



## Weekend Worship

On Sunday, we focused on the story Jesus told about “The Pharisee and the Tax Collector” in Luke 18:9-14. If you haven’t had a chance to hear a sermon on this section, go on our website and listen to the message on August 9<sup>th</sup> on Luke 18:9-14.

This study will take a look pride, humility, and the mercy from God we so desperately need.

## Intro

What “blessed” details would you expect to hear from someone who said something like: “Oh, I am so blessed!”?

There are countless great reasons to thank our God and count ourselves blessed. Rank your top 5 blessings from the LORD.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

# repentant, forgiven, and blessed

## Psalm 32:1-5 (NIV)

Blessed is the one  
whose transgressions are forgiven,  
whose sins are covered.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the one  
whose sin the LORD does not count against them  
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

<sup>3</sup> When I kept silent,  
my bones wasted away  
through my groaning all day long.

<sup>4</sup> For day and night  
your hand was heavy on me;  
my strength was sapped  
as in the heat of summer.

<sup>5</sup> Then I acknowledged my sin to you  
and did not cover up my iniquity.  
I said, “I will confess  
my transgressions to the LORD.”  
And you forgave  
the guilt of my sin.

- 1) In the first two verses of this Psalm, David (the author of Psalm 32) tells us what makes a person blessed. What makes you blessed?
- 2) In Psalm 32:3-4, David talks about the torment of unconfessed sin. Think of a time you have held onto a sin and not repented. Did you feel this same way? Why might a person feel this way when they don't repent of their sin?
- 3) In verse 5, David states the fact: “And you [the LORD] forgave the guilt of my sin.” There are certain times your sin may torment you. The LORD says: You are forgiven. This is a fact. Why is it essential and a tremendous comfort to know that your forgiveness is a fact – accomplished and declared by the LORD?

# the bronze serpent

Numbers 21:4-9 (NIV)

They [the Israelites – *after they had been rescued from Egypt and before they entered the Promised Land*] traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; <sup>5</sup> they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!”

<sup>6</sup> Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. <sup>7</sup> The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us.”

So Moses prayed for the people.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.”

<sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.

- 1) Impatience, grumbling, and complaining can be contagious. We see its sinful and deadly fruit here in Numbers 21. How have you seen negative impact of impatience and complaining in your life?
  
- 2) Grumbling and complaining are also sins against God. It’s easy to find “valid excuses” for our sinful complaining. God calls us to repentance. What are three complaints / grumbling / impatience that you need to repent of to God?
  
- 3) The LORD healed all those who looked to the bronze snake which the LORD told Moses to make and set up. You can imagine how the Israelites who were saved would have felt.
  - a. What has the LORD saved you from? How does it feel to know that?
  
  - b. What has he saved you to be and do?

# the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

## Luke 18:9-14 (NIV)

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: <sup>10</sup>“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people - robbers, evildoers, adulterers - or even like this tax collector.’ <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

<sup>13</sup>“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

<sup>14</sup>“I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

- 1) As Jesus tells this story, it seems rather easy to picture both the Pharisee and the tax collector. What outward things might make it seem like the Pharisee “had it all together” and was a better person in God’s eyes?
- 2) The Pharisee’s prayer betrays his heart. In what ways do you see how lost and wicked he was?
- 3) It can be easy to see how others are “being a Pharisee.” Why is it so difficult (and so important) to examine our own hearts and see the “Pharisee in me” first?
- 4) What do Jesus’ words in Luke 18:14 mean?
- 5) On the 1<sup>st</sup> page of this study, we listed big blessings from God. In this story, Jesus highlighted the gigantic blessing of being “justified”: that is, “declared not guilty by God.” In what ways is this perhaps the biggest blessing from God?
- 6) Go back to Luke 18:9. If I take to heart what Jesus says in this story, then I will NOT:
  - a.
  - b.
- 7) Martin Luther wrote that “a Christian’s whole life is one of repentance.”
  - a. Use Luke 18:9-14 to explain what Luther meant.
  - b. What might your life look like if your whole life is one of repentance?

⇒ Based on what God's taught you in what we've studied today, what should YOU:

DO? (and NOT DO?)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

PRAY?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## Prayer

Dear LORD, you show me my sin, lead me to repentance, and forgive me. Thank you! Your forgiveness is a fact - accomplished by Jesus' life, death, and resurrection for the whole world, for me. Thank you for my treasured status as your forgiven child. In thanks for all that you've done for me, empower me to love you and serve others in all that I do. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.