

When Jesus told stories, He always had some real reason and purpose for telling that story. It's coming toward the end of time and Jesus says in the end times, people are going to be eating, drinking, and having parties, just like it was in the days of Noah. It is going to be hard to find people who have faith let alone people who pray.

He uses these two parables to tell the story about how a person ought always to pray and not to faint in the days of adversity. The characters He uses illustrate perfectly what we are talking about on interpersonal relationships.

Let's look at the judge now and you look at your interpersonal chart and see where you are going to put the old judge in the picture. That's kind of the way we are playing the game now. You are going to be looking at the chart as you follow along. Now here is the old judge.

v. 1 Now He was telling to them a parable to show that at all times they ought to be praying and not to be losing heart.

“Now He was telling to them a parable to show that at all times they ought to be praying and not to be losing heart.”

v. 2 saying, “There was in a certain city a judge who was not fearing God and who was having no respect for man.

“saying, “There was in a certain city a judge who was not fearing God and who was having no respect for man.”

Where do you put this unscrupulous politician? The guy on the bench that's wanting to use his power and his clout over people?

Notice the statement, "He had no respect for God, he wasn't fearing God and he had no respect for man."

Where do you put him immediately? Incorrect Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting. We put him down in the lower left hand corner already.

A few words might tell us about him as we put a few more clothes on him. He's kind of a know-it-all. He's self-reliant, he doesn't have respect for others, he doesn't need others, he uses them. Pride and arrogance may be some of those words.

You could say that as he's introduced to us he is just a cold, calculating politician who really is on the bench, doesn't have any respect for God or any fear of God and no respect for his fellow man.

What does that tell you? That is a critical principle. If you don't have a good vertical relationship, you're going to have a hard time having good horizontal relationships. A good vertical relationship sure will help you to reach out in compassion to others and have good horizontal relationships.

If you're having a real rough time in your marriage you might just try something. Pray together. Realize you both have spiritual needs. Acknowledge those spiritual needs and you'll be amazed. There is going to be a new fervor in your marriage.

There is going to be a new closeness, a new love for each other that is going to spring out of this common denominator that you both realize you are spiritual beings and you've got spiritual needs.

Your common respect for God will bring closeness in the marriage relationship. There are men who have not prayed with their wives for forty years and they claim to be Christians. They've gone to church and they have done all those things. Their marriages literally come together when that guy, who thinks that only weak people pray, finally begins to talk to God with his wife about their concerns. Amazingly their marriage springs up a new beauty, a new dynamic. That's the principle. Right there in the first two verses.

v. 3 Now there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him saying, 'See to it that I get justice against my opponent.'

"Now there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him saying, 'See to it that I get justice against my opponent.'

Now this widow lost her husband. Naturally the lawyers are trying to take her estate. Someone is trying to take her real estate to turn it into some business or something. They are really not being fair with her.

She goes to the judge and she keeps going—that's what the Greek text says. She's been there a lot of times. He says the same thing over and over again. "I don't have time. I can't get you on the docket. I'm sorry I can't help you."

She doesn't take no for an answer.

v. 4 And he was not willing for a considerable time; however afterwards he said to himself, Even though I'm not fearing God or respecting man,

“And he was not willing for a considerable time; however afterwards he said to himself, Even though I'm not fearing God or respecting man,”

He even knows himself.

v. 5 yet because this widow is continually furnishing me trouble, I'll give her legal protection in order that lest by her continued coming she might not fly on my face.”

“yet because this widow is continually furnishing me trouble, I'll give her legal protection in order that lest by her continued coming she might not fly on my face.”

Do you know what she did? One day she came in there, and she said to that secretary, “If I don't get to see the judge, I tell you what I'm going to do, I'm going to notify the networks, I'm going to get my widow ladies, and we're going to camp out on the lawn down below, and we're going to have a demonstration, and I'm going to get you out of office.”

The secretary went in and said, “This lady means business and she brought her lunch, I mean she sat there through the whole

lunch hour, and she flat finally got an audience with him.”

