

The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Luke 18:9-14

- **Go vertical:** Use a ladder or low scaffolding to add a new dimension to the story. Consider standing near the top step as you say the Pharisee's proud prayer. Then climb down and fall to your knees to read the prayer of the tax collector.
- **Use dramatic lighting:** Dim the lights and use stage lights to draw attention to the storyteller. Shine a spotlight on the tax collector to indicate that God heard his humble prayer and forgave him.

Jesus told a story to some people who looked down on others. These people thought they were better than everyone else. **Jesus said, “Two men went into the temple to pray. One man was a Pharisee, or a religious leader.”** Pharisees tried very hard to please God by following the rules. They even made up new rules to follow. **“The other man was a tax collector.”** Many people did not like tax collectors. They were often dishonest and unfair in the way they collected money.

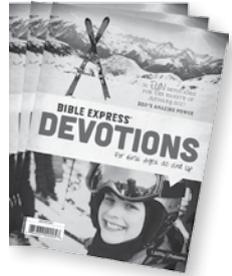
“The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed, ‘God, I thank You that I am not greedy, dishonest, and unfaithful like other people. I am glad I am not like that tax collector. I fast two days a week and tithe.’

“The tax collector stood far away. He did not even lift up his head because he was sorry for the things he had done. The tax collector pounded on his chest and said, ‘Have mercy on me, God! I am a sinner!’”

The prayer of the Pharisee was very different than the prayer of the tax collector. **Jesus explained that God was happy with the tax collector, and He forgave him. But God was not happy with the Pharisee.**

Jesus said, “If you put yourself above others, you will be put down. But if you are humble, God will honor you.”

Christ Connection: The tax collector knew he needed God to forgive him, and he cried out to God. Everyone is a sinner who needs forgiveness. Jesus took the punishment for our sin by dying on the cross. We can cry out to God like the tax collector and because of Jesus, God will forgive us.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that the Pharisee would not admit that he, too, was a sinner. We are all sinners. When we humble ourselves and call out to Jesus, we are saved. (Luke 18:14) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Words Matter

Cross out the statements that do not bring honor or glory to God.

"I am glad I am not like that tax collector."

"Father, forgive me for sinning against You."

"God, I thank You that I am not greedy, dishonest, and unfaithful like other people."

"I am the best person here. I fast two days a week and tithe."

"Have mercy on me, God! I am a sinner!"

"You alone are worthy of all glory and honor."

Word Reveal

Color the squares containing the number 8 to reveal two key words from today's Bible story.

