

MD KIDS CURRICULUM: LUKE

Week 20: The Pharisee & The Tax Collector (from Luke 18:9-14)

To the Teacher:

This lesson can often seem straightforward to adults, especially ones who are familiar with the Bible, but the implicit messages can easily go over the kids' heads because of the confusing details in the story. Pray this week that God will give you guidance and help you convey this important truth to our kids.

- **Big Idea:** God humbles the proud and celebrates the humble.
- **Question:** Have you ever played a game or a sport with people that you thought were better at it than you? How did you feel?
- **Starter:** 'Humility Is Useful to God'
Give each of the kids a balloon and keep one for yourself. Demonstrate for the kids how a deflated balloon is pliable, it is easy to stretch and fold. You can wrap it around your finger or other objects. Have the kids experiment with the versatility of their deflated balloons. Then have each of the kids blow up their balloons and blow up yours as well. Talk about how it is no longer flexible. Now that it is "puffed up" it can only be one shape. Explain to the kids that a prideful or "puffed up" person is not as useful to God as a flexible, pliable, or humble person. Tell them that today's story is about a time when Jesus told a parable to explain this to His followers.
- **Story:** from Luke 18:9-14
[READ]
One day Jesus was teaching a group of people, including His disciples. Now, also in this group were some people who believed they were righteous, or right before God. These people would look down on everyone else because they thought they were better than them. Jesus told the group a parable, or story, to help show them what God thought about that kind of behavior.

Jesus said: "There were two men who went to the temple to pray, one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector." When the crowd heard about these two men they would have known right away that Pharisees were religious leaders who said they always followed God's law. They would have also known that many tax collectors were liars and cheaters who stole money from God's people while helping their enemies. Jesus used these two examples because He wanted the people to see that God knows how

everyone truly is on the inside, not just what people can see on the outside.

Jesus continued the story: “The Pharisee stood by himself (because he felt he was better than everyone else) and he prayed: ‘God, thank you that I am not like other people; robbers, people who do other evil things, or even like this tax collector who is here with me now. I fast (a form of prayer where someone relies on God to provide what is needed for their body) twice a week and I give to the priests a tenth of all that I get.’

“But the tax collector stood far away from everyone else (because he did not feel worthy to come close to God or even to other people). In fact, he wouldn’t even look up toward heaven. Instead, he looked down and hit his fist on his chest because he felt so guilty. He said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’” Then Jesus finished the story by saying this: “I tell you that the tax collector, and not the Pharisee, went home justified, or right before God. That is because everyone who makes much of themselves will be humbled, and everyone who humbles themselves will be made much of by God.”

[Things to Point Out]

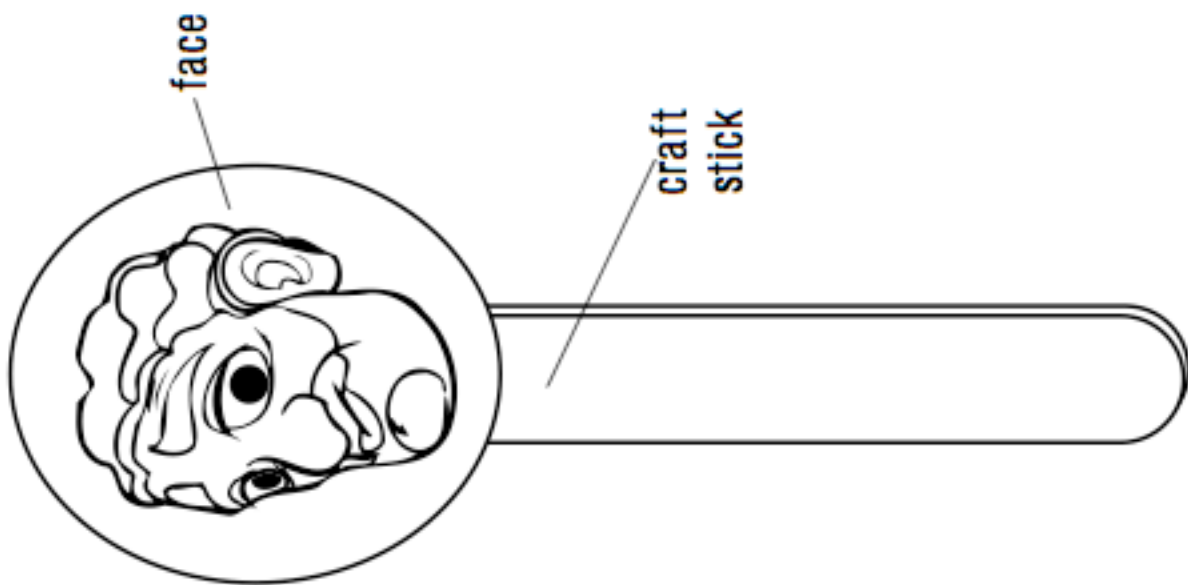
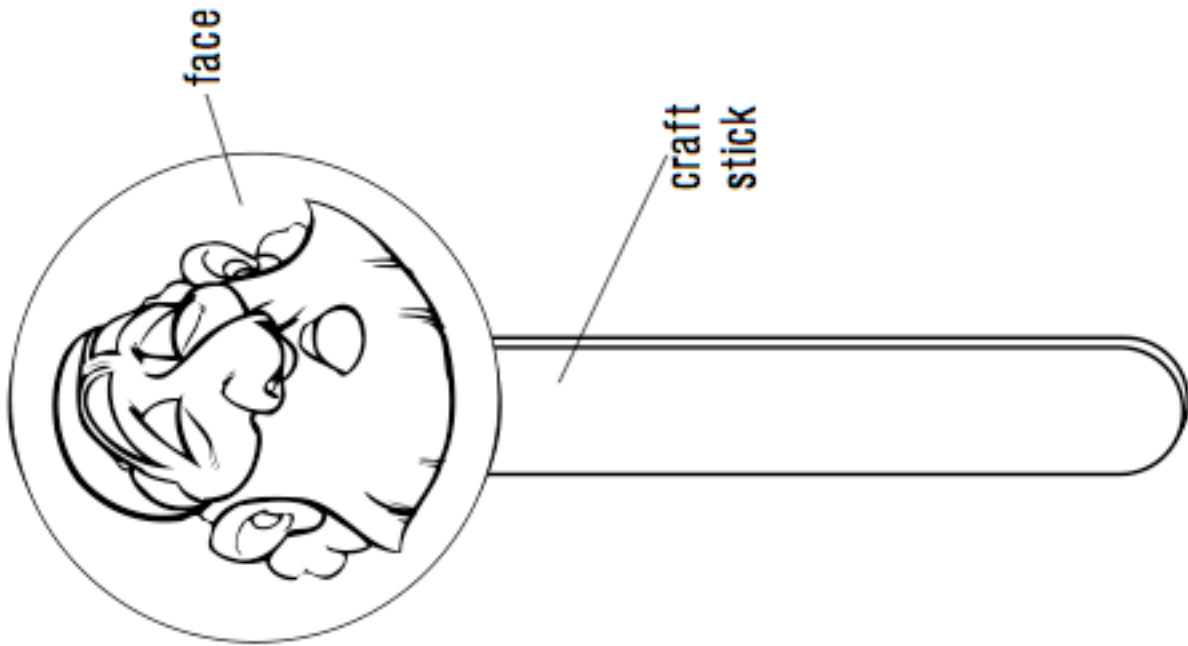
- Ask: Why did Jesus say that the tax collector, and not the Pharisee, was right before God?
 - ▶ The tax collector humbled himself by admitting he was a sinner
- Ask: It seemed like the pharisee did good things. Why didn’t that make him right before God?
 - ▶ The Pharisee seemed to do all the ‘right things’ to earn acceptance from God, not out of a love and gratitude God had already accepted him.
- Ask: How did the Pharisee in the story think about himself and others?
 - ▶ Highly of himself, poorly of others
- Ask: Was Jesus telling this story to Pharisees?
 - ▶ Not necessarily. In fact, the only people we know were there were Jesus’ disciples
- Ask: Why did Jesus want his followers to hear this story?
 - ▶ He wanted his followers to know that God did not love them because of the things they did, and he did not love them more than other people. God cares for all people and wants his followers to do the same.