The judge realized that she really meant business. Do you think that the Lord has a sense of humor? He says “I’d better give her justice lest she fly in my face.”

Do you know what that is in the Greek text? “Lest she give me a black eye.” I mean lest she hit me with her purse, lest she really punches my lights out. I’d better do something here pretty quick because it’s going to be really rough.

Now is this woman right in what she’s doing? Well you better believe it. She has a just cause. She can stand her ground in her interpersonal relationship with this man. He has no respect for God, no fear for God, no respect for fellow man. She is confronting him with that and she has a right to do that.

v. 6 And the Lord said: “Hear what the unrighteous judge is saying.

“And the Lord said: ‘Hear what the unrighteous judge is saying.

v. 7 Now shall not God bring about justice for his elect, who are crying to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

“Now shall not God bring about justice for his elect, who are crying to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?”

v. 8 I am saying to you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. Yet, when the Son of Man comes, will

He find faith on the earth?”

“I am saying to you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. Yet, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

So, what we have done with the judge in that little brief capsule is we have put him in the lower left-hand corner with Incorrect Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting.

The next story focuses on a PHARISEE—verses 9-12.

v. 9 And he also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they are righteous and who are utterly despising the rest of mankind.

“And he also told this parable”

You probably remember this one because you’ve heard this a lot of times.

“to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they are righteous and who are utterly despising the rest of mankind.”

They think they are righteous and they are self-righteous and they despise the rest of mankind.

Here is a judge and he doesn’t even fear God and he has no respect for his fellowman. Here on the other side you’ve got a real religious kook. He has a lot of religion but utterly despises the rest of mankind.

You've probably met those kind of people. You get around them and they are so self-righteous. They carry a great big Bible, they sit in the back and they are waiting for questions because they want to really blast you on a theological point to see whether you've really got it together or not.

The Lord had a bunch of those in His day. Now He is telling a story about those kind of people.

Here is the Pharisee. "He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they are righteous and who are utterly despising the rest of mankind."

In self-righteousness, spirits of criticism spring up and we have a real hurt among believers a lot of times in this. There is a graphic illustration of that in the little book of Third John:

3 John 9 & 10

I wrote something to the church; (and this is John, he is really an apostle of love) but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and he forbids those who desire to do so, and puts them out of the church.

He is just running the whole thing. Here are the two men:

v. 10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a

Pharisee, and the other, a tax collector.

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

The Pharisee is a member of the religious establishment. There were 6,000 of these fellows. Nicodemus was a Pharisee who came to the Lord in John chapter 3. They are committed to keep the law and to be very religious. They are the conservatives of the day theologically.

Here is a Pharisee, a tax collector. You know what a tax collector is. He is a factory reject. He is a guy who is making his money off of Rome and everybody hated him. In fact, a good Jew made a commitment, if he was a conservative Jew and a part of the Zealots, that he would kill a tax collector in his lifetime.

That's the amazing thing about the interpersonal relationships among the twelve disciples. There was Simon the Zealot and there was Matthew the tax collector and Judas Iscariot. Here are these fellows, poles apart. Here is Simon the Zealot thinking he has a real chance right among the twelve to put it to the one guy that he needs to and that is Matthew, the tax collector.

Yet out of this relationship with Jesus Christ, these twelve men had an incredible love and commitment to one another as well as their commitment to Him in their purposes. That is the miracle that takes place when the Lord gets into the middle of interpersonal relationships. Here is a tax collector and here is a Pharisee. They are way, way, way apart. Now, notice what the Pharisee does. See if you can put him in your picture.

**v. 11 The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself:
'God, I am thanking you that I am not like the rest of
mankind, swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like
this tax collector.**

“The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself: ‘God, I am thanking you that I am not like the rest of mankind, swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.’”

“I am thanking you, Lord, that I am not like the rest of mankind” and he lumps it into four types: “swindlers, unjust, adulterers and even this tax collector.”

