

“THANK GOD MERCY”

THESIS: Let’s Thank God

TEXT: Luke 18:9-14

OPEN: True or False: The Bible encourages self-confidence. The answer to that and the type of prayer that invites the blessing of God’s mercy as we look to **Luke 18:9-14** and other Scriptures.

Luke 18:9-10 *“To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰‘Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.’”*

Historical: The Pharisees originated during a period of Jewish captivity many years prior to Christ’s birth. Initially their goal was to preserve the culture, OT laws, and tradition of their people amidst heavy pagan influence. By Jesus’ time, the Pharisees had become hypocritical, legalistic, rigid, and self-righteous. They considered their tradition and teaching as authoritative as Scripture, if not more so (*Matthew 15:1-3*). They were about the “show, symbolism, ceremony, and ritual” of religion rather than religion of the heart.

Historical: The Greek word for tax-collector includes the meaning “plunderer.” Some tax-collectors became wealthy by poaching their fellow Jews. Tax collectors worked on behalf of the oppressive Roman Empire. They often demanded unreasonable payments. Jewish tax collectors were considered traitors by many of their own people.

Luke 18:11-14 *“The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ ¹³But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to Heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ ¹⁴I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

Let’s not boast about ourselves instead let’s build others up as an expression of thanks to God for His mercy to us.

1. Let’s be humble and not boast about ourselves.
 - A. **Jeremiah 9:23-24** “This is what the Lord says: ‘Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight,’ declares the Lord.”
 1. **Boast** (Hebrew: *halal*) means to cheer, extol, or praise.
 - a. **James 4:6-7** “‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and He will come near to you.”
 - b. **1 Peter 3:12** “For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”
 2. **Insight from T.W. Hunt:** “Not everything that happens is from God, but He can use everything for your good and His glory (*Romans 8:28*)...Belief in the goodness of God not only produces gratitude, it also stimulates faith or trust. We sometimes are merely grateful for the satisfactions of the moment. If that becomes our habit, our faith bobs up and down like a cork in water. Circumstances alone are a poor indicator of what God is doing or will do. Form an attitude of trust in God’s goodness” (*Disciple’s Prayer Life*, p. 73-74).
2. Let’s be humble and build others up.
 - A. **Ephesians 4:29** “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”
 1. **Build up** (Greek: *oikodomeo*) means to benefit, be constructive, edify, or to strengthen.

- a. **Proverbs 12:25** “An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.”
- b. **Romans 15:1-4** “We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: ‘The insults of those who insult you have fallen on Me.’ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

2. **Application:** (“Ways To Encourage Others” by Stacy Wiebe)

CONCLUSION: True or False: The Bible encourages self-confidence.

Jeremiah 17:7 “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him.”

Philippians 3:3 “We who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh...”

2 Thessalonians 3:3-4 “The Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord...”

1 Corinthians 1:28-31 “He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before Him. It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: ‘Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.’”

Illustration: (*foxnews.com* “Two Secret Churches In North Korea Show How Powerful The Bible Really Is”)

Hebrews 13:5b-6 “God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’ So we say with confidence: ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’”

CLOSE: Let’s be humble and build up others in the faith so they, too, may thank God for His mercy.