

TEACHING THE LESSON
PART 4
SALVATION BY GRACE
Luke 18:13-14

Don Krow

“John, would you read Luke 18:13 aloud please?”

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”

“I want you to notice the body language of the tax collector. In the last lesson we looked at the Pharisee. He was very self-righteous, despising others, looking down on them. He said, ‘I fast, I give money to the church, I do all these things.’ He thought he was better than everyone else, but I want you to notice the tax collector; notice his body language first of all, John. What is the very first thing it says about the way he was standing? Would you read the first part of that verse please?”

“And the publican, standing afar off.”

“Where was he standing, John?”

“Well, he was standing afar off”

“That’s right, John, he was standing afar off. In other words, he was so ashamed, he wouldn’t even go all the way up to the church. Yes, he went to the church to pray, but he was so ashamed of the life he lived, and the things he was doing that he held back and stood afar off. What else does it say about his body language; what does it say about his eyes there? Would you read that?”

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven.”

“You’re right. He wouldn’t even lift his eyes to heaven. In other words, he wouldn’t lift his eyes to God. Because he was so ashamed of the things he had done, he just hung his head. Then, John, he did something else. What else does the Bible say there in the next part of that verse?”

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast.”

“That’s right, John. He smote his breast. What does that mean? I’ll just tell you that in the Bible when people smote their breast, many times it was accompanied by tearing their clothes. It was a sign of repentance, of a broken heart, a contrite heart which God will not despise. In other words, this man humbled himself. He was so sorry for what he did that he smote his breast. Then he prayed a prayer. John, what did he pray? Would you read that aloud please?”

“but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.”

“That’s right, John, but I’ll bet he didn’t just say, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’ I’ll bet he said it with excitement—‘GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME, I’M A SINNER.’ And I’ll bet tears rolled down his face. He had a repentant heart that wanted to turn to God and knew he wasn’t at all like the Pharisee. He wasn’t self-righteous; he knew he had no righteousness to offer God, but he hung his head and cried from his heart for mercy. Now, I want to ask you, the next verse says that of these two men, one went down to his house justified—just as if he’d never sinned—in right relationship with God, forgiven, acquitted. One man went down to his house right with God. Which one was it? Would you read that verse?”

“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.”

“Which man was justified—who was in right-standing with God when he went home?”

“Well, it was, uh, it was the tax collector.”

“That’s exactly right. It was the tax collector who was right when he went home, and my question to you, John, is why? Why was he right, and the Pharisee wasn’t in right-standing with God when he left? Why?”

“I guess because he prayed and asked God to forgive him.”

“That’s exactly right, John. Would you read all of verse 14?”

“I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

“He did what, John?”

“He humbled himself.”

“That’s right. He humbled himself. He knew he had no standing before God, no righteousness that would give him acceptance before God. So he cried out for God’s grace, His unmerited favor, His salvation. He humbled himself before God. The Bible says in James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5 that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. You see, the Pharisee was proud and self-righteous, and God resisted him, but the tax collector who knew he was sinful and needed a Savior, humbled himself and cried out for mercy. God accepted him there, justified him just as if he had never sinned, and forgave his sins. John, I’m going to ask you a very, very important question. If from your heart you got down on your knees right now like the publican, looked up to heaven, and said, ‘God be merciful to me, I’m a sinner,’ do you think God would treat you the same way He treated that tax collector?”

“Well, yes.”

“That’s exactly right, John. Did this teaching help you? Would you like us to come back next week and do another lesson with you?”

“Yes it did, I understood some things I didn’t understand before. Yes, I would like for you to come back.”

“Tuesday night at 7:30, shall we come back then?”

“Yes, come back and help me some more.”

This is what we see happening all the time. We’re not pressuring people, we’re not twisting their arms, we’re not using a salesman-type approach, but we’re trying to bring them understanding. The first few lessons are giving a foundational understanding of Jesus Christ and Him crucified—what it means to commit your life to Jesus. So when a person does cry out to God and turn to Him for salvation and the forgiveness of sins, they’re not doing it ignorantly. They’re not doing it because someone has pressured them or twisted their arm, but freely from the heart just as the tax collector did.

