

The Right Prayer

Levi walked toward the Temple, his robe swishing around him. It was nearing time for evening prayer. Certainly he would not fail to be there. Levi was careful to go to every prayer time. In fact, he was careful to follow every part of the Law. After all, he was a good Pharisee, he told himself proudly. His chin lifted higher in the air. Surely no one could find an evil word to say about Levi.

He glanced to the right and left to see who was noticing his arrival at the Temple. To his disappointment, the only people near were the beggar beside the steps and a publican who was also coming to pray.

“Give me money. Have pity on me,” Levi heard the beggar call. He frowned. Beggars were so disgusting. He drew his robe aside so it would not brush the filthy man. And publicans aren’t much better than beggars, he thought as he stepped in front of the other man. No one likes them. They’re just dishonest tax collectors.

Behind Levi, Neri the publican came to the stairs. Unlike the Pharisee, his head was down. He was feeling sad as he thought of his sinful life. Could he come before God, wicked as he was? Then the voice of the beggar reached his ears. “Money, kind Sir. Give me some money.”

Neri hesitated. He was going to God's house to ask for forgiveness. Could he refuse to give to someone else, and expect God to give to him? Reaching into his pouch, he drew out a handful of coins and dropped them before the beggar.

Inside the Temple, Levi chose a spot where everyone would see him. Raising his hands, he began his carefully prepared prayer. He spoke loudly and reminded God of all the good he had done. Noticing through half-shut eyes that the publican had also entered, he thanked God that he was not like that person. When he was sure that he had been seen by those about him, Levi lowered his hands and moved slowly out of the Temple.

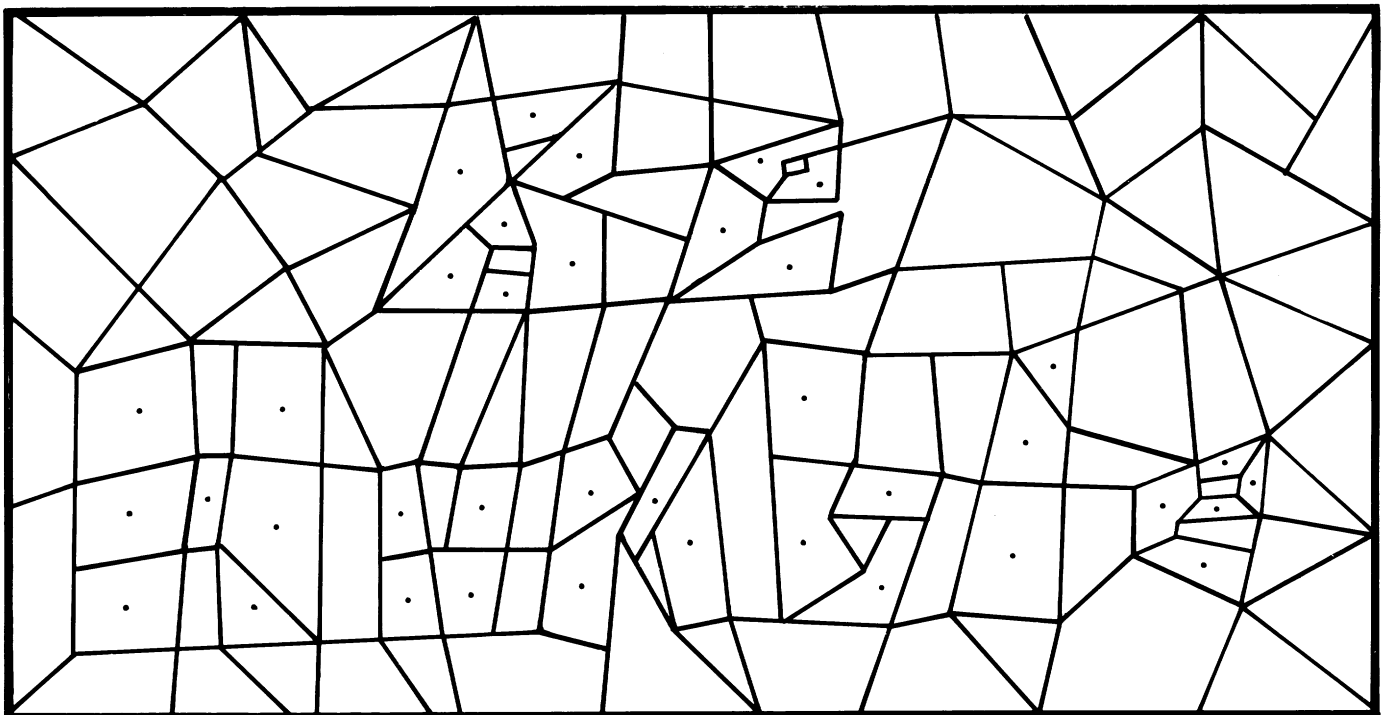
Neri's prayer was different. He found a place where few would notice him. Kneeling down, he cried out to God. "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!" He was sorry for all the wrong he had done. "Forgive me." Neri did not notice when the Pharisee left. He thought only of God.

Suddenly great peace came into his heart. In an instant the sadness went away. He felt new and clean inside. Could it be that God had heard his prayer? Yes, yes! That must be this great joy he was feeling. Humbly he again bowed his head. "Oh, God of Heaven, I thank You!"

Two men went to the Temple that day. Two men left. Whose prayer did God hear?

Color the Spaces

Color all the spaces that have a dot in them.
Find out how you should be when you pray to God.



