

I. Lessons from a Pharisee: How not to pray

- A. Do not be confident in your own righteousness

“He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe.” (Proverbs 28:26)

- B. Do not compare yourself with others

- C. Do not seek recognition from people

“Do not be like the hypocrites for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men.” (Matthew 6:5)

- D. Do not put your hope in your good works

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

- E. Do not be full of yourself

II. Lessons from a Tax Collector: How to pray

- A. We approach God with humility

“When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?” (Psalm 8:3-4)

- B. We seek the attention of God

“Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.” (Psalm 105:4)

- C. We come to God with a broken spirit

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” (Psalm 51:17)

- D. We confess our sins to God

“He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13)

- E. We put our hope in God’s mercy

“Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.” (Micah 7:18)

“Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.” (Isaiah 55:7)

III. Lessons from Jesus: How to pray

- A. God will answer the prayer of repentance

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

B. God will not answer the prayer of pride

“He does not answer when men cry out because of the arrogance of the wicked. Indeed, God does not listen to their empty plea; the Almighty pays no attention to it.” (Job 35:12-13)

C. God will exalt the truly humble

“Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will lift you up.” (James 4:10)

D. God will welcome those with a child-like faith