- **Prayer:**

Jesus, thank you for showing us how to act towards God and other people. Please forgive us for the times we make much of ourselves instead of being humble. Please help us show other people how much you love and care for us all. Amen.
- **Craft:**
 - Have each of the kids make a pair of puppets with popsicle sticks, glue, and the attached sheets. Allow the kids to take turns acting out the story with their puppets.
 - If there is additional time you can give the kids the remaining coloring and activity sheets that are also attached here.
- **BLESS Activity:**

For kids to do during the week

SPEAK: This week pick one person you do not normally spend a lot of time with and think of things you truly think are special about them. When it is appropriate, tell that person what you think is special about them and why. Tell them you are grateful God made them special! Make sure what you say is true about them and that you truly think it, otherwise it will not be meaningful.

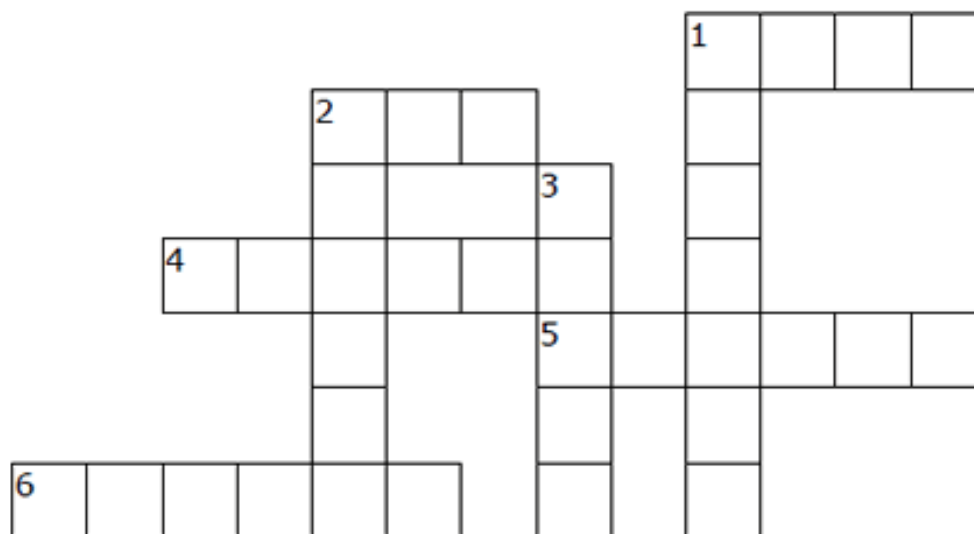




The Pharisee & the Tax Collector

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. Luke 18:14b (NIV)

Based on Luke 18:9-14



ACROSS

1. To speak to God
2. Money paid to support the government
4. Modest, not proud
5. Someone who steals from someone
6. A person who breaks God's law

DOWN

1. A story told by Jesus to teach his followers
2. A place of worship
3. Showing great kindness and forgiveness

TEMPLE
HUMBLE

ROBBER
PARABLE

MERCY
TAX

SINNER
PRAY