

Ron Armstrong • April 27 & 28, 2019

Flip the Script: I Don't Have to Always ...

Luke 18:9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: **10** “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. **11** The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. **12** I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

13 “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

14 “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Joshua 24:15 But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Three suggested resources:

Switch On Your Brain (2013) by Dr. Caroline Leaf

Flourish (2011) by Dr. Martin E. P. Seligman

Emotional Agility (2013) by Dr. Susan David

A. Predictable reactions are not required reactions.

1. From an early age, people develop pretty predictable reactions.
 - a. This is natural and forms how we think about and describe PERSONALITY.
 - b. These “predictable reactions” are often helpful shortcuts in productive relationships.
 - c. What about the destructive ones?

2. Clearly, Jesus is painting the Pharisee in a negative light and the tax collector in a positive one. Could the Pharisee be DIFFERENT?
3. Don't confuse “can't change” with “tough to change.” Jesus' teaching PRESUPPOSES the ability to choose, grow, and change.
4. Choosing/decision-making is your SUPERPOWER. It is the biggest influencer in your life.

- a. You can't control the events and circumstances of life, but you can CHOOSE your reaction to them.
- b. Your reactions will even determine whether you live with stress level 1, 2, or 3.

B. Let's practice our choosing/deciding superpower.

1. Seligman (Flourish) pointed out that monism almost always fails and that “well-being” comes from a COMBINATION of things.
2. Seligman identifies 5 components of a feeling of “well-being.” (I think the Bible does too.)
 - a. Positive feelings: Having some PLEASANT choices or things you do just because you enjoy them.
 - b. Engagement: Something that uses your abilities and can put you in “FLOW.”
 - c. Relationships: Developing close, positive relationships.
 - d. Meaning/PURPOSE: Belonging to or doing something bigger than yourself.
 - e. Accomplishment: ENOUGH so that you feel good about using what God has entrusted to you.
3. Superpower practice: Choose to change the MISSING pieces.