He is a man who feels a cut above. He’s something special. He is a choice child.

Now where do you put him? This man goes in that lower, left-hand corner. There are a lot of those words that you can star down there that described him.

What does that tell you? That tells you that a man cannot be religious and have bad interpersonal relationships because he has no fear for God and no respect for man.

On the religious side you can come over to the other side and you can find religious individuals who have poor interpersonal relationships because they are living in Incorrect Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting.

Don’t sit here and think, just because I am a Christian, I should

have good interpersonal relationships. No, you can develop an arrogant spirit of self-sufficiency and self-adequacy just as much as some guy who has no fear for God at all. Here is this fellow.

Now look at his credentials in verse 12.

v. 12 I am fasting twice a week; I am paying tithes of my whole income.'

"I am fasting twice a week; I am paying tithes of my whole income."

You could say of him, he is self-righteous, he's self-sufficient, he's self-centered, he's judgmental, he brags, he boasts, he's got pride, haughtiness, and arrogance.

Do you think that his prayer gets through? I don't think a guy's prayers get out of the rafters when he prays like that. That smells to the height of heaven to hear somebody praying like that. That's totally inconsistent. The man who walks with God has deep love and compassion for his fellow man and longs to reach out in compassion and helpfulness to those individuals.

We've had a judge and a Pharisee. Let's put a tax collector alongside here.

v. 13 But the tax collector, standing some distance away was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast saying, 'God be merciful to me, the sinner!'

“But the tax collector, standing some distance away was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast saying, ‘God be merciful to me, the sinner!’”

Now we have a tax collector. Where do you put him on your chart?

Give some words to describe where you think he is. Where do you put him? Negative Thinking/Feeling/Acting.

What are the words up there? Humility is one of them. Acknowledges he is a sinner. He’s imperfect, he realizes he’s inadequate, he has limitations.

For God to work in our lives is to get to the upper right-hand corner. We, by nature, are born in the lower left and before you can ever get to good interpersonal relationships, you must have a relationship with God that takes you through upper right over to upper left.

If you want good interpersonal relationships, you’ve got to acknowledge that you are in lower left. You have to take a little trip to upper right over to upper left in order to have good interpersonal relationships. .

A man who does not have a relationship with God is running uphill into the wind to try to have good interpersonal relationships. It comes first by acknowledging our inadequacy. It comes first by recognizing we have a need that we cannot meet and we’re willing to trust God.

Have you been there? Have you seen God in this light? The closer you get to God, the more aware you become of sin in your life. That is true of believers, as well as unbelievers. Now look how Jesus applies all of this in our last verse.

v. 14 I am saying to you, this man went down to his house having been justified rather than the other, for everyone who is exalting himself shall be humbled, but the one who is humbling himself shall be exalted.”

“I am saying to you, this man went down to his house having been justified rather than the other, for everyone who is exalting himself shall be humbled, but the one who is humbling himself shall be exalted.”

The universal need of mankind is to deal with sin and pride. Once that is dealt with through coming to know Jesus Christ in a personal relationship, you have the foundation for establishing that.

Now, where are you? The bible describes the person who is not a Christian as a natural man. He refuses the things of God. He receives not the things of God. He resists those. Maybe your nature right now is that of resisting that. God is proud of you by His Holy Spirit for you do something about it.

The Bible also describes the fleshly person. This is a person who is not living in fellowship with God. He is a Christian but he is not living in a relationship with God. That person has the same ugly things that are true in his life just like the Pharisee and

God has to deal with each of us individually to bring us out of Incorrect Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting to Correct Negative Thinking/Feeling/Acting so that we can end up over in Correct Positive Thinking/Feeling/Acting.

