

The Facilitator

Community Groups @ Trinity Presbyterian Church

Get Acquainted: Learning to tell our story

- Describe your week using a type of weather system.
 - Example: My week was full of reflection so I would say a beautiful spring day.
 - I was in trouble all week so my week was a storm and I was in a small boat about to go under with every wave.
- Think of a particular friend that brings you a lot of joy and encouragement.
 - Example: My time with my brother Rick has been particularly sweet this week.
- What is something you enjoy doing that you take for granted?
 - Example: Friendship.

Engage with the Sermon - (Use the Facilitator along with the Sermon Outline in the Worship Folder to guide your discussion.)

Dr. Luke tells a great gospel. This story is typical of most stories in Luke's narrative about Jesus where there are 2 main characters representing the primary ways we act out in our rebellion and brokenness. There is always one person who does right wrongly and another who does wrong with great gusto.

Here are a few examples:

- Simon, the Pharisee and the prostitute that weeps at Jesus' feet
- The Prodigal Sons – the Younger son goes after wrong with passion and the older jerk brother tracks the error of his little brother and the good of his doings
- The Pharisee and Tax Collector in the Temple

Luke loves to let his reader know that Jesus is a Dr. who is the cure for both errors. In each story Jesus lauds the repentance of the Big Sinner and warns of the danger of heartless rule following. Success can be hard on the heart and failure can serve to encourage the awareness of need and frailty.

Read the passage together

Luke 18:9-14 ^{Lk 18:9} **He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:** ¹⁰ **“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.** ¹¹ **The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.** ¹² **I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’** ¹³ **But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’** ¹⁴ **I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”**

Reflection Questions:

1. **The Problem: The danger of right living from wrong motives**
 - a. **What is a Pharisee? A religious person who thinks the righteous of their person and practice is sourced from themselves and not God**

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- b. How does the Pharisee's prayer actually feed his arrogance? The source of his prayer concerns are stimulated by the failures of his neighbors – I am not like them – and his own practices – he prays his list of accomplishments.
- c. Why is it difficult for the talented and successful to feel their sin? How can that cause you to be more compassionate and prayerful for them?
- d. Here is an exercise to help you confess your sins of Self-Righteousness. You can try this as a group or maybe a brave individual. Think through the decades of your life. What were things you did well or experiences that you had that made think highly of yourselves and look with contempt on others. Please consider what your sins of arrogance and contempt might be in the decades ahead.
 - i. 0-10
 - ii. 10-20
 - iii. 20-30
 - iv. 30-40
 - v. 40-50
 - vi. 50-60
 - vii. 60-70
 - viii. 70-80
 - ix. 80-90

2. Hope in Humiliation

- a. What is a tax collector? A Thug who is an extortioner who profits off of his own countrymen while working for the occupying government. He is hated despised by most with only his own to enjoy his company.
- b. How is it almost easier for the outcast and reckless to feel their need for Jesus and the conviction of Holy Spirit?
- c. Here is an exercise to help you confess your reckless passionate sins of rebellion against God. Try this as a group or individual. Think through the decades of your life. What were your hidden or public sins of corruption or sensuality.
 - i. 0-10
 - ii. 10-20
 - iii. 20-30
 - iv. 30-40
 - v. 40-50
 - vi. 50-60
 - vii. 60-70
 - viii. 70-80
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3. **Jesus Propitiates for Us – The satisfaction of a just charge as gift from another**
 - a. **The Temple is the house of God and place for reconciliation because of the work of Christ applied to you.**
 - b. **How is it possible for one so unlikely to be justified?**
 - i. **What do you gain from the work of Jesus on the Cross? – the forgiveness of your sins.**
 - ii. **What do you gain from the righteous life Jesus lived for 33 years? – the perfect obedience of righteousness we need to be qualified to be adopted as sons of God.**
 - iii. **Is your salvation earned (trick question)? Yes, not by us, but it was earned through the work of Christ for us. We are purchased by his work. The certainty of that work for us is eternal life.**

A.C.T.S.

Use this as a time to talk to God about what's been revealed in your heart during your sermon discussion.

1. ADORATION - Adore and Worship God for His attributes and actions

Worship the LORD for His atoning mercy. Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit that He is gracious to the humble but guarantees that the proud will be humbled.

2. CONFESSION – Give honor and glory to God by confessing both to the wonder of your design being created in His image and rebellion against that same design.

How have you lived proud of yourself and looking down on others?

Confess your arrogance and lovelessness to Jesus, asking Him to have mercy on you, to forgive you and change your heart.

How have you sinned against God by not loving being you, created in His Image?

Confess how encouraged you are at the transformation that you are experiencing in an area of your life or daily disciplines. Be encouraged.

3. THANKSGIVING - Give thanks to Jesus for his salvation (past, present, future)

Give thanks to Jesus for humbling Himself to bear the costs of all your arrogance! Thank Him for loving you enough to go where no one else is willing to go, that people like us could be redeemed.

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4. SUPPLICATION - Ask Holy Spirit to transform you in specific ways

Who do you know that resists humility (and it may be you)? Pray for them, asking the Lord to have mercy on them and to grant them a soft heart.

Prepare for Gospel Community: Pray for those who are on your heart, that God would use you to impact them with His gospel message.

Think about your week. Who are Christians you can encourage with questions of reflections? Who are the not yet Christians you can talk and with ask about their heart and relationship with Jesus?

Pray for them now. Ask God for courage and a divine appointment to be with them.

Launchers – Possible Conversation starters

Christian friends:

Mercy

- What has been a recent fresh experience of failure that has caused you to look down and beat your chest begging God for mercy?
- What was the feeling of standing justified before God because the work of Jesus after a most recent fall back into an old habited repetitive sin?
- How does the cry and experience of mercy each day fuel your gratitude and hope in your relationships?

Not yet Christians:

Mercy

- Have you ever done anything that made God mad?
- If God were mad at you, what would be your hope of him showing you mercy?
- If God is both merciful and just, how can he remain both and have any of us join him in his heaven of perfection?
- If you were to die tonight and stand before God, what reason would you give to allow you into His Heaven?