

SERMON OUTLINE

'Gospel Words'

Study - 2

'Justification'

Luke 18 v9 - 14

There are 5 key gospel words which help us to understand what the Christian gospel is all about:-

Regeneration, Justification, Redemption, Propitiation, Reconciliation

Regeneration - a legal word which comes from the law court. It's the opposite of condemnation.

Key Question - How can God acquit us (justify us) when we are so clearly guilty in our sin and deserving of judgement? We see this being answered in this parable which Jesus told.

Contest - This parable was told with an eye to some religious people who thought that when it came to God's final judgement they would have nothing to worry about. See - v9. They were self-deceived!

1. THE TWO MEN

See - v10. Learn to look at the parables through Jewish eyes - this gives you the 'shock value' of them.

A. The Pharisee

He was the best of the best - the holiest of the holy. Respected and admired. God would surely justify him - of course He would!

B. The tax collector

The worst of the worst. Think here of a collaborator in Nazi occupied France - getting rich at the expense of his fellow countrymen. That was the tax collector. What a shock - 'And what is he doing in church - throw him out!'

2. THE TWO PRAYERS

A. THE PRAYER OF THE PHARISEE

(i) Where did he pray from?

See - v13a. He was right up at the front of the congregation - where everyone could see him. See - Matt 6 v5a

(ii) Who did he pray to?

See - v11a. Lit - "He prayed to himself" - but in a loud voice so that everyone could hear.

(iii) What did he pray about?

(a) He prayed positively - about what he had done. See - v12

(b) He prayed negatively - about what he was not. See - v11

Note - He prayed comparatively, which is easy to do when there are people who you consider to be worse sinners than you. It's important to pray comparatively - but not comparing ourselves to others, rather comparing ourselves to God. See - Is 6

Key Point - The Pharisee had no sense of spiritual need, and therefore had no sense of needing God. See - Lk 5 v31 - 32.

B. THE PRAYER OF THE TAX COLLECTOR

See - v13. Mercy is when God doesn't give you what you know you rightly deserve - His judgement. He made this prayer because he was most probably looking into the temple, to the Mercy Seat, where a sacrifice was being made for the sins of the people. Did he ask himself - 'Could God do that with my sins?'

3. THE TWO JUDGEMENTS

See - v14.

Key Question - Which of these two men represents you?