**The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector**

Luke 18:9-14

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me. Because he has anointed me to proclaim good news (the Gospel!) to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:18-19

1. A primary theme of Luke’s Gospel is that the good news is for everyone.

* Rich vs poor. Healthy vs sick. Righteous vs Unrighteous.
* The question is who will actually receive Jesus and the Good News of His upside-down Kingdom?
* The people who understand and admit they are in need are the ones who are given grace and freedom.

1. Pharisees were religious leaders who knew their Bibles well.
   * Jesus had many harsh conflicts with the Pharisees over their legalistic and separatist practices.
   * This particular Pharisee’s posture was one of pride and self righteousness.
   * His prayer was self exalting and others debasing - expecting exaltation.
2. Tax Collectors were Jews who had betrayed their community for financial gain.
   * Jesus entered tax collectors’ world, He ate with them, He even made them His disciples.
   * This particular Tax Collector’s posture was one of humility and self awareness.
   * His prayer was God exalting and humble – requesting atonement.
   * Literally: “God, be atoning for me, the sinner.”

We are only considered righteous before God if we are covered in the righteousness of Christ.

Application:

1. Who’s in the mirror?
2. What’s your posture before the Lord?
3. Who are you looking to for justification? Those around you, yourself or Jesus?
4. Humble yourself before the Lord and He will lift you up.