



Seeing Ourselves

Glory to Jesus Christ!

It's easy to judge others. Seeing their mistakes and pointing out their faults can become second nature for us if we're not **careful with our thoughts and words**.

Jesus Christ reminds us that God is the only One to judge, and **we are to repent** of our sins. If we truly want to repent, it means we need to **be honest with ourselves**.

Looking in the Mirror

What if we're comfortable in our way of life, the friends we have, our pet, the belongings and stuff we have in our bedroom, and how we act in school?

Shouldn't we be happy and just live our life? Why should **we want to change**?

Room to Grow

What if our present way of life has **opportunities to become better** Orthodox Christians? Are we living according to Christ's teachings or a version we've created for ourselves justifying our behaviors?

Healthy self reflection gives us a chance to consider **our thoughts and actions**, deciding if our behavior and routines are godly or godless.

Seeing Our True Self

The reality is, there's always **space for improvement**. When we desire to be with God, we can see where we've fallen short, and where we can **draw closer to Christ**.

Repentance is a gift from God allowing us to be self-aware, affirming the progress we're making with God's help, and to honestly see where more time, effort, and **prayer is needed**.

The Joy of Repentance

Our lives as Orthodox Christians aren't supposed to be sad or miserable. Christ came to **bring us new life**! The lives of the saints are examples and proof of God's love. They found **true joy and freedom** through repentance.

God's Mercy

Our repentance leads to the excitement and **radiance of Pascha**. Turning from the darkness of the devil and sin leads us to **a life illumined** by the light of Christ's resurrection.

We are **invited by our Lord** to repent, so we can **live with the joy of Pascha** every day of our life.

Scripture Readings

for the Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee

Epistle: **2 Timothy 3:10-15**

Gospel: **Luke 18:10-14**



Hymns of the Day

Troparion/Apolytikion — Tone 4

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of the Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the Apostles: "Death is overthrown!

Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy."

Kontakion (Resurrection) — Tone 4

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains.

He has shattered the gates of hell, and as master, He has risen on the third day!

Kontakion (Tridion) — Tone 4

Let us flee from the pride of the Pharisee and learn humility from the Publican's tears!

Let us cry to our Savior, have mercy on us, only merciful One!

Parents, Church School Teachers & Youth Directors:
Watch for the ☞ to indicate topics/questions you can use to inspire conversations with youth. Or use the corresponding study guide for this resource.

TWO WAYS OF PRAYING

THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE



The Pharisee stood and prayed to himself saying...

The tax collector was far off, not daring to raise his eyes to heaven, beat his breast saying...

Today's gospel lesson presents two different ways we can approach prayer.

Put a check mark next to the statements which are true, based on what each character says and does. Then, consider how each character speaks *and* acts.

Whose actions and prayer do we want to use as an example for when we are in church or praying to God at home?

THE PUBLICAN

What does he say?

- ☐ is honest about his sins
- ☐ talks bad about others
- ☐ asks God for forgiveness
- ☐ tells God he's good
- ☐ expects God to help him

How does he say it?

- ☐ with humility
- ☐ with anger
- ☐ calmly
- ☐ honestly
- ☐ with a desire to change

What does he do?

- ☐ makes excuses
- ☐ beats his chest in anger
- ☐ lies to God
- ☐ boasts about his deeds
- ☐ wants God to forgive him

How does he do it?

- ☐ asks God for mercy
- ☐ weeps for his sins
- ☐ humbly bows his head
- ☐ kneels before God
- ☐ prays for healing

THE PHARISEE

What does he say?

- ☐ is honest about his sins
- ☐ talks bad about others
- ☐ asks God for forgiveness
- ☐ tells God he's good
- ☐ expects God to help him

How does he say it?

- ☐ with humility
- ☐ with anger
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The Publican is a good bad example for me to follow.

The Pharisee is a good bad example for me to follow.

PRAYER IN YOUR LIFE

The Publican's prayer is just like one we sing and say in Church all the time: "Lord, have mercy!"

We can learn from the Publican that looking at ourselves, and trying to be good is very important.

If we make comments or judge others, we're not doing what God wants.



Directions

- Think of situations in your life where you might be tempted to compare yourself to others. (*below are some ideas, or you can use your own experiences.*)
- Name three scenarios, and under the title, draw a picture showing how you can be kind and loving towards other people, and use prayer in that situation.
- The next time you find yourself in one of these (or other) scenarios, think of praying to Jesus, "Lord, have mercy" helping to acquire a peaceful and loving feeling in a moment which might be difficult. *This prayer can help you focus on God, asking for His help.*

Scenario #1: _____

Scenario #2: _____

Scenario #3: _____

