

The First Self-Righteous Church; Luke 18:9-14

I. Mississippi Squirrel Revival

A. Written by Ray Stevens

1. "As the squirrel made laps inside her dress, She began to cry and then to confess,
To sins that would make a sailor blush with shame,
2. "She told of gossip and church dissension, But the thing that got the most attention,
Was when she talked about her love life, And then she started naming names,"
3. "The day the squirrel went berserk, In the First Self-Righteous Church"
4. "Well 7 deacons and then the pastor got saved, And 25,000 dollars got raised and 50
volunteered, For missions in the Congo on the spot, And even without an invitation,
There were at least 500 rededications, And we all got rebaptized whether we needed
it or not"

B. Luke 18:9; He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:

C. This parable is aimed right at the religious leaders of the day

II. Prideful

A. Luke 18:9–12 (NASB95); 9 And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: 10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 "The Pharisee ***stood and was praying this to himself***: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'

B. The English Standard Version says, "The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus"

1. This phrase is an Aramaic idiom, "taking his stand, prayed"
2. We are left to figure out for ourselves if the meaning is that the Pharisee stood at a distance from the tax collector or if he was thinking (praying) to himself
3. Because of the purpose of this parable (that they trusted in themselves that they were righteous) I am going with the idea that he "took his stand"

C. The Pharisee was focused on his own accomplishments by his own hand

1. ***He*** had kept himself from sinful behavior
2. ***He*** fasted more than he was supposed to
3. ***He*** payed tithes on all he received, not just what he earned

D. God has a lot to say about a prideful person

1. Proverbs 6:16–19; 16 There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: 17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, 19 a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.
2. **"Haughty" - high or exalted, to be proud**
3. Proverbs 16:18–19; 18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. 19 It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.
4. 1 Corinthians 10:9–12; 9 We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, 10 nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. 12 Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.
5. Numbers 21:4-9 tells the story of the Israelites wanting better food and water, calling the Mana that God provided for them "worthless food"

- 6. Numbers 14 tells the story of the spies and Israel's reaction to their report about the land of promise
- 7. Paul uses these two events as illustrations against pride, thinking we know better than God
- E. In the Old Testament pride was a catalyst for failure
- F. In the New Testament pride is a catalyst for failure!
- G. Luke 14:7–11; 7 Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, 8 “When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, 9 and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. 10 But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. 11 For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

III. Humble

- A. The opposite of prideful is humble
- B. God has a lot to say about humility
- C. James 4:7–10; 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.
- D. The key to humility is submission
 - 1. To submit to someone else is to say that they are more powerful than I am
 - 2. To submit to someone else is to say that they are more important than I am
 - 3. To submit to someone else is to say that they mean more than I do
 - 4. YES! This is the mindset we must have
 - 5. Ephesians 5:15–21; 15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.
 - 6. As we submit ourselves to the Father, we submit to one another
- E. We might make excuses as to why we don't want to humble ourselves for someone
 - 1. I don't like them
 - 2. They don't believe that same as I do
 - 3. They are living in sin
 - 4. They are evil
 - 5. I would remind us that while we were still yet sinners, Christ died for us
- F. Philippians 2:3–11; 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has

highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

1. Jesus left his throne to become a poor carpenter's son
2. Jesus left his throne for a people who despised him
3. Jesus left his throne to be beaten, mocked, and murdered
4. The Creator of the universe, and all that is in it, submitted Himself to His creation for the sole purpose of ensuring that we (his creation) have life eternal in his presence!

G. Humility ought to be our way of life

IV. Righteous

- A. We are a righteous church, but only by the blood of Jesus
- B. No, I did not let a squirrel loose in our auditorium this morning (but I did think about it)