

Hey God Look What I'm Doing!

There are annoying people in this world. They steal the limelight and get all the attention. They have an attitude about them that makes it seem as if we are the lucky ones to have them even speak to us. They are aware of good looks, or their wealth, or their fame and they thrive on the attention it brings them. Parents can relate to this when they have children who compete for their attention. People in business must deal with ambitious employees. Even sometimes in church we find people who just think they are so much better than others.

In today's Gospel reading (Luke 18: 9 – 14) The Pharisee looked around himself as he prayed and pretty much decided that he was the best man in the synagogue that day. His prayer to God basically breaks down into three parts:

1. You are so smart God, you made me what I am and I am awesome!
2. Look at all the things I am doing for you God! I give money to the Temple and not just some money but exactly what you require. And when it comes to fasting, I do more that you require I do it twice a week, not just once a year.
3. I am so much better than anyone else because I keep your commandments...there are a lot of sinners in this temple but I am not one of them. You are the best God and because of you SO AM I.

The Pharisee was so full of himself that there was no room for unselfish love. His sin is so obvious because his attitude is so outrageous. There is a subtle danger in this because we can all be tempted to compare our situations and circumstances to others and think that we are at least better than they are.

The best way to avoid these types of comparisons is to stack our goodness up against the goodness of Jesus. That should keep us all humble.

Let's face it, we are only as good as our next sin. We need to repent daily. We need to be careful to place anything above God. We add

nothing to God's creation. We only have what God gives us. If we strive to humble ourselves before our Creator, and our Savior then God will make it worth the effort.

¹⁰ After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD restored his fortunes and gave him twice as much as he had before.
(Job 42:10 NIV)

And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, even among the survivors whom the LORD calls.
(Joe 2:32-3:1 NIV)

¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (2Ti 4:18 NIV)

¹⁴ "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." (Luk 18:14 NIV)