

Am I A Hypocrite?

Upside Down series

by Chris Famisaran

Good morning, everybody. You hear me okay. Day of lively worshipped today that we've had so far. Thank you to our praise team who have learned a new song. Amen. I always appreciate when new music is brought forth. And so please continue. I want to encourage you to find new songs or even better if you can create your own songs and be able to sing here. Let's pray. Father in Heaven Thank You, Lord, for Your goodness for your love endures forever as we now open the Scriptures. Leading guide us help us see and take part in part, what you want us to learn today that we can apply it to our lives and share with others in Jesus name. Amen.

Tony Shea noted happiness guru. Kirstin Grind, shared and wrote a story. Sometime last year. The title of her article in Wall Street Journal was the rise and fall of management visionary behind the Zappos, Tony Shea. He wanted to promote happiness, and world peace. And this guy, he was a very smart business guru. He took over Zappos anybody know who Zappos is? Right? Soon after it was founded. And he led that company and basically where it was on the verge of collapse. He turned it into a very successful online retail enterprise and sold it to Amazon for anybody want to know how much he sold it for \$1.2 billion in 2009. Good amount of money. Now he wrote a book called Delivering Happiness, a path to profits passion and purpose. He became this worldwide phenomenon of a workplace happiness guru. And so business leaders, even government officials and Wall Street analysts, all headed to the Zappos headquarters down in Las Vegas. Every year, they would take tours of all of the fun field offices that Zappos offered, and they wanted to learn from Tony Shea 1000s of individuals. And when he stepped down into 2020 of August, he decided that he wanted to move to Park City, Utah. He wanted people to come intellectuals artists to create this sort of Utopia as Kirsten wrote. And the model behind all this would hopefully be applied to all the cities around the world. But behind all of this was a curtain behind the curtain. Mr. Shea, had struggled for years with anxiety and with alcohol abuse. In

fact, five months before his very own death, he suffered a breakdown of abusing drugs. And he actually also became fascinated by fire. He liked fooling around with it, performing tricks with it. Sometimes candles, were sometimes perched dangerously on his bedspread and Mr. Shea would keep a small fire ring in his bedroom that shot flames into the air without any barrier. Sadly, in November of 2020, at the age of 46, he died from injuries sustained in a house fire that was ruled an accident by local authorities. What did Mr. Shea desire, happiness, we all want happiness, is that fair? We all desire happiness. Yet in seeking his own happiness, he was hiding his unhappiness, trying to deal with it internally.

Now, today we're embarking on a new series called upside down and we're basing it off the Beatitudes found in Matthew chapter 5 and at the beginning of chapter 5, what is it known for? What is it kicking off? Jesus's Sermon on the Mount it's three whole chapters dedicated to a bunch of wisdom, things that we can take and apply to our lives to be more faithful and maybe markers of faithful disciples. Just want to quickly highlight so today we're going to talk about blessing are the poor in spirit. Now when it says blessed, another way you could also translate this is happy are so blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Now, if you were here with our series on Matthew, Kingdom is a very important theme. Is a kingdom that Jesus is talking about; Is it a future kingdom? Or is it now? Okay, we'll let that soak in your mind. There is also blessed are those who are mourn for they will be comforted. Happy are those who mourn Jesus. Do you want us to be sad? Do you want us to be regretful Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart for they will see God blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. And finally, blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Now six out of the eight of the six out of the eight of these Beatitudes I can get on board with but persecution and mourning. Happy are those who are persecuted. Jesus, what are you talking about? And as Jesus is talking, you have to think about what are these first century believers hearing. Everything that Jesus is saying is going counter to what they have been taught, Jesus is literally turning their world upside down. A new way of thinking a new way of looking at faith.