Gavin and Patti McLeod had a rough time in their marriage. The captain of the Love Boat (a show from the 70s and 80s) finally confesses it through nearly having a divorce from Patty. They got it back together again and wrote the book called *Back on Course*. Part of the reason that they got it back on course is because Patty became a Christian and this is what Patty says:

(Back on Course by Gavin and Patti McLeod)

I prayed right there in my back bedroom with Edith Shaffer. Her quiet voice led and I followed. “Dear Jesus, please come into my heart. Forgive me all my past sins, take me as Your child to serve You, love You...” The words floated around my head like wafts of perfume. I was becoming Born Again. It shocked me that I had never really been a Christian. I’d believed in Jesus, but I hadn’t really made Him and Him alone Lord of my life. It was a little bit clearer now.

Edith reached into her purse and pulled out some books written by her husband. I looked at the name, Dr. Francis Schaeffer. The books were called *The God Who Was There*, *The Mark of a Christian*, and *No Little People*. Then she handed me a small copy of the Gospel of John from the New Testament of the Bible. “Do you have a Bible of your own?” she asked.

p. 149

Patti had to say no. It was out of that relationship that Gavin

was brought along with her into a relationship with Jesus Christ as the foundation.

We don't emphasize a lot of that today. We really need to. We need to realize that the only way we can have the guarantee of the potential of good interpersonal relationships is a right relationship with God.

You aren't going to go to heaven by yourself. If you don't have a hold of the arm of Jesus Christ, you are not going anywhere. The only One who can get you into heaven is Jesus Christ.

Jesus said in John 14:6:

John 14:6

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me.

The door will be closed unless you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Father, we thank You for Your Word and the joy of sharing some of these things that You have been teaching us. We pray these individuals will count it worthwhile to study Your Word and that You will use it in a very significant fashion in each of their lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SOLVING STRUGGLES

In Interpersonal Relationships

“Learning to Live, Love and Listen to Each Other”

Ingredient #1: Relationship with God – Luke 18:1-14

NOTES

I. The Judge – Luke 18:1-8

v. 1 Now He was telling to them a parable to show that at all times they ought to be praying and not to be losing heart,

v. 2 saying, “There was in a certain city a judge who was not fearing God and who was having no respect for man.

v. 3 Now there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘See to it that I get justice against my opponent.’

v. 4 And he was not willing for a considerable time; however afterward he said to himself, ‘Even though I am not fearing God nor respecting man,

v. 5 yet because this widow is continually furnishing me trouble, I will give her legal protection, in order that lest by her continual coming she might not fly in my face.”

v. 6 And the Lord said: “Hear what the unrighteous judge is saying.

v. 7 Now shall not God bring about justice for His elect, who are crying to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

v. 8 I am saying to you that He will bring about justice for them speedily. Yet, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

II. The Pharisee – Luke 18:9-12

v. 9 And He also told this parable to certain ones who trusted in themselves that they are righteous and who are utterly despising the rest of mankind.

v. 10 “Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other, a tax collector.

v. 11 The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself: ‘God, I am thanking you that I am not like the rest of mankind, swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

v. 12 I am fasting twice a week; I am paying tithes of my whole income.’

III. The Tax Collector – Luke 18:13

v. 13 But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’

IV. Jesus – Application – Luke 18:14

v. 14 I am saying to you, this man went down to his house having been justified rather than the other, for everyone who is exalting himself shall be humbled, but the one who is humbling himself shall be exalted.”

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

Lesson #1: The universal need of mankind is a relationship with a person from whom I cannot hide. A relationship with a person at whom I can hurl, but who gives me no cause to and won't be alienated if I do. A relationship with a person who will always tell me the truth. A person who meets all of these qualifications is God Himself.

Lesson #2: Salvation gives me a relationship with God wherein I am completely and continually accepted because of my position in Jesus Christ.

Lesson #3: God wants a relationship with us and not a performance from us.

Lesson #4: A vital principal from this exposition is: A man's

relationship with God is foundational for meaningful interpersonal relationships.

Lesson #5: A relationship with God is the key ingredient to form a good foundation for interpersonal relationships.

Lesson #6: The Pharisee in these verses is a man who has a lot of religion without a relationship. He trusted in himself that he was righteous.

Copyright © 2022 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Ronnie Marroquin.