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GOD’S LOVE > MY BEST EFFORTS

Luke 18:9-14

John 4:22-23, 22 You Samaritans worship what you **do not know**; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Luke 18:9-14, 9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11The 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. 12I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ 13But 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.’ 14I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justifiedbefore God. For all those who exaltthemselves will be humbled, and those who humblethemselveswill be exalted.”

Two issues addressed:

1. Confidence in our own righteousness. (Luke 18:9)
2. Looking down upon others. (Luke 18:9)

What Blocks Answered Prayer

1. A condescendingspirit (Luke 18:11a)

Luke 18:11 (NKJV), The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself . . .

Ecclesiastes 5:2, Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.

Job 9:1-2, 1 Then Job replied: 2“Indeed, I know that this is true **. . .** how can mere mortals prove their innocence before God?

Psalm 143:1-2, 1 Lord, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy; in your faithfulness and righteousness come to my relief. 2Do not bring your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you.

1. A comparative spirit (Luke 18:11b)

Isaiah 53:10-11, 10 Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makeshis life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. 11After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledgemy righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

1. A self-congratulatory spirit (Luke 18:12)

John 12:25, Anyone wholoves their lifewill lose it, while anyone who hates theirlife in this world will keep it for eternal life.

* Life – *psuche* - our natural life, our human personality
* Life – *zoe* - absolute life, the life in God

What Brings Answered Prayer

1. A contrite spirit (Luke 18:13)

Jeremiah 17:9, The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Luke 18:18-23; Luke 5:1-8

1. A confident spirit (Luke 18:13)

Luke 18:13-14

Ephesians 3:17-18, 17 . . . And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

1 John 4:16, And so we know andrely on the love God has for us . . .

Questions:

1. What did you hear from the Holy Spirit?
2. What will you do because of it?
3. How can we pray for you?

