



Gospel Truths: Humility and Prayer



Explore the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector to learn God's heart for humble prayer and true righteousness.



Table of contents

<u>Introduction</u>	3
<u>Day 1: 🙏 The Heart of Prayer</u>	4
<u>Day 2: 🕊️ God's Favor to the Humble</u>	10
<u>Day 3: 🏠 The Pharisee's Prayer Exposed</u>	16
<u>Day 4: 🙌 The Tax Collector's Cry</u>	22
<u>Day 5: 📖 Lessons from Jesus' Teaching</u>	28
<u>Day 6: 💬 Prayer as Honest Dialogue</u>	34
<u>Day 7: ✨ Living Out Gospel Humility</u>	40



Introduction

The Gospels are treasure troves of divine wisdom, revealing Jesus' teachings and how He calls us to live. Among these, the **Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector** in *Luke 18:9–14* stands as a powerful lesson on humility, prayer, and what truly pleases God.

In this parable, Jesus contrasts two men praying in the temple: the proud Pharisee who boasts about his righteousness, and the humble tax collector who begs for mercy. This story confronts our own hearts, challenging us to examine how we approach God — whether with pride or genuine repentance.

Throughout this week-long Bible study, we will dive deep into this passage and related scriptures to discover what God values most in prayer and in our daily lives: humility, repentance, and dependence on His grace. We'll uncover how these truths relate to who we are, how we pray, and how we live before others.

Whether you're a seasoned believer or new to faith, this study invites you to embrace a heart posture that draws you closer to God, reflecting the genuine humility Jesus highlights. Let's open our hearts to His teaching and allow His Word to transform our prayers, attitudes, and our relationship with Him. Get ready for a journey into the heart of the Gospel and how it shapes authentic, humble faith.



Day 1: 🙏 The Heart of Prayer



Day 1: 🙏 The Heart of Prayer

Your Verse

Luke 18:9-14: "Two men went up to the temple to pray..."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Psalm 51:17: "A broken spirit... you will not despise."*
- *James 4:6: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."*



Day 1: 🙏 The Heart of Prayer

Devotional: Approach God with a Humble Heart

Jesus begins His parable addressing those who trusted in themselves and looked down on others. Prayer is more than words spoken to God; it reveals our heart posture. The Pharisee's prayer was self-focused, boasting of good works and moral superiority, while the tax collector acknowledged his sin and begged for mercy.

God values a humble and repentant heart above proud declarations. When we come to God in prayer, it's not about listing our good deeds but recognizing our need for His grace. True prayer strips away pretense and pride, placing us honestly before God.

Ask yourself: Do I approach God with humility or self-righteousness? Am I willing to admit my weaknesses and need for forgiveness? The path to God is always open when we come simply and sincerely.



Day 1: 🙏 The Heart of Prayer

Reflect and Apply

1. How do I typically approach God in prayer: with pride or humility?

2. What might the Pharisee's prayer reveal about my attitude before God?

3. In what areas do I need to seek God's mercy more honestly?



Day 1: 🙏 The Heart of Prayer

Journaling Prompts

1. Describe your usual prayer approach and how it compares to the parable.

2. Write about a time God showed you grace in humility.

3. List barriers that keep you from praying honestly and humbly.



Day 1: 🙏 The Heart of Prayer

Prayer for Today

Lord, teach me to pray with a humble and sincere heart. Help me to stop relying on my own righteousness and instead seek Your grace daily. Strip away any pride that blinds me from seeing my need for You. I want to come honestly and freely, trusting Your mercy and love. May my prayers reflect a heart fully dependent on You. *Amen.* 🙏 ❤️ 📖





Day 2: 🕊️ God's Favor to the Humble



Day 2: 🕊️ God's Favor to the Humble

Your Verse

James 4:6: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Proverbs 3:34: "He mocks proud mockers but shows favor to the humble and oppressed."*
- *Isaiah 66:2: "This is the one I esteem: the humble and contrite in spirit."*



Day 2: 🕊️ God's Favor to the Humble

Devotional: Embrace God's Favor through Humility

Humility isn't a sign of weakness; it's the doorway to God's grace. Throughout Scripture, God promises to lift up those who are humble and repentant. The parable reminds us that God values the heart more than outward religious acts.

When we humble ourselves, acknowledging our dependence on Him, God responds with favor and blessing. Pride pushes God away, but humble hearts experience restoration and acceptance.

Consider how humility in your walk with God changes your relationship with Him. When you humbly embrace His leading and corrections, spiritual growth follows. Today, cultivate a spirit that welcomes God's favor through humility.



