

How Big Is God?
God's Forgiveness Is Bigger Than My Sin

I. Introduction

- A. "There's no greater disaster in the spiritual life than to be immersed in unreality, for life is maintained and nourished in us by our vital relationship with reality." (Thomas Merton)
- B. Luke 18:9-14 (NAS) ⁹*And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: ¹⁰"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.' ¹³But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!' ¹⁴I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."*
- C. Luke 18:11 (NAS) *"The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: 'God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.'"*
- D. Luke 18:12 (NAS) *'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.'*
- E. Matthew 23:23 (NAS) *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others."*
1. He really came to inform God - - and inform other people - - of how good he was.
- F. Luke 18:13 (NAS) *"But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, the sinner!'"*
1. Until we come to the realization of how big our sin really is, we can't see how big God's forgiveness of our sin really is.
- G. Luke 18:14a (NAS) *"I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other."*
- H. Luke 18:14b (NAS) *"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."*
1. "Exalt" - - "To deliver and redeem"
- I. Luke 23:47-48 (NAS) ⁴⁷*Now when the centurion saw what had happened, he began praising God, saying, "Certainly this man was innocent."* ⁴⁸*And all the crowds who came together for this spectacle, when they observed what had happened, began to return, beating their breasts.*
- J. The spiritual discipline of confession
- K. I John 1:9 (NAS) *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
- L. I Corinthians 11:23-26 (NAS) ²³*For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴and when He had given*

*thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."
²⁵In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*

II. Conclusion