

# JESUS UNFILTERED

SERMON STUDY GUIDE | PART 4: Why are we fixated on sin? | 1.28.18 | FOLLOW ON FB @PASTORERICHUFFMAN TWITTER @ERICTHESTORY

It seems like we're always talking about why it's important to believe in Jesus, but when was the last time you stopped to think about *what Jesus believed?* Over the next month, we're going to take a closer look at Jesus' belief system by analyzing eight of his most famous parables. Here are the parables we've looked at so far:

- + The Parable of the Reckless Farmer (Matthew 13:1-23)
- + The Parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son (Luke 15)
- + The Parable of the Vineyard Workers (Matthew 20:1-16)

With today's sermon we'll focus on *two* parables: *The Parable of the Two Prayers* (Luke 18:9-14) and *The Parable of the Two Debts* (Luke 7:36-50). Both parables deal with the same core teaching: Jesus wants us to know the dangers of self-righteousness.

Before getting into the parables, how have you witnessed self-righteousness become a distraction in your life with God? How have you seen self-righteousness (either yours or someone else's) harming your relationships with others?

## Luke 18:9-14: The Parable of the Two Prayers

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

"But 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.'

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

What do we know about Pharisees in Jesus' day? What do we know about tax collectors?

How do people "exalt themselves"? Have you ever been guilty of exalting yourself? Were you subsequently "humbled"? If so, how?

How do we humble ourselves? Is it just an act, or is it something deeper?

What do you think Jesus is trying to say about God with this parable?

Luke 7:36-50: The Parable of the Two Debts

When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner."

Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, teacher," he said.

"Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Simon replied, "I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven."

"You have judged correctly," Jesus said.

Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little."

Then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

The other guests began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"

Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

What was Simon's implication when he said "If this man were a prophet, he would know...what kind of woman she is - that she is a sinner"?

It would appear, at first glance, that Jesus is suggesting that Simon and his Pharisee buds aren't sinners like the woman in this story. Do you think Jesus really believed that? How do you know?

What does self-righteousness do to our relationship with God? And our relationships with other people, especially those who are not like us?

How do we combat self-righteousness?

What do you think Jesus is trying to teach us about God with this parable?