Day 2: 🕊️ God's Favor to the Humble

Reflect and Apply

1. Why do you think God opposes the proud but favors the humble?

2. How does this truth affect your view of your spiritual journey?

3. What practical steps can you take to cultivate humility daily?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about ways pride has impacted your relationship with God.

2. Describe moments when God showed you favor after humbling yourself.

3. List specific attitudes or habits to change to grow in humility.



Day 2: 🕊️ God's Favor to the Humble

Prayer for Today

Father, help me to embrace humility as the pathway to Your favor. Teach me to recognize pride in my life and replace it with a humble heart open to Your guidance. Thank You for valuing those who come to You honestly. May I always seek Your presence with the right attitude. In Jesus' name, amen. 🙏





Day 3: 🏠 The Pharisee's Prayer Exposed



Your Verse

Luke 18:11-12: "God, I thank you that I am not like other people... I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all I get."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 23:27: "You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead bones."*
- *Romans 12:3: "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought."*



Devotional: Beware Spiritual Pride in Prayer

The Pharisee's prayer might seem righteous, but Jesus reveals the danger of self-righteousness. His prayer is filled with comparison and boasting, focusing on how he is better than others. This attitude blinds him to his own need for God's mercy.

Jesus warns us not to fall into the trap of spiritual pride. Outward religious acts mean little if the heart is arrogant. The Pharisee's prayer is a reminder that God desires truth and humility, not hypocrisy.

Reflect on how easily we can compare ourselves with others and falsely assume superiority. God calls us to examine our hearts honestly, coming before Him with genuine repentance rather than boasting.



Reflect and Apply

1. In what ways might pride creep into your prayer life?

2. How can comparing yourself to others harm your spiritual health?

3. What does it mean to provide God with a sincere, humble heart?



Journaling Prompts

1. List moments when you've felt tempted to compare yourself with others spiritually.

2. Write about how you can replace pride with humility in prayer.

3. Reflect on what God might be asking you to confess honestly today.



Day 3: 🏠 The Pharisee's Prayer Exposed

Prayer for Today

Lord, reveal any pride within me that hinders true connection with You. Help me to stop comparing myself to others and to focus on my own need for Your grace. Cleanse my heart from arrogance and teach me to come humbly before You. May my prayers be genuine reflections of my soul. Amen. 🙏 ✨ 🕊





Day 4: 🙌 The Tax Collector's Cry



Day 4: 🙏 The Tax Collector's Cry

Your Verse

Luke 18:13: "God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Psalm 86:5: "You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you."*
- *1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us."*



Day 4: 🙏 The Tax Collector's Cry

Devotional: Confess Humbly and Receive Mercy

The tax collector's simple, heartfelt prayer confesses his sin and pleads for mercy. Unlike the Pharisee, he doesn't defend himself or make excuses. This honesty touches the heart of God.

God delights when we acknowledge our brokenness and cast ourselves on His mercy. The tax collector's example teaches us the power of humble confession and the comfort of God's forgiveness.

Today, let go of any fear or shame about coming before God as you are. His mercy is for you, always available when you turn to Him sincerely. Remember that humility invites healing and restoration.



Reflect and Apply

1. How comfortable are you with confessing your sins openly to God?

2. What does the tax collector's prayer teach about God's mercy?

3. Are there any barriers preventing you from coming to God as a sinner in need?



Day 4: 🌻 The Tax Collector's Cry

Journaling Prompts

1. Write your own prayer confessing your need for God's mercy.

2. Describe moments when God's forgiveness brought peace to your heart.

3. List fears or hesitations you have about being honest with God.



Day 4: 🙏 The Tax Collector's Cry

Prayer for Today

Merciful God, I come before You acknowledging my sins and failings. Thank You for Your endless mercy and willingness to forgive. Help me to be brave and honest in my prayers, trusting You to restore and renew me. May I never be ashamed to lay my soul bare before You. In Jesus' name, amen. 🙏❤️🙏





Day 5: Lessons from Jesus' Teaching



Your Verse

Luke 18:14: "For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 23:12: "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*
- *Philippians 2:3: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."*



Devotional: Humility Is the Path to Exaltation

Jesus ends the parable with a profound truth: humility leads to exaltation. This reverses worldly values that prize self-promotion. God's kingdom works differently — the humble are lifted up.

This calls us to examine how we live not only in prayer but in relationships and service. True greatness in God's eyes is rooted in humility, putting others above ourselves and recognizing our dependence on Him.

Take Jesus' teaching to heart today. Practice humility in your speech, actions, and thoughts. Trust God's timing and ways for your exaltation.



