

INTO THE MARGINS

THE PARABLES OF LUKE

The Pharisee & The Tax Collector

Luke 18:9-14 | Pastor Alf Halvorson

This is the 13th in our Fall Series of the Parables from Luke and also the First Sunday of Advent. There will be communion in all our English Speaking services as well as readings at the beginning of each service to prepare for the Coming of the Christ Child. How can a parable about a Pharisee and a Tax Collector in the Temple two thousand years ago help us this year to prepare for the Prince of Peace & the Savior of the World?

1. *Read Luke 18:9-14.* This is the second of back-to-back parables on prayer from Luke 18. First, what is the two-pronged context that Luke describes in verse 1?

Second, who have you come across in your life that possessed one or both of those qualities? What was it like to be in their presence?
2. Who are the two men who went up to pray, according to verse 10? How do you generally regard each category of person? How did my sermon suggest that the first century hearers would have regarded each type of person? In what way might that influence how the parable plays out?
3. Describe and then discuss the posture and content of the Pharisee's prayer in verses 11-12. Is it really a prayer or a recitation of all his good points?
4. Now look at the Tax Collector's petition in verse 13. Describe and then discuss the posture and content of his prayer. How does it compare or contrast to the previous prayer by the Pharisee?
5. Luke offered the introduction to this parable; and Jesus gives the conclusion in verse 14. What is the outcome for each person? And what is Jesus' rationale at the end for this conclusion? How does it harken back to the exact same phrase Jesus used in His parable in Luke 14:7-11?
6. Where are you more like the Pharisee? Where are you more like the Tax Collector? How might this parable begin to help us discover our need for the babe in the manger who is the Savior of the World? What has He come to save us from and for?



Pastoral Team

Dan Aikins
Assistant Pastor, Alpha Hub Director

Clay Brown
Equipping Pastor

Beth Case
Caring Ministries Pastor

Mauricio Chacón
Spanish Language Pastor

Almir Dias
Portuguese Language Pastor

Alf Halvorson
Senior Pastor

Brett Hurst
Relationships Pastor

Rachel Poysky
Children's Pastor

Dave Steane
Executive Pastor

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MDPC App

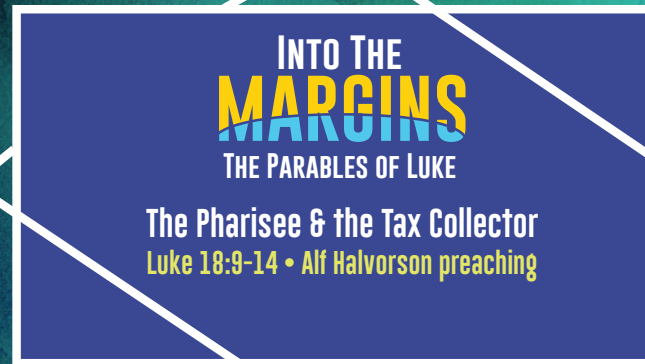
For a quick download link for Apple and Android, text "APP" to 832-742-1832.

MDPC Worship

8:30 AM • Blended • Chapel
9:45 AM • Contemporary • Sanctuary
11:15 AM • Traditional • Sanctuary
11:15 AM • Spanish Language • Chapel
6:00 PM • Portuguese Language • Chapel



Sunday, December 1, 2019



The Pharisee & The Tax Collector

⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

MDPC Food Service Ministries



Treats For Your Feast!

Order by Sunday, December 15:

treats.mdpc.org

- Chocolate Chip Cookies
- Christmas Cookies
- Pumpkin Pie • Pecan Pie
- Cranberry Bread

WEEKLY MINISTRY PARTNER PRAYER FOCUS

Fuller Theological Seminary Houston Fuller Houston was founded to bring the rich programs of Fuller Theological Seminary to Texas. It provides scholarships to seminarians so that these future leaders in the Body of Christ may complete their seminary education without the burden of significant debt. fuller.edu/campuses-online/texas.aspx

Urban Outreach Urban Outreach is a Christian apartment ministry with onsite locations at apartments in Spring Branch, Aldine, Alief, Gulfton, Eastside, and Northside neighborhoods. It offers programs that address spiritual, physical, and social needs to help strengthen and preserve inner-city families. urbanoutreachinc.org

Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo, Egypt Almost all the leaders of the Evangelical Church in Egypt have graduated from the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo (ETSC). The most exciting aspect of the seminary is how it equips students to witness to the Gospel of Jesus in and beyond Egypt amid political and cultural transitions, especially in neighboring Sudan, Iraq, and throughout the Middle East. Pray for the students as they share the love of Jesus. etsc.org

Generosity Matters. On **Sunday, November 3**, we made our 2020 financial pledges to God. If you've not yet pledged, you can still do so online at pledge.mdpc.org, or by using the Covenant Cards found in the pews. Also, please keep year-end giving in mind as we strive to meet our 2019 budget obligations. **Online giving is available at giving.mdpc.org.**

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: HOPE

Call to Worship with Elaine Khalil, and daughter Kathryn

8:30 AM BLENDED & 9:45 AM CONTEMPORARY

PRAISE & WORSHIP • CONFESSION • MESSAGE • COMMUNION • OFFERING

Musicians in these services: Meliza Gómez and Gisele Duque, worship leaders
Asher Pudlo, drums • Daniel Martinez, keys • Daniel Amaya, bass • George Heathco, guitar

11:15 AM TRADITIONAL MUSIC

The Gulf Coast Campanile will be in the Sanctuary Lobby between the 9:45 and 11:15 Services.

PRELUDE	<i>Savior of the Nations, Come</i>	J.S. Bach (1685-1750)
*HYMN OF PRAISE # 2	<i>Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus</i> Verses 1 & 2	HYFRYDOL
OFFERTORY	<i>Of the Father's Love</i>	arr. Barry Talley
THE LORD'S SUPPER	<i>There is No Rose (from A Ceremony of Carols)</i> <i>Gesù Bambino</i>	Benjamin Britten (1910-1976) Pietro Yon (1886-1943)
POSTLUDE	<i>Good Christian Folks, Rejoice</i>	Wilbur Held (1914-2015)
	Women's Chorus • Sanctuary Choir Kathryn White, piano/organ • Charles Hausmann, conductor	

* Please stand if able.

CCLI # 182374

Mission Market

Sundays, December 1, 8, 15, & 22
Chapel and Sanctuary Lobbies



STARTS TODAY!

Give the gift of hope for Christmas this year when you purchase cards in honor of friends and loved ones. The money goes directly to an MDPC ministry partner to fund life-saving surgeries, safe and loving homes for children, life-transforming education, wheelchairs, and so much more. **Shop Mission Market on weekdays in the Front Office.**

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES AT MDPC

Everything Holiday! For a comprehensive look at MDPC's seasonal opportunities, pick up a copy of the latest FOCUS, found on bulletin boards around campus, or visit holiday.mdpc.org.

We need ushers for our Christmas Eve Services (4:00, 5:30, 7:00, & 8:30 PM). Sign up: xmasushers.mdpc.org

Purchase Poinsettias for Christmas

The Christmas Poinsettias for the MDPC Chapel and Sanctuary may be purchased in honor or memory of loved ones. Visit flowers.mdpc.org, or pick up an order envelope at the Front Office or Connection Center. Sign up through December 13 \$8.00 per dedication flowers.mdpc.org

Christmas Caroling on the Ship Channel

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord with the Houston Seafarers. Sing Christmas carols as an outreach to those working on the ships during the holidays and far from home. Saturdays, December 7 & 14 5:00-7:30 PM Register by Dec 4; contact David Wells: wells6652@msn.com or 713-443-4262.

