

Justice, Mercy, and Humility

Description

Luke 18:9-14

Prayers of the poor and vulnerable often echo a longing for justice in a broken world. What might the prayers of those who have privilege and power sound like?

Jesus follows up the parable of the persistent widow with one about a Pharisee and a tax collector. Both were men who had status or wealth, but their prayers were very different. The Pharisee self-righteously thanked God that he was a pious man, unlike those around him. He could not see that the religious community that he represented often harmed as many people as it helped.

The tax collector, on the other hand, begged God to have mercy on a sinner like him. He knew he was complicit in an unjust economic system that benefited him financially but exploited and oppressed his own people. Jesus declared that “this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God” (v. 14).

Lord, help us to see our own complicity in the sin and brokenness of the world, to repent of our participation in injustice, and to “act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with [our] God” (Micah 6:8).

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Date Created

2024/02/20