



## 2010 Lenten Meditations

Written by Parishioners of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral / Compiled by The Daughters of the Holy Cross

Masthead courtesy of Susan Craig

### **Ash Wednesday, February 17** **Luke 18:9-14**

Pharisees in the time of Jesus were widely respected in religious circles. They endeavored to serve God, obey God's law and encouraged others to do the same. Tax collectors were considered the scum of society, thieves, and though Jewish by birth, were grouped in with gentiles as heathens.

The fact that the tax collector went home justified before God may be counterintuitive based on what we know of Pharisees and tax collectors. It begins to make sense when we acknowledge that Christ is our only example and that righteousness comes from God who desires a personal relationship with us.

It is easy to compare ourselves to other humans and to feel good about where we are in our faith. However, our standard is not others but Christ. In 1 Peter 2:21-22a, we are reminded that the example that we should follow is Christ who suffered for our sins even though He committed no sin Himself.

Ephesians 2:8-9 states "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works so that no one can boast." Our salvation does not come through our actions, which can never bring us righteousness. Only through Christ's sacrifice and God's grace can we be purified enough to approach the Father and share a relationship with Him.

During this season of Lent, ask yourself if you are living by worldly standards or by God's standards. God calls us to attend church, tithe, and read His word, but none of these actions can replace a relationship with Him. Seek first HIS kingdom and HIS righteousness, and God's grace and mercy will be at the forefront of your hearts and minds during this season of Lent.

#### **Jonathan Vipperman**

*Jonathan is married to Lisa Vipperman. They have 3 daughters, Cameron (7), Grace (5), and Louise (2). They attend the Growing in Christ class and enjoy working with the Trinity children's programs.*