

any comparison we may be tempted to make - not the poor individuals whose lives are full of mistakes.

One shudders as one reads how the Pharisee related to himself the virtues he saw in himself. Is not this recitation of his a perfect example of pure and simple boastfulness? Is this the way of holiness? "I fast twice a week", he said haughtily, "I pay tithes of all that I possess", and all the rest. Let us not fail to keep well in mind that his entire spiel was made and said AS A PRAYER! With never a word about his failures and sins, boastfulness alone was in the mind of this man, and how noticeable is his own concocted standard of excellence as he "prayerfully" compared his excellence to the inferiority of the "rest of men".

At this point it simply has to be further noted that in the words of the Pharisee nothing can be found of petition. His self-sufficiency oozes out of his every word. There is nothing in his words to indicate his realization of his need of Divine consideration. There is nothing to indicate that he felt the slightest dependence upon God. This added dimension is as serious as his boastfulness. He went all the way to the front of the Temple - most likely in the view of other worshippers - and there he bore public testimony to his good works. He gave no hint of any failures or shortcomings on his part, nor did he seem to have any concern about the usual temptations that besiege even the righteous. He was so secure in his own abilities, and his confidence in himself was so unlimited, that expressions concerning his personal unworthiness would have been, for him, unseemly and inappropriate. He brashly flaunted a strength that is not found in weak human nature. Therefore, secure in his belief that he was, indeed, "not like the rest of men", and with unlimited confidence in himself, he began his thanksgiving to God - "O God, I give Thee thanks", which was simple hypocrisy and was nothing more than an open indulgence in self-glorification.

The scene now changes and we go to the dark recesses of the Temple, hardly within the main entrance itself, and there we find the publican. He was a man full of shame and felt himself unworthy to go any further into the Temple. He would not so much as lift up his eyes toward Heaven, and as he was striking his breast in sorrow and confusion, he cried: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner!" That was all he said. How different was the frame of mind of this man. How different, as a result of his disposition as opposed to the disposition of the Pharisee, was the verdict he received from the Father in Heaven. How clearly do these two men bring into bold relief the awesome standards of the judgments of God! How clearly different is the evaluation of God when compared to the evaluation of man. The Pharisee was a public figure and was given public admiration. The publican was a public figure also, but because of his position was given public hatred and condemnation. And it all came to