Parents, do you need a day without the kids to work on your Christmas shopping? Register for Parents Day Out. Saturday, December 14 • 9:15 AM-3:00 PM Cost: \$30/child • \$15/sibling • \$55/family Register at pno.mdpc.org

Christmas Mythbusters

Let's discuss some common Christmas "myths." Is Christmas truly a Christian holiday? Do we really believe in a virgin birth? Those and other ideas will be explored by our panel made up equally of Christians and atheists. Open to 20s & 30s. Tuesday, December 10 • 7:00-9:00 PM Kindred, Montrose (2515 Waugh, 77006) \$5 Admission • Free craft beer & food Sarah Stone: ssstone@mdpc.org

Merry & Bright

Join us as art meets music in a celebration of the Christmas season! This art-filled event will feature works from the students of the REACH Art Ministry classes, along with a concert featuring the Contemporary Music team. Artist Bridget Wolk will perform a live art demonstration during the concert. Wednesday, December 18 Art & Appetizers: 6:15-7:00 PM • The Nook Concert: 7:00-8:00 PM • Chapel Dessert Reception: 8:00-9:00 PM • Parlor

Married Life Prep Classes

Sundays: January 5, 12, 19, 26 10:00 AM-12:00 PM • Room 171/172 Couples are invited to join us for this four-week course, taught by Brett and Kellie Hurst of Home Encouragement. Program is open to all engaged and newly married couples, and combines Biblical teaching with the best current marriage research. mlp.mdpc.org

Walking the Mourner's Path

Does it seem like you should be over your grief? Join us for this Christ-centered grief program designed to help those dealing with the loss of a loved one. Trained facilitators guide the group. Thursdays, January 16-March 5 3:30-5:00 PM • Ministry Center 116 Fee: \$30 for materials grief.mdpc.org or contact Beverly Fluke: bfluke@mdpc.org or 713-490-9542

Girls Getaway: Spring Is Coming!

Join us for a time of refreshment, laughter, and fun. Bring a friend, neighbor, mother, or sister, to enjoy a five-star retreat complete with an outdoor movie, teaching time, and free time to walk the property or just relax. All adult women welcome. Friday-Sunday, April 3-5 Jordan Ranch in Schulenburg Register getaway.mdpc.org Contact Amanda Grace Caldwell: acaldwell@mdpc.org or 713-490-0931

COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS AN ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

From the Gospel of Luke
Written by Rev. Dr. Clay Brown

Download at adventdevo.mdpc.org. Paper copies are located around the church.



Women Christmas Coffee

You're Invited!

Join us for coffee, wassail, treats, and a few carols sung by the children of The Yellow School. All women are welcome!

Tuesday, December 3
9:30-11:00 AM • MDPC Parlor

Free childcare available: childcare@mdpc.org

coffee.mdpc.org



KIDS

FAMILY CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Sunday, December 8 | 4:30-6:30 PM

Dinner*, Bingo, and a Christmas Amazing Race! Booths for Face Painting, a Hot Chocolate Bar, Family Dress-Up Contest, a Service Project, and more!

*RSVP for dinner at festival.mdpc.org (\$8/adult • \$4/child)

Please bring a gently-used children's book to donate



Jubilate Deo
by Dan Forrest

MDPC Concert Series
2019-2020

Sunday, December 8
6:00 PM
MDPC Sanctuary

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES AT MDPC

Walking Through Luke

Stand-alone lessons, taught by MDPC theologians, follow the "Transformed by Hope" study. Choose 9:45 or 11:15 AM, Amphitheater. Today: Rev. Dr. Clay Brown, Equipping Pastor, (Luke 9:1-36)

Next week: Luke 9:37-10:24 **The Winsome Witness Challenge** • If the idea of witnessing to others feels daunting but you want to be able to share your faith more comfortably, join us in a Winsome Witness Challenge! Each week, we will suggest simple and practical ideas for building deeper relationships with those in your sphere. **This week, get to know your "third place" neighbors, like the baristas at your local coffee shop, or the guy behind the counter at your gym. Do you routinely visit the same stores? Find out names of your regular service providers this week and write them down so you can greet them by name next time.**

Download the New MDPC App

We've created a powerful new mobile app, with all the features you enjoyed in the former app, PLUS expanded features in the area of event information and easy registration, group communication, personalized notifications, check-in, and so much more! See back page for quick links. Contact Marquita Pointer: mpointer@mdpc.org

"The Big Ten" Bible Study: Taught by pastors Beth Case, Rachel Poysky, and Clay Brown. This "Big Ten" walks us through the Ten Commandments and reveals their continuing insight for today's world. No homework or pre-registration. Tuesdays, 9:00-10:00 AM | MC 122