Now today, I want to go to a very important passage, let's go to the book of Luke chapter 18. And to be fair, we have looked at this passage before, but I'm just gonna say it I had a very great conversation, I was able to listen to one of my former teachers, and he broke down this parable in a way that I hadn't thought of before he went so much deeper. And also just to be fair, I I also read a lot from noted theologian and historian, Kenneth Bailey, so I'm taking these two giants and just want to make sure for the record, I'm taking a lot of borrowing, okay. Those of you are probably very, most of you are probably very familiar with this particular parable. Okay, so chapter 18 of Luke verse 9. And it says, to some who were what? Confident in their own righteousness, look down on everyone else? Sense of arrogance here, right. Okay, so Jesus tells them a parable. Two men went up to the temple to pray. One a Pharisee and the other what? Tax Collector, those of you know, our tax collectors held in wide regard? Opposite. Okay. The Pharisee stood by himself, got to remember that, and prayed God, I thank you. I'm not like the other people here. Robbers, evildoers, adulterers, or even like this tax collector, I fast twice week, and I give a 10th of all that I get. And Jesus says, I tell you, this man, rather than the other went home, just but sorry, verse 13. But the tax collector stood a distance he did not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast or his chest and said, God have what? mercy on me and how does he describe himself? a sinner. And I tell you, this man, rather than the other went home what? justified before God for all those who exalt themselves will be humbled and those who humble themselves will be exalted. Two differing contrasts.

Now many at that time, how would they describe a Pharisee? He's modeling what in their eyes, he's modeling faithfulness. I mean, think about it. He fasts twice a week. At a time what was required, how many times were you supposed to fast? Once a year on the Day of Atonement, but Pharisees had to up their game they would fast I believe, two days before and after every major feast and you have three feasts, this dude twice a week, so he's fasting 104 times a year. He also mentioned that he also pays tithe on a 10th of all that he gets or all that he owns, not just based on the grain or the oil that was specified in the Old Testament, but everything that he has, you would think he's a model guy. But yet, where is he standing? He's standing off by himself. And when he prays, is he praying silently?

No, he's praying out loud, so that others may hear him. In fact, what does he say? God, I thank you that I'm not like what? other people.

Now, back when Jesus teaches the disciples to pray, in Matthew, before he even gets to the prayer part, what does he say? Don't pray like these guys standing on the street corners, hoping that they're gonna get the recognition? Because they're not, in fact, praying and secret. Now is Jesus saying you can only pray in secret? No, we're here corporately, right? As a group. So Jesus is not saying you can't pray with others. But the intention of these individuals was to look at self. The other time that you know, maybe what was also going through this Pharisees head was that, well, I'm gonna pray, have you ever heard somebody pray, and maybe there was kind of a thought that you hadn't thought of before? Maybe he was preaching through prayer. So maybe he's thinking if somebody listens, maybe I can help see the better picture, the bigger picture. But everything that he is saying, is based on what himself. He's saying, I'm grateful that I'm not like these other people, these evildoers, adulterers, tax collector, another way of saying it is an extortioner. And he's trying to build himself up, he's trying to say all the things that he has accomplished. And you know, his conceitedness is not the bigger issue here. What is? He's relying on his own strength, his own reliance, his own self, salvation. So he's attacking those around him as well. He's putting them down.

Now, when we look to the tax collector, and by the way, they are not going into the synagogue, they're here at the temple, they're outside. And be mindful as well. Keep in mind, when does this take place? It probably takes place around I think it's mentioned around 3pm. But the tax collector stood at a distance, and he wouldn't even enter the temple area with his head up. He looked down a sign of reverence, of respect of humility. And all he simply says is, God have mercy on me, a sinner and he beats his chest. Now, if you look through the all the Scripture, there are only two instances in all of Scripture that is pointed out to me, which is so interesting this week. There are only two instances at all of Scripture where somebody beats their chest. And it's both found in Luke here, and also in Luke 23. In fact, let's go to just keep a keep a thumbnail here on chapter 18. Let's go over to verse chapter. Sorry, chapter 23. And more specifically, verse. Let's go to verse 44. And I want to read to verse 48. Okay, it was about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stops shining, and the curtain of the temple was torn in half. Jesus called out with a loud voice,

father into your hands, I commit my spirit. And when he said this, he breathed his last in in verse 47, the centurion, who was overseen all with everything that had happened, praise God and said, Surely, this was a righteous man. When all of the people who'd gathered to witness this site, saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. It takes something of the level of as Dr. Kidder said Golgotha for them to beat their chest. This isn't just something that's happenstance. They truly saw the lamb on the cross. They saw their own need for Jesus. In fact, Kenneth Bailey He writes, in the Middle East, generally speaking, only women would beat their chests, but not men, and especially at funerals, sometimes in tragic instances, they would beat their chest. And as it says here, only twice in the instance of only in the Gospel of Luke twice is this ever an indication of they would hit their chest. Essentially, it required a distressing scene. Those around watching Jesus on the cross, it was distressing to the believers, amen. And so even in in this area of the world, there was a man, Hussein who was murdered, he was the founder of this community. And he, those who gathered would they beat their chests, a sign of distress, the tax collector was moved with so much compassion, he beat his chest, because he recognized that salvation only comes from whom? God.

