James #30

God, be merciful to me, the sinner!

Pick it back up where we left off in Luke chapter 18 RF.

We were looking into the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector.

This is all tied into our anchor study of James 1:9 into verse 10, which was a warning that had historical context.

Many of the Jewish converts in Jerusalem under the authority of Pastor James were looking down their nose at others. Many Jewish Christians were looking down upon Gentile Christians.

Wealthy Bels wanted preference over the less fortunate Bels.

This is a problem of arrogance with its evil little cousin pettiness leading the way.

People who put strength in status symbols, wealth or bloodline connections are very petty people.

Christians stuck in this attitude have a soul in need of deep cleansing.

Listen to one of Jesus’s great parables pointing this out.

/Luk 18:9 Now He also told this parable to some **people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous**, and **viewed others with contempt**:

The Pharisees generally rejected Jesus, whereas many of the tax collectors responded positively to Jesus. They were at opposite ends of the social and spiritual scales in Judaism.\

The contrast is immense – it leaves no room for doubt! Two separate classes of people, who were either accepted and praised, or rejected and loathed by the Jews.

This is very similar to what our anchor study of James chapter one verses -9 & 10 was addressing.

[Luk 18:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/luk/18/10/s_991010) “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

[/Luk 18:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/luk/18/11/s_991011) “The Pharisee stood and *began* praying this in regard to himself: ‘God, **I thank You that I am not like other people**: swindlers, crooked, adulterers, or even **like this tax collector**.

This Pharisee has no idea if this man is truly corrupt or not – arrogance assumes it is always in the right and others are wrong. Pettiness looks upon the surface of the details of life with bitter judgment, ignited by deep insecurities and conceit.\

One sign someone is very petty is they lack generosity - generosity in compassion, forgiveness and wealth.

They are very harsh toward others and hypersensitive toward self.

 REPEAT

The majority of publicans (tax collectors) were engaged in shady practices, many in cahoots with Roman guards.

It was a career known for criminal enterprises involved in skimming, manipulating taxes and even strong-arm behaviors.

In some cases, they even worked secretly with members of the Sanhedrin to pocket some of the tax money.

This Pharisee has no idea if this man is truly corrupt or not – arrogance assumes it is always in the right and others are wrong.

The Pharisee’s prayer tells us everything we need to know.

/It is possible to address your words to God, but actually be praying to yourself, because your focus is on yourself, not on God. Your thoughts are directed at your agenda, not God’s. Your attitude is my will be done and not GOD’s will be done. The Pharisee was full of pseudo-praise, he actually rejoiced in self not what GOD was doing and God’s power and plan.\

[Luk 18:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/luk/18/12/s_991012) ‘I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’

Now we see the works program….deeds of the flesh, not divine good.

Tithing was still incorporated because the Church Age had not fully interrupted the age of Israel until after the Cross of Jesus Christ.

The season of transition - I like to call it, began at the birth of the unique God-man, Jesus Christ (Doctrine of the Hypostatic union). The true turning point began when John the Baptist called out in the wilderness of the 1st Advent of Christ.

That was a pivotal point, it was the last prophet of the OT.

[Luk 18:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/luk/18/13/s_991013) “But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to raise his eyes toward heaven, but was beating his chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’

What truly motivates you is what GOD observes.

[/Luk 18:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/luk/18/14/s_991014) “I tell you, **this man went to his house justified rather than the other one**; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

True salvation comes from a moment of surrender. When we look to the truth of the person and work of Jesus Christ, realizing we are a sinner in need of the one true SAVIOR.\

The Pharisee’s prayer was one of self-importance and pettiness. While the Tax Collector surrender to the power of GOD.

/This is how we walk toward maturity, under a consistent surrender to the power and plan of GOD. It is not done in the flesh, it is done under the power of the HS, driven by the accuracy of the WORD. This means a mental capacity of BD has to be abundant and flowing through consistency of positive volition. Judging, arrogance, pettiness, along with many other MA sins interrupts this process.\

So, in our anchor study…what we see is that, James had concerns that the some of the Bels at Jerusalem under his authority, were moving backward not forward in their spiritual walk.

The pettiness and egotism of this Pharisee’s attitude we see in Luke 18, was present among several of the Jewish converts under Pastor James’s authority.

Many times, this is a deep-rooted issue within the OSN and it may take time to continually wash it out of your soul.

Our new nature has to be given the seat of authority for this to happen.

Folks – one of our most precious currencies is not wealth or social status, it is time.

Every day you waste time pursuing the things of the cosmic system, or fumbling around in negativity. Or even wasting time on temporal nonsense, is a day you could have made positive strides inside the plan of GOD.

 REPEAT

Time can either work for you or against you – take your free will and make it count!

/Jam 1:9 Now the brother *or sister* of humble *circumstances* is to glory in his high position; 10 but the rich person *is to glory* in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away.

The reality James is teaching; is that God looks at the heart. Also, that our temporal walk is short, there is no time or room for the OSN to be allowed into authority any longer.\

There are points in our walk where we draw lines in the sand so to speak – lines that we will no longer cross over anymore.

This is really what the teaching of James 1:9-10 is pointing out.

