 18:9-14



Dear Parents...

Welcome to Bible Time for Kids! Bible Time for Kids is a series of daily devotions for children and their families. Our purpose is to supplement our Sunday morning curriculum and give you an opportunity to encourage your children to develop a daily devotional life. We hope you and your family will be blessed as you study **God's Word** together.

This week in Children's Church we learned about **The Pharisee and the Publican**. The theme was "**God honors a humble heart.**" What a wonderful story about the kind of attitude that God wants us to have when we come to Him. The best example in the entire Bible in the area of humility is Jesus. He laid aside all of the glory of heaven to become a man, a servant and then lay down His life on the cross for our salvation. Like Paul says in Philippians chapter 2, may we have the same kind of attitude.

Our children, are growing up in an "I, me and my" world. The example of humility that the Bible declares goes against the world's way of thinking. It is "others" centered. But it is the way of the kingdom of God. May we all learn the kind of humility that Jesus had!

The section of scripture that we studied was **Luke 18:9-14**. The following five devotions are based on either the scripture and/or the theme for Sunday's lesson. As a starting point it would be good for you to review these verses with your children.

These devotions are designed to help you reinforce Sunday's lesson throughout the week with your children, provide some more ideas for the application of God's Word in your children's lives and provide a tool to help in family devotions.

Obviously children at various age levels will respond to the devotional in different ways. You may want to add your own ideas to these to make them more age appropriate.

May the Lord bless you as you study His Word together!

Day One

Tortoises and Tax Collectors

Text: Luke 18:13 – “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner!’”

Also read Luke 18:9-14

Have you ever read the story of the Tortoise and the Hare? Do you remember what happened? The tortoise and the hare were going to have a race. The hare was very prideful, and confident that he would easily win the race. The tortoise just decided to go as fast as he could and keep focused on the course ahead of him. The hare took off so fast that he got quite a lead and very quickly. After a while he decided to take a rest under a tree. He thought he had plenty of time, but he ended up falling asleep. Meanwhile the tortoise just plugged away, slowly but surely. He ended up passing the hare and headed towards the finish line. The hare woke up, realized what happened and ran as fast as he could. But it was too late; the tortoise had won the race.

This story reminds us of the story that we studied on Sunday about two men. One was prideful and the other was humble. The first man was a Pharisee and the other man was a Publican, or tax collector. The Pharisee was very religious and he was proud of himself because of all of his good works and how he prayed all of the time. In fact, he even thanked God that he wasn't like that terrible, sinful tax collector. Everyone looked down on tax collectors as very sinful people at that time. But the tax collector came to God in humility. He realized that he was a sinner and he asked God for forgiveness. Which person do you think was actually right in God's eyes?

Jesus told us this story for a reason. He had the Bible carry the record so you and I could understand how important it is that we are humble people. We need to always remember that we are sinners. Jesus died for our sins. We cannot go to God and tell Him how proud we are of all the good things we do. God wants us to remember that He died to save us and give us eternal life. God honors a humble heart.

- What does the “hare” in our story teach us about pride?
- What does the “tortoise” and the “tax collector” teach us about humility?
- In what way (prideful or humble) do you pray to Jesus?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Humility: Showing meekness, modesty or simplicity.

How Can I Serve You?

Text: John 13:14 - "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

Also read John 13:1-20

God is strong and powerful! He has a voice like thunder and He can split a mountain in half. Could you even dream or imagine being able to do something like that? Jesus was God, but the Bible tells us that He was also a man. He could heal a leper, raise someone from the dead and calm a storm, just by speaking a word. Jesus had great power.

Many times when we think of someone with a lot of power we might think of a king or some powerful ruler. Most of the kings or rulers we think of always have servants. They have a lot of other people serving them all of the time. Jesus is a very different kind of King. He didn't come to be served, even though He deserved it. He came to serve others and to serve us. What an example we have in Jesus!

Being humble is not easy, but Jesus gave us many examples of how humble He was. He was not too proud to talk to people who were poor; He continually helped the blind and the lame. He often worked so hard that he would be worn out at the end of the day, but He was still moved with love for all of the people who had needs. He would often stay up very late and get up very early to pray for others. He was a servant even to those who followed Him daily. Jesus was the Messiah, Lord, King of Kings and God of the universe, but He was also humble servant.

A good leader leads by example. The night Jesus was betrayed by Judas, He gathered all of His disciples together and washed all of their feet - even the feet of the Judas who would betray Jesus to the Pharisees. He was powerful, mighty and strong, but He was humble, kind and forgiving.

- Why did Jesus wash the feet of His disciples?
- Do you serve others like Jesus?
- If you are proud, can you be humble?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Foot Washing: A practice done in Bible Times to show respect to a guest. It was done to clean the feet of weary travelers since often sandals were worn. It was usually done by the lowest servant in the house.

Let God Be Exalted!

Text: Daniel 4:37- "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down."