Oftentimes, you would go to the temple at nine o'clock, and three o'clock, and maybe just even no more than maybe a couple of week or maybe a couple of weeks later, as he, as the tax collector knew, they could see the sacrifice is taking place. Could you have known that only a couple of weeks later, that the lamb, the Son of God, would be laying down his life for him. His simple response, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, talking about being poor in spirit. This man exemplified a deep need a humbleness and humility, recognizing that it was God who saved him. That the Pharisee completely opposite, tried to rely on his very own strength, he lacked humbleness, he was conceded.

So the Pharisee was reliant on his own salvation while a tax collector was totally dependent on God, for His salvation. And oftentimes, sadly, how many of us can be proud of times, I can raise my hand. I was proud this week. I was proud driving, and I was humbled. God truly desires to want to be in our lives, and have a part of our lives where God can lead us and have revival in our lives. God wants to make a difference in our lives, and God wants to make a difference in our community. And everywhere we go. What's interesting, though, is a quote I heard this week

was we cannot bring revival. But we can stand in the way. Crazy, right? We need to be desperate for God. We need to be desperate to get to know and understand and seek God's wisdom. Bill pointed out I believe it was last week at Asbury College. There's a group of people who truly desired and I've spent days if not weeks, or are we coming up on months now, Bill? Pretty close to where people are truly seeking and desiring God.

And the tax collector was seeking God with everything. Not just coming up and paying a little Oh Help me Lord. No! His whole life was before him and desperately seeking God.

The question I have on this day. Do you identify more with the Pharisee or the tax collector? We all want to identify more with the tax collector. But the truth is, do we always act like the tax collector? No sometimes in pride and arrogance we can act like the Pharisee. I'm a recovering Pharisee. That's partially a joke, but I'm being serious. I grew up being very critical of others because they didn't know the Bible like I knew the Bible. Anybody else a recovering Pharisee, please don't raise your hands.

I'm being very honest with you, and you know, what was my reward for that? Broken and strained relationships. Because I was so arrogant. God doesn't want us to be arrogant. God wants us to be humble, and to seek God with everything, and to rely on him, just as the tax collector did.

Now, if you go to the next chapter in Luke 19, what's the first story? The key is we're going to talk about the key is later in our small groups. The key is was a tax collector as well. Now one thing to know for those who maybe don't know, tax collectors were often fellow Jews, who sold out to the Romans. So they were kind of one of us, but not, they abandoned us. And oftentimes, the only way to make money was to extort to add on to what was supposed to be the regular tax, because they weren't being paid extra. So people would have this disdain for tax collectors. And oftentimes, tax collectors would be outcasts. And if you look at the Pharisee, he treated him as an outcast with disdain. But yet, it's intentional that Jesus desire is saved, not one person, but everyone. Jesus points out again, or Luke points out that even the key is as well. Jesus goes to the tax collectors house. And by God's grace, the tax collector is reborn. Amen.

Happy are those who are poor in spirit. And I'm not saying here now. Oh, you need to be more full you need because by God's grace, we have victory. Happy are those who have victory in Jesus. May God bless you lead and guide you. And as you begin to study this week, may you be blessed. And if you have not had a chance to sign up or if you haven't gotten your book yet, please come see me. But make sure you sign up with the group and we'll get you connected. Amen. Then let's pray. Oh, and as we go, sorry, the challenge. See God daily in prayer in desire to follow God's leading.

Father in heaven, Lord, this week. Help us to be faithful to you. May we seek you every day in prayer. May we desire to follow your leading, come into our hearts door, knock and pound on the door of our hearts, Lord, that we may let you in. The Lord may we seek you with gratitude with humility, like the tax collector, may we not be vain and conceited, like the Pharisee and may you help us to be faithful ambassadors for you. May Downey church be representative of your love and grace that others may find hope and a chance at new life in Jesus' name.

Everybody said grace and peace everyone