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Weekly Letter – 26 October 2025

Luke 18.9-14

Another parable where you have to wait for the punch line, at the end!

There's a few of us, which includes Simon, who are reading St Augustine's 'Confessions'. One of the many remarkable qualities of this autobiography by St Augustine of Hippo, is how this wonderfully brilliant man reveals in such a simple and genuine way that he is at times an utterly miserable follower of Christ.

Being truthful about ourselves is far from easy, in part because we are continually encouraged to improve our 'inner confidence' and to be 'upbeat'. It's also not easy as our culture promotes various forms of nationalism, i.e. a promotion of your own cause, and you sense everywhere subtle and rather artful forms of narcissism. I was in Florence with Carol and my mum and we were looking at Michelangelo's David – in all his magnificence. Everybody was being wowed by this huge figure. But, had we all forgotten that David was a young lad, who placed all his faith in God, and not in himself. But there stands this vast, magnificent and supreme figure, muscles bulging out, looking the 'ideal man'. He is the original superman, in complete control who everybody admires (the absolute opposite of what he really was!) This love of oneself is not only 'your false self', but also utterly destructive, for narcissists simply live in their own illusions, which as I'm sure we all know, separates you from real life, and therefore God.

As we know Jesus is not exactly into puffing us up in a false way, because he knows, that even those close to him do so easily become somewhat narcissistic. (Do look at Matthew 20.28 or Luke 22.24).

The punch line in this parable reveals the way forward, seek humility, for humility is the means to find the courage to confront the truth about life. Those who love the truth about themselves never fear the future or puff themselves up to make themselves 'feel' good.

Stephen

Sunday Morning Worship in Christ Well, and on Zoom at 10.30 am will be led by Rev Linda Woollacott
Bible Readings: Ecclesiastes 11.1-12.4: Luke 18.9-14.

Cycle of Prayer in the Region – we will pray for Uniting Church, Sketty



FAIR TRADE GOODS WILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER SERVICE.

Fair Trade biscuits will be served with the coffee and tea.

SATURDAY, 25th OCTOBER - ECO COFFEE MORNING IN CHRIST WELL – 10.30am-12 noon.

**Kate McCabe will be here to share ideas for Manselton Park,
and discussions will be held about Penlan Racecourse.**

THANKS

Harvest Christian Aid collection amounted to £1,156. Thank you to all who donated to this appeal.

LOOKING UP AND DOWN

(Lectionary Readings: Joel 2.22-32: Psalm 65: Jeremiah 14.7-10, 19-22: Psalm 84.1-7; 2 Timothy 4.6-8, 16-18; **Luke 18.9-14**)

We see the Pharisee, Jesus, a respectable man, but here in his prayers, gloating rather than Godly, looking down upon others, full of his own importance, perhaps believing he had done everything required to be right with God, and holy in heart.

Then we glimpse the tax collector, unable to look towards Heaven, humbly aware his living is wrong and asking your forgiveness.

The Pharisee and Tax Collector are worlds apart, approaching prayer so very differently.

And we find ourselves thinking of our own faith when you invite us to pray, to share our concerns, our feelings, our moments of joy or times of deep sorrow.

In prayer, something within our soul reaches out to you drawing us closer in peace, hope, and love.

Give us compassion, never to judge nor compare ourselves to others.

May our prayers be a blessing, something beautiful for you, bringing your love to earth, and earth to heaven.

Let our words uttered or unspoken, in stillness, or rush of living, be prayers always from our hearts.

Hazel McCorrisken

(URC Prayer Handbook 2025)

