



Jesus often used parables to help the people understand about the kingdom of God. One day Jesus told a parable to warn certain people. These people thought they were keeping God's commandments so well that God would

take them to heaven for being good. They also looked down on others because they thought they were much better than other people. Jesus wanted to make these people see how they really looked in God's sight. This is the parable he told:

"Two men went to the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee. The other man was a tax collector.

"The Pharisee was a proud man. He stood right up where everyone could see him and said, 'God, I thank you that I am not a terrible sinner like other people. I don't steal or cheat or do other evil things. I'm especially glad that I'm not like that tax collector over there. I do many good things—even more than you command me to do. I go without food two days a week, not only once a year as you have commanded. And I give one-tenth of all that I earn as an offering to you.'

"The Pharisee did not ask God to forgive his sins. He only bragged about himself and told God how good he was.

"But the tax collector stood off in a corner where he could hardly be seen. As he prayed, he felt so ashamed of his sins that he wouldn't even look up to heaven. Instead, he bowed his head and beat upon his chest. He prayed, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'"

Then Jesus said, "I tell you that the tax collector went home with his sins forgiven, but the Pharisee received no forgiveness from God. Everyone who honors himself will be humbled, but everyone who humbles himself will be honored by God."



The tax collector knew that he was a sinner. He confessed his sins and depended on God for forgiveness. Jesus tells us that the tax collector's sins were forgiven.

1. Ask for ways your child depends on you, his or her parent. Remind your child that we depend on God in many more ways. Talk about the most important thing we depend on God for—forgiveness of sins (and the salvation that results). Point out that your child trusts you to provide a home, food, clothing, and the like, and you are a human being who makes mistakes. Emphasize that we can trust God even more than we trust parents. We can completely depend on him to forgive us and take us to heaven!

2. On the next day that most of the family spends at home, encourage family members to try to notice whenever they sin in their thoughts, words, or actions and make tally marks on a family chalkboard or marker board. At the end of the day, look at the board together and notice how many marks it has. Add even more marks, pointing out that sometimes we sin without even realizing it. But then remind everyone that no matter how often we sin, we can trust that God will forgive us for Jesus' sake—and wipe the board completely clean.

Pray Together

Dear God, we confess that we sin every day. Thank you for forgiving our sins for Jesus' sake. Help us always trust in you for forgiveness. Amen.



Luke 18:13b

*** Ephesians 2:8,9**

*** The Conclusion to the Commandments**

What does God say about all these commandments?

He says, "I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments."

*** Hymn 304:5**

I, a sinner, come to you
With a penitent confession.
Savior, show me mercy, too;
Grant for all my sins remission.
Let these words my soul relieve—
Jesus sinners does receive.