Also read Daniel 4

If you were the king or queen of a mighty nation, wouldn't you feel important and powerful? The Bible teaches us many lessons from important and powerful people. One of those people that God teaches us about in His word was a mighty and powerful king of a huge nation. But this king learned that God is the Mighty One who builds up and who can humble even the most powerful king. The king's name was Nebuchadnezzar and God allowed the king to tell his story in Daniel chapter 4.

Babylon was a great nation, conqueror of many kingdoms, and was ruled by King Nebuchadnezzar. God allowed this king to conquer His people, Israel and take them into slavery. The Bible tells us that God raised up this nation because His children were disobedient to Him, worshipping false gods and not remembering the true and living God. But Nebuchadnezzar thought he was the mighty and powerful one who had conquered all of the other nations in his own power. That is until God sent him a dream. The dream was a warning to the king and no one could interpret the dream except Daniel, God's prophet, who had the Spirit of the living God inside of him.

The dream was a prophecy of what would happen to this prideful, puffed-up king. Daniel was troubled by the prophecy the Bible says. When the prophet told the king he would lose his kingdom, unless King Nebuchadnezzar repented from his pride, the king did not listen. God took away the kingdom and King Nebuchadnezzar lost everything, including his mind. For seven years, just as God said, the king wandered in fields, eating grass, until the king lifted his eyes toward heaven and blessed God. This king humbled himself before God and God honored him and restored the great kingdom of Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar. God honors a humble heart.

- Did God give the king a chance to humble himself?
- Why do you think the king did not listen to God?
- Has God spoken to your heart about something? What?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Nebuchadnezzar: King of Babylon who captured Jerusalem and brought many Jews to Babylon in captivity, among them Daniel and his friends.

God Uses Eight Year Olds!

Text: 2 Chronicles 34:27-28 - "because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words against this place and against its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me, I also have heard you," says the LORD. "Surely I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; and your eyes shall not see all the calamity which I will bring on this place and its inhabitants." ' ' " So they brought back word to the king."

Also read 2 Chronicles 34

The Bible teaches us about people who were used by God to help other people come to know God. God used prophets, ordinary people and kings to accomplish His work. Let's look at one of the kings who had very humble beginnings.

The people of Israel had disobeyed God for many years. Then a very young boy became king in Jerusalem and God used this young king to show the nation of Judah how to behave. Josiah was only eight years old when he became king of Judah. His father and his grandfather had been kings before him but they were very bad kings who did not worship God. The Bible teaches us that Josiah's father did not humble himself before God and the king's own servants overthrew him. When Josiah was about 16 years old, he threw away all of the false gods his father and grandfather had created. He began to repair the temple of the true God when he was 26. The temple workers found the book of Moses that had been hidden for many years. When Josiah heard the word of God he began to cry because he knew how unfaithful his people had been to God.

Josiah humbled himself before the Lord and sent his advisors to ask of a prophetess of God what would happen to the people of his kingdom because many of them were still worshipping false gods. God saw that Josiah was humble before Him and promised the young king that while he was king of the land, God would not bring judgement against the nation. The nation of Judah was given peace for a time because God honored Josiah's humble heart.

- Did God use Josiah even though he was a young boy?
- How did Josiah show a humble heart?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Josiah: The 16th king of Judah. He was a good king who served the Lord and restored worship of the true God to the land.

Esther's Example

Text: Esther 2:15 - "Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her."

Also read Esther 2:5-18, Matthew 18:4

Jesus taught many lessons about His kingdom and how to behave toward others. He pointed out that these lessons were given to us in the Bible, the word of God. Many of the lessons He taught and the words He spoke were from the Old Testament. Jesus taught us that in order to enter the kingdom of God, His kingdom, we should be humble and not lifted up with pride. The Old Testament tells us a wonderful story of a woman who was humble and God honored her humble spirit and gave her a throne on earth. The woman's name was Esther.

Her Uncle Mordecai had raised Esther in the ways of the Lord. She was obedient and humble. She was also kind and considerate. Her uncle brought her to the king's palace because the king was trying to find a good wife. Because she was so sweet and humble, the king's servants who took care of the women liked her. One of the servants wanted Esther to be chosen as queen and he gave her the best room in the house.

There were many women who wanted to be queen and maybe even tried to make themselves look good to others, but Esther was humble. She did not demand anything or try to impress anyone. The servants remembered Esther's humble, sweet spirit, and the Bible says the king was delighted. God honored Esther's humility by giving her favor in the eyes of everyone she met at the palace. She was chosen to be queen and was used by God to save her people. God can do awesome things in and through a person with a humble spirit.

- Why do you think people at the palace remembered Esther's name?
- Tell about someone you have seen show humility.
- In what ways does God honor a humble heart?

Kid's Prayer Time



There is a lot that we learned this week about humility. This week when you pray remember to ask the Lord to help you to be humble in all things. Ask Him to fill you with the Holy Spirit to become more like Jesus.