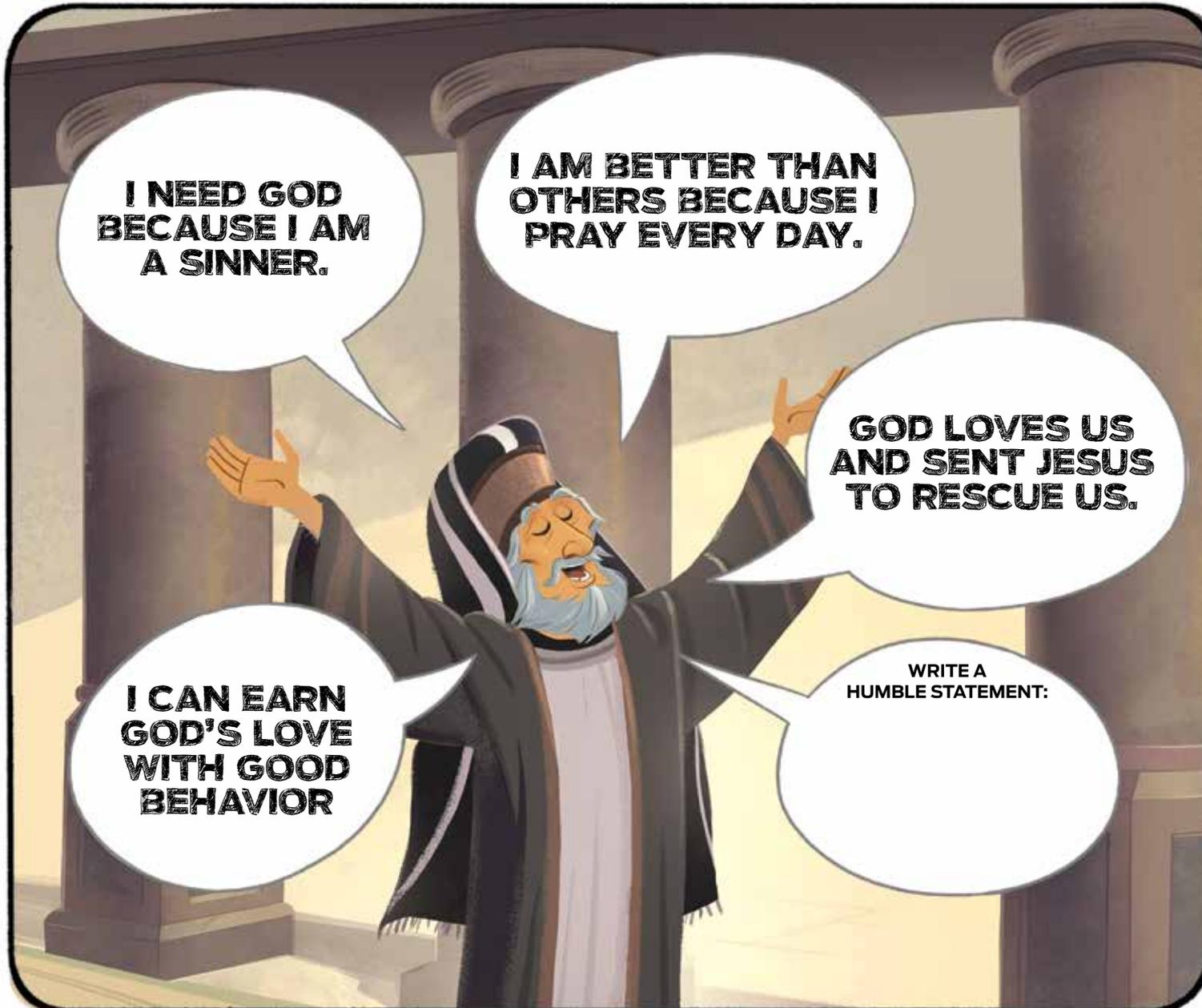
8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	0	0	8	0	8	8	8	0	8	0	0	8	8
8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	8	0	8	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	0	8	0
8	8	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	8	0	0	8	0	0	8	8
8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	0	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	0	8	0
8	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	0	8	0	8	8	8	0	8	8	0	8	8

0	8	8	0	0	8	8	8	0	0	8	0	0	8	0	8	0	8	8	0			
0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8			
0	8	8	0	0	8	8	0	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8			
0	8	0	0	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8	0	8			
0	8	0	0	0	8	0	8	0	0	8	0	0	0	8	0	0	8	8	0			

Humble Hearts

DOWNLOAD THE
TGP FAMILY APP

INSTRUCTIONS: Cross out prideful statements and circle statements that show humility. Then write your own humble statement.



KEY PASSAGE: Mark 6:34

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- Why did Jesus tell parables?
Jesus told parables to teach people about God and His kingdom.

BIBLE STORY:

THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

- Jesus told a parable to teach about humility.
- The Pharisee prayed in a way that tried to glorify himself.
- The tax collector knew he needed God to save him from sin.
- God rejects the proud but gives grace to the humble.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- When do you feel too prideful?
- When do you feel humble?
- Why do you think God wants us to be humble?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

- Check out a book of optical illusions from your local library. Go through it with your kids and talk about how looking holy is not always the same as being holy. Explain what it means to be humble.



**MAIN POINT: GOD REJECTS THE PROUD BUT
GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Tip: Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.