It is between you and GOD to determine the lines and the timing of when you make those positive pivots in this temporal life.

We have to stop accepting the human viewpoint narrative about happiness, about wealth and social rank or family status.

 REPEAT

At the very beginning of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, when HE came out of the temptation in the wilderness HE then began to gather HIS men.

Highlighting the principle that it takes a team of positive Bels to embark on a serious ministry.

Every pastor-teacher needs support and a team behind him.

Then we see crowds began to follow our LORD – as soon as the public momentum built-up, Jesus then pulled HIS team aside for preparation.

This is when you see the Sermon on the Mount directed at the apostles.

/Mat 5:3 **Blessed are the poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

This is Jesus’s first Beatitude in the speech, pointing us to Divine Happiness beginning at salvation. \

Salvation is first – step one, phase one.

NOTICE – poor in SPIRIT.

This is the pathway forward not only into salvation - but as we keep growing inside the plan of GOD;

/Mat 5:3 Blessed are – *Makarios,*

Inner peace is contentment, this is the path to Divine Happiness, it begins here at salvation from this position.

The Greek adjective for poor is, *ptōchos,* meaning one who is down financially, destitute of wealth and status. It was often used for a person in a helpless position, powerless in status, wealth and even education. That is the position in view! \

MAR-CAR-EE-US, speaks to an inner peace, this is true happiness, it is real contentment.

POE-HUSK, speaks to a position of complete helplessness and hopelessness, not just financially poor.

GOD looks deep within us while mankind seeks the exterior presence to tell us the true story. God sees the end result, mankind lives in the moment.

/Isa 66:2 “For My hand made all these things, So all these things came into being,” declares the LORD. “But I will look to this one, **At one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word.**

This speaks to a surrender of the flesh, faith is seen eventually in obedience.\

Notice the three Hebrew words used in this description;

/Humble - *ʿānî,* weak or feeble in stature and wealth. One of lowly position.

Contrite - *nāḵê,* stricken and lame, physically or mentally.

Trembles (at the WORD) - *ḥārēḏ,* a deep reverence to the point of trembling or even fear. To be completely awestruck.\

HAW-KNEE, was used for a position of weakness.

NAH-HECH, to be struck down, to be made lame.

HAR-RAID, this means to tremble in fear, but it was often used for being in the presence of a great and wise king. The highest level of respect.

TOWARD THE WORD!

Your attitude toward BD is your attitude toward the LORD Jesus Christ!

Many Christians reject that teaching because they want large, concert- themed ministries….music, magically presentations and fun stories.

Bread and Circus has always been a satanic agenda to distract us and fill our time with lies, counterfeits and doctrines of demons.

 REPEAT

It is designed to tickle the OSN.

Look what the Apostle Paul teaches us in relation to what this cosmic system offers us;

/Phl 3:8 More than that**, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whom **I have suffered the loss of all things**, and count them *mere* rubbish, so that **I may gain Christ**,

We gain closer intimacy with Christ by receiving HIS mind, filled by the SPIRIT. HE then increases and our flesh decreases.\

There is no price tag… or worldly value that compares to having the mind of Christ.

The Apostle Paul had struggles and failures like all of us.

Yet he finished the race, he completed his mission magnificently.

There are rarely calls and missions for CA Christians like the Apostle Paul’s calling and life mission. Most of us…myself included, will never be called into that depth of spiritual combat and that responsibility!

In closing today, let me clarify even more so, what the teaching of James was pointing out in James 1 verses 9 into 10.

/Money, social status, bloodlines and any form of unnecessary discrimination, is a sign you are moving further away from Christ, not closer to HIM. Wealth does not determine spirituality, nor does poverty. Nor does social status, high or lowly, even the Hebrew bloodline was never guaranteed as spirituality. GOD looks at the heart – faith and free will determines spirituality.\

There are warnings within scripture in relation to becoming conceited or dependent upon the details of life.

/1Tim 6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to set their hope on the uncertainty of riches, **but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy**. 18 *Instruct them* to do good, to **be rich in good works, to be generous** and ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves the **treasure of a good foundation for the future**, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.\

I could spend the next 30 minutes covering the warnings of trusting in the riches and materialism in the cosmic system.

Those warnings are woven throughout scripture.

The point being – your soul structure is what matters in the end Royal family.

What is being built in it?

/Psa 52:7 “Behold, the man who would not make God his refuge, But **trusted in the abundance of his riches And was strong in his *evil* desire.**”

Prov 11:28 **One who trusts in his riches will fall,** But the righteous will flourish like the *green* leaf.\

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as well as Job, David and Solomon and many other spiritual heroes, lived very wealthy comfortable lives.

David began his journey as a poor sheep herder.

Gideon was a frighten farm boy, having no social significance.

Joshua came out of a life of slavery and ending up leading a powerful nation.

Rahab was a prostitute; Mary Magdalene also had a questionable background.

Jesus came from a poor neighborhood, barely a stain on the map – called Nazareth.

He and his earthly father Jospeh were labors and carpenters.

Your background, bank account and last name do not matter! You are now a CHILD of God and a bride of Christ.