

Sunday Message: May 2, 2021

Meet Jesus | Prayers of the Divided Self, Luke 18:9-14

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Reflection Questions

1

An exercise for reflection...

Where are you most prone to comparing yourself with others? (i.e., your job, success, spirituality, stuff, parenting, etc.)

Read Romans 3:10-20 and Psalm 121. How do these passages inform the comparison game we tend to play?

2

An act of confession...

Read John 1:7-9. Is there anything in your life (perhaps from the last week or two) that you need to confess and bring into the light? Who in your life would it be appropriate to confess this to so that you may take a step toward healing in this area through abundant grace and forgiveness from Jesus?

3

A step in faith...

What do you tend to look to for relief in despair or uncertainty?

Where do you tend to find assurance in doubt?

Who do you tend to rely on first for help in the midst of trouble?

Read Hebrews 12:1-3. While these tendencies may or may not be bad, how could you tangibly seek to fix your eyes first on Jesus, the author and perfecter of your faith, this week?

DIGGING DEEPER

The primary translation used on Sunday mornings is the ESV. The corresponding notes in the ESV Study Bible are helpful when reflecting on the questions below.

For an excellent study resource consider buying Grant Osborne's user-friendly commentary on Luke: Grant Osborne, *Luke Verse by Verse* (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2018).

Text Exploration Questions

Read Luke 18:9-14. Take notes or discuss using the questions below.

- Jesus is speaking a parable in 18:9-14. What is the general purpose of a parable? Do all parables serve the same function?
- According to Luke 18:9, who is this parable directed to? What do you think the purpose of this specific parable is?
- Compare and contrast the two men praying in the temple (18:11-13): the Pharisee (written in first person) and the Tax Collector
- How is “doing” for God juxtaposed with having the right attitude toward/about God?
- What do we learn about God from this parable? Who is righteous and justified before God? What does this say about who God is and what God desires from us?
- What do we learn about prayer from this parable? How is a healthy prayer posture connected to the themes of loving others and humility (or conversely loving self and pride)? Read Ezekiel 21:26.
- What is the role of petition, repentance, and confession in prayer and what does the absence of these say about our prayer posture? What does it say about where we are placing our trust? What does it say about our belief in how the gospel of Jesus applies to us? Reflect on God's mercy through Christ. Read Romans 3:24; Hebrews 2:17; I John 2:12.