

Come Humbly

Luke 18:9-14

In Luke 18 Jesus gives us a series of living examples to teach us how to come to our Heavenly Father:

- vv. 1-8, the story of the poor widow and the unjust judge.
The lesson: **come persistently.**
- vv. 15-17, Jesus blessing the children.
The lesson: **come simply, trustingly, as children.**
- vv. 18-30, the rich young ruler.
The lesson: **come without reservation, committing everything to Him.**
- vv. 35-43, healing of blind Bartimaeus.
The lesson: **come in bold faith.**

Between the first and second bullets above Jesus told another story as to how we should come to God. Two people come to the temple to pray. The first sounds like a good Christian. He is considered one of the holiest people in his society. He thanks God for His many blessings in his life—and thankfulness is a great virtue! The man seems to be doing everything right.

The second person is a sinner, pure and simple. He is choked by his deep unworthiness. He won't even lift his head in God's presence.

So why is God pleased with the second person and not the first? What is Jesus teaching us about how we come to God?

Pride is self-centered and self-serving. It is one of the biggest barriers to a true relationship with the Living God. Pride fails to see God for who He is and ourselves for who we are. Pride prevents God from filling our lives, and being to us all He wants to be.

When we first come to God for salvation, we realize our unworthiness and neediness. We come to God empty, with nothing in our hands, in utter humility, totally dependent on His mercy. Sometimes after we've been a Christian for a while, we forget that in ourselves, we are just as unworthy, just as needy, just as dependent on His mercy as we ever were.

Most relationships are a two-way interchange. Each party contributes something to the relationship. But in our relationship with God, we bring nothing. The only thing we have that is truly our own is our sinfulness and unworthiness. We come empty.

Only when we see God for who He is and ourselves for who we are can we have a true, honest, open relationship with Him.

Listen to the prayer of the Pharisee with the ears of a person today caught in the darkness of sin, and you may hear what they hear when they listen to our church talk. When Jesus talks, I never hear harsh condemnation for sinners, those outside the faith. He saves His harsh criticism for those who are comfortable in their righteousness, those caught up in the externals and forgetting **love**.

When I listen to the church talk through the media about the social “sinners” of our day—for example, homosexuals—I too often hear strident condemnation. If I were a sinner outside the church, that’s what I’d hear. And when I listen to the condemnation, spoken in such strident tones, I hear fear. I don’t hear confident, secure children of the Father, focused on showing the world how much He loves them. I hear a fearful, embattled minority focused on self-protection.

We don’t have to work to conjure up humility. All we have to do is get a glimpse of who God is and who we are without Him. Love, trust, and humility are at the very core of proper relationships with God, with our fellow believers, and with the needy world around us.

Hymn options:
[I Come in Christ](#)
[As Simply as a Child](#)
[You Are Holy; I Come in Silence](#)

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