Now with your outline, “Additional Information” by Don Krow, take verses 13 and 14 and read the questions asked. After you have studied for awhile, teach that part of the lesson to your trainer. If you don’t have a trainer, turn to another person and teach it to him. Teach the lesson to your children, your spouse, your friends, or maybe to yourself in a mirror. Teach it several times until you’re very familiar with the material.

Take your Bible and mark the parts we’ve talked about. Mark words and phrases such as “the Pharisee prayed with himself, fast, tithes, publican, afar off, wouldn’t lift his eyes, smote his breast.” Talk about the body language of the individuals. There are keys such as the word “justified.” Most people don’t know what that means, so tell them what it means: just as if you’d never sinned, acquitted. Then mark the word “humble” because it’s humble people who receive God’s grace and mercy. That is the teaching on “Salvation by Grace.”

Notice another example you can use at your discretion about the word “Savior.” I’ve used that many times to emphasize what it means to have Jesus save you, and if you want to use it, please do. After you’ve taught this short segment back to your trainer, go back and study the entire material until you can teach the whole lesson. Teach it to some friends and then to your trainer. After you’ve taught it several times, you’ll be able to use it in an actual setting where you are ministering to either a lost person, a backslider, or a new person in Christ who needs this additional information.

Finally, go back to the outline we supplied with the seven points. The way I taught this lesson will show you the principles of teaching. We made the person read aloud. We caused him to see the answer for himself through the Scriptures. We illustrated with examples and stories from Jesus and Acts. We put feeling into the lesson.

Always trust the Spirit of God. Don’t let these lessons become a formula, because if you do, they will become the deadness of the letter. If you will trust God and take this material—the teacher’s guide and the additional information—to help you teach the lessons, if you will meditate, pray, seek the Lord and ask Him to lead you, He will help you teach the lessons. It was Jesus that gave the commission of Matthew 28 and Mark 16 to go and make disciples of the nations, teaching them to observe all things He commanded.

I pray that God will use this method all over the world to win villages, cities, and countries to Jesus Christ. Pray for us here as we prepare these tools. God bless you, and go make disciples of the nations.

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PART 4
SALVATION BY GRACE
Luke 18:13-14
(Trainer Video Lesson)

Read aloud Luke 18:13: “And the publican, STANDING AFAR OFF, would not lift up so much as HIS EYES UNTO HEAVEN, but SMOTE UPON HIS BREAST, saying, GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME A SINNER” (Luke 18:13).

1. Notice the body language of this publican. Where was he standing?

Afar off. In other words, he was so ashamed that he didn't even approach the temple (church).

2. What was his facial expression?

He wouldn't even lift his eyes to heaven.

3. Why was he hitting himself?

Smiting the breast and sometimes tearing your clothes was a sign of humility, repentance, a contrite heart, and a broken spirit, in which God will not despise.

4. What was this tax collector's prayer?

“God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Read aloud Luke 18:14a (The first part of the verse), “I tell you, this man went down to his house JUSTIFIED” (declared right before God, just as if he had never sinned, acquitted of his sin, declared innocent before God).

1. Which one of these two men was declared righteous before God when he went to his home?

The tax collector.

2. Why?

Read aloud Luke 18:14b (The last part of the verse), “For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that HUMBLETH himself shall be exalted.”

The answer is that he humbled himself and cried out for God’s mercy.

3. Did God forgive this tax collector?

Yes.

4. If you got on your knees right now and cried out to God from your heart, “God be merciful to me a sinner!” Would God treat you the same way He treated the tax collector?

Yes! (If the person says “yes!” the lesson has been understood correctly.)

(Here is an additional example to be used at your discretion).

“What is a savior? Suppose you are drowning. There you are out in the middle of the ocean. Suppose someone throws you a book, “THREE EASY LESSONS ON HOW TO SWIM.” Would he be a savior? No! Perhaps he could be called an ‘Educator.’” (Handbook of Personal Evangelism, Dr. A. Ray Stanford, pp. 26-27).

“Now suppose a man got out of his boat, jumped in alongside you, demonstrated various swimming strokes, and showed you just how you ought to do it. Would he be a savior? Of course not! He would merely be an example”

“A Savior is one who takes you into the boat and safely to the shore. Christ is the true Savior. If you do not trust Him to take you all the way to heaven, then you have not trusted Him as your Savior.”