Preparing for This Bible Lesson

Parent's Corner

Our lesson on prayer will focus on having the correct attitude when we pray to God. By studying the lesson of the Pharisee and the publican, your child will realize that these two men approached God in very different ways. The Pharisee with the proud spirit did not receive the answer he wanted to his prayer, but the humble publican did.

To help your child understand the difference between a humble attitude and a proud attitude, help him make two simple stick puppets. Have him trace around a cup twice to make two circles on a piece of white paper, and draw features on these circles making one a proud face and one a humble face. Then he can cut out the circles and tape each of them onto a popsicle stick.

Use these puppets to illustrate proud behavior and humble behavior. Be prepared with some situations he could use to dramatize these two different attitudes.

Time Together for Family Devotions

Verses to help your child understand this Bible lesson.

SUNDAY: James 4:6

MONDAY: Psalm 10:17

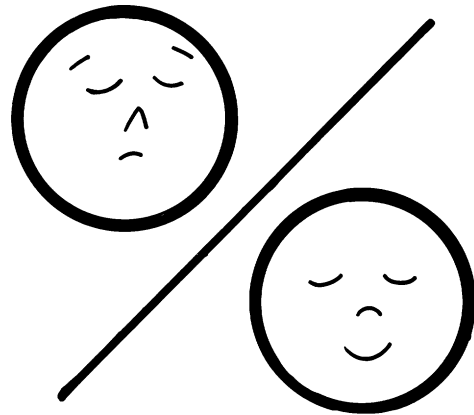
TUESDAY: II Chronicles 7:14

WEDNESDAY: Isaiah 57:15

THURSDAY: Matthew 18:4

FRIDAY: Matthew 23:12

SATURDAY: Psalm 25:18



Bible Text

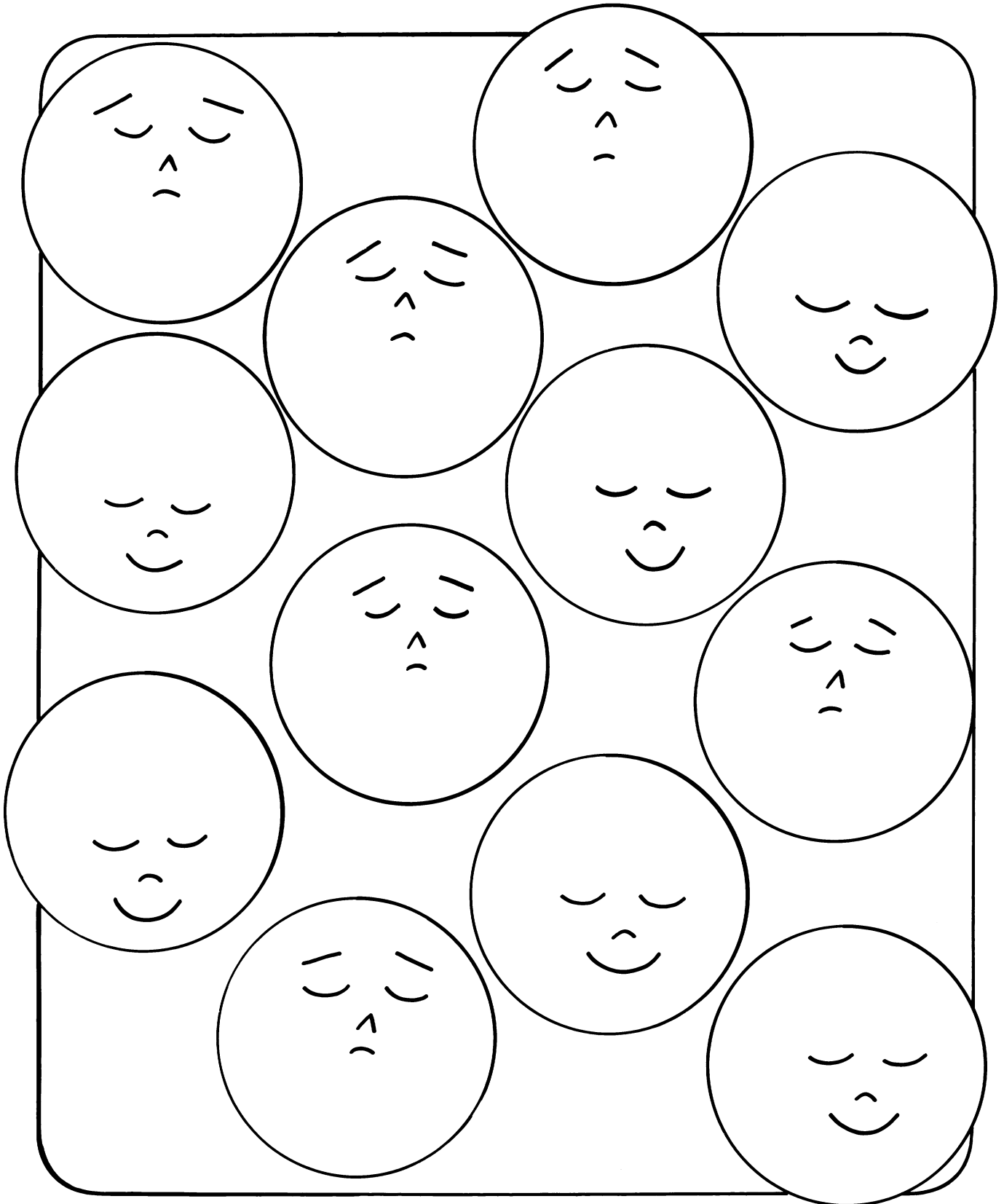
Luke 18:9-14

Memory Verse

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. — James 4:6

Which Prayer Was Heard?

Color the humble-looking faces blue. Color the proud-looking faces orange.



Name: _____