



# GOOD PEOPLE AND BAD PEOPLE

## SERMON DISCUSSION NOTES FROM 7/11/21

### SERMON SUMMARY

If you've been in church a while, you've probably heard this parable preached about before. Preachers tend to paint a negative caricature of the Pharisee in this passage—a loud, pretentious villain. At the same time, we tend to make a hero out of the seemingly likable other character in this narrative that takes place in the temple, the praying tax collector. This week's message shows us that only bad people are in need of God's grace. And that bad people are the only kind of people there are.

**Key Passage:** Luke 18:9-14

*Be sure to read this Scripture passage together before you proceed to the "Grow" section of our study.*

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

**KNOW**—Spend some time finding out how everyone's week has gone. *The questions in this section provide a guide for connectivity; feel free to approach this part of your group time organically over a meal or "connection" activity or with questions appropriate to your context.*

*What is one way God is challenging you to trust Him this week?*

*What are some ways you have experienced God answering your prayers lately?*

*Who in your life is in need of prayer, physical help, or emotional encouragement right now?*

**GROW**—Grow in the Lord as you engage His Word together.

*Why do you think Jesus so often used parables as He communicated with others (see Matthew 13:10-13)?*

*What problem is Jesus addressing in this parable (see v. 9)?*

*The Pharisee in this parable falls into the trap of comparison. Why is this dangerous? Perhaps describe a time in your life when you battled this pitfall.*

*Why was the tax collector standing "far off" from everyone else? How does the gospel give a place of belonging to those who are "far off"?*

*How can the perspective of the tax collector lead a person to deeply worship the Father in Heaven? How can this mindset, disconnected from the gospel, lead us to an unhealthy place of self-loathing?*

*Why was the man who lifted himself up NOT justified? What is justification and how do we get it?*

**GO**—Talk through ways you can put what you've learned into practice.

*In what ways are we all just like the "extortioners, unjust, adulterers, and tax collectors" with whom the Pharisee compared himself?*

*Are you living life more like the Pharisee, lifting yourself up, or like the tax collector, humbly confessing your sin before God?*

*The tax collector was standoffish in approaching the temple. Have you ever felt unaccepted or un-welcomed by the church? How can our church love people in ways that attract/motivate them to come to Jesus—or at least to investigate faith in Christ.*