Reflect and Apply

1. How does Jesus' teaching challenge cultural ideas of success?

2. In what areas of life can you practice more humility this week?

3. What does it mean to 'value others above yourself' practically?



Day 5:  Lessons from Jesus' Teaching

Journaling Prompts

1. Reflect on ways God has humbled and lifted you.

2. Write specific actions you can take to humble yourself before others.

3. Journal about how humility changes your thinking about greatness.



Day 5: 📖 Lessons from Jesus' Teaching

Prayer for Today

Jesus, teach me to walk the path of humility. Help me to see others through Your eyes and to serve with a humble heart. May I value those around me and trust You to exalt me in Your perfect timing. Let my life reflect Your kingdom's upside-down ways. Amen. 🌿 🙏 ❤️





Day 6: Prayer as Honest Dialogue



Your Verse

Matthew 6:6: “But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen.”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Psalm 34:18: “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”*
- *Jeremiah 29:12: “You will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.”*



Devotional: Speak Honestly to God in Prayer

Prayer is not a performance; it's an honest conversation with our Heavenly Father. Jesus encourages private, sincere prayer away from public show. This aligns with the humility seen in the parable — God listens to the broken and contrite, not the prideful.

Embrace prayer as a space where you can be transparent, vulnerable, and real. Speak your heart to God without fear of judgment or the need to impress. God delights in your truthful expressions, whether praise, confession, or need.

Today, set aside time to pray honestly. Share your burdens, ask for healing, and rest in God's attentive love.



Reflect and Apply

1. How does private prayer affect your connection with God?

2. What prevents you from being fully honest in prayer?

3. How can you cultivate a prayer life of authenticity and surrender?



Journaling Prompts

1. Describe your favorite place or way to pray privately.

2. Write a prayer expressing your honest feelings to God today.

3. List distractions or obstacles to deeper, honest prayer.



Day 6: 💬 Prayer as Honest Dialogue

Prayer for Today

Father, help me to come before You with an open heart. Teach me to pray honestly and privately, trusting that You hear and care. May I find peace in sharing my true self with You, knowing You are close to the brokenhearted. Thank You for listening and loving me always. Amen. 🙏🌸📖





Day 7: ✨ Living Out Gospel Humility



Day 7: ✨ Living Out Gospel Humility

Your Verse

Philippians 2:5-7: “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus...”

Supporting Scriptures

- *Colossians 3:12: “Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility...”*
- *Ephesians 4:2: “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”*



Day 7: ✨ Living Out Gospel Humility

Devotional: Reflect Christ's Humility Daily

As this study concludes, the call to humility moves beyond prayer into daily life. The Gospels and Paul's letters remind us to imitate Christ's humility, who gave up glory to serve others.

Living with gospel humility means putting others first, forgiving, and demonstrating kindness even when it's difficult. It's an ongoing journey requiring the Holy Spirit's help.

Challenge yourself to identify practical ways to embody this humility in family, workplace, and community. Allow Jesus' example to transform your heart and actions, shining His light in a proud world.



Reflect and Apply

1. What does gospel humility look like in your daily interactions?

2. How can embracing humility improve your relationships?

3. In what ways can you serve others following Christ's example?



Journaling Prompts

1. List specific people you can show humility and kindness to this week.

2. Reflect on how practicing humility has changed your perspective.

3. Write about how Christ's humility inspires your daily life.



Day 7: ✨ Living Out Gospel Humility

Prayer for Today

Lord Jesus, help me to live out humility every day. May my actions reflect Your love and servant heart. Teach me patience, kindness, and grace as I relate to others. Empower me through Your Spirit to be humble like You, bringing glory to Your name through my life. Amen. ✨ 🙏 ❤️





Where God's Word Meets Your Daily Life

A Personal Invitation from HolyJot

We pray this Bible Study has blessed you and drawn you closer to the heart of God. If you enjoyed this study, we'd love for you to join our growing HolyJot community online.



What you'll discover when you visit [HolyJot.com](https://www.holyjot.com):



 **100k+ Bible Study Plans** on every topic of life

 Access studies anytime on your phone, tablet, or computer

 Studies for individuals, families, small groups, and churches

 Secure online journaling — or keep using print for privacy

 A place to grow your faith alongside believers worldwide

Bonus for You:

Download exclusive study bundles and resources when you create a [free HolyJot account](#). No spam. No gimmicks. Just God's Word.

Visit Now:

 [www.HolyJot.com](https://www.holyjot.com)

 Scan this QR code to start your next Bible Study today:



 We'd love to hear your story.
Email us at info@holyjot.com.

 Connect with us at:

[Facebook](#) • [Instagram](#) • [YouTube](#) • [TikTok](#)



You are welcome to share this PDF with others.
Please keep it intact so the full study and credits remain.

© 2025 HolyJot LLC. All Rights Reserved.