



Word in the Home—Easter

with Barbara Reaoch

WEEK 1: God Saves Those Who Depend on Him

Day One

READ: Luke 18:9–12

Do you know someone who thinks they are better than other people? Jesus told this story to people who thought God loved them best. Pharisees added many extra rules to God's law. The man in this passage thought he had earned God's love by the many extra things he did. God told His people to fast once a year and he fasted twice a week. Why would he need God's mercy? Hadn't he done more than God required? Surely God would love him more than people who broke rules. But God doesn't give us a list of things to do, He wants to change our hearts. We cannot earn God's love.

TALK ABOUT IT

- **To whom did Jesus tell this story?**
 - **What did the religious leader think about God's love?**
 - **Does God love us because of good things we do?**
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Day Two

READ: Luke 18:9–14

Why did Jesus tell this story? Jesus wants us to know that God looks at our hearts—not just at what we do or who our family is. He saves rich and poor; He saves smart and not so smart. He saves children who never get in trouble and those who get in trouble a lot. The Pharisee looked at other people only to make himself look better. He did not ask God to change his heart. But the tax collector knew he needed God to change his heart. He depended on God's mercy and love. *In Jesus, God saves all who depend on His mercy.*

TALK ABOUT IT

- Why did Jesus tell this story?
 - What did the tax collector know about himself?
 - What have you learned about God's forgiveness?
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Day Three

READ: Luke 18:15–17

What does it look like to depend on God? Jesus showed us. He called the little children to come to him. Little children cannot work. They cannot earn their food and clothing. They depend on their Mom and Dad to provide everything—to feed, clothe, hug, and keep them safe. The Pharisee proudly depended on the things he did. The tax collector humbly depended on God's mercy alone. God's children don't tell God what they will do for Him. They depend on God to do everything for them. Jesus invites us to admit that more than anything else, we need God's love and forgiveness.

TALK ABOUT IT

- What does it mean to humbly depend on God?
- What have you learned about God?
- How will you depend on God today?

PRAY: Father God, thank you for sending Jesus so that you can forgive us and make us your children. Jesus, please help me to see how much I need your love and forgiveness. Help me believe that God will forgive all my sin.

Day Four

WHO IS GOD? GOD IS MERCIFUL

Jesus showed us what humility looks like. He called the little children to come to Him. Little children fall and get dirty or even hurt themselves. Little children run to their parents for help. Our Father God wants us to run to Him! He freely gives us forgiveness and help. Jesus also showed us what pride looks like. The Pharisee felt clean. He thought he did not need God's mercy. But the tax collector was like a little child. He knew he was dirty. He ran to God for help (1 Pet. 3:8; 5:6). When we admit to God the wrong things we think, say, and do, we find Jesus forgives our sins and gives us joy (1 John 1:9). Jesus helps us love Him more than our sin (Col. 3:12; Matt. 5:3). Pride tells us we do not need to say we're sorry to anyone. Humility tells us Jesus is our way to God's mercy—His forgiveness and joy (Matt. 11:29; Eph. 4:2).

ACTIVITY

Talk about what it means to be humble. Does it mean you have to pretend when you actually did run the fastest or get the highest grade? Does it mean that you should not want your parents to praise you? How can you humbly thank God for helping you do your best? Will you ask God to show you how you can use the gifts He has given you to help others love Him?

MEMORY VERSE

Luke 18:16 But Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”



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