

GOSPEL PEARLS

Don't label

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Jesus spoke the following parable to some people who prided themselves on being virtuous and despised everyone else: 'Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a Pharisee, the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood there and said this prayer to himself, "I thank you, God, that I am not grasping, unjust, adulterous like the rest of mankind, and particularly that I am not like this tax collector here. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes on all I get." The tax collector stood some distance away, not daring even to raise his eyes to heaven; but he beat his breast and said, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." This man, I tell you, went home again at rights with God; the other did not. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the man who humbles himself will be exalted.' (Luke 18, 9-14)

Those who are truly grateful to God for the gifts that have received do not use them to create a barrier between themselves and their neighbor, putting themselves in the Lord's place by judging others. We might be able to evaluate the objective behaviors that are wrong, but not the conscience of those who did them. In fact, we can never fully know the factors that can alleviate the faults of others. For this reason, the true disciple of Jesus does not label others, risking to block a path of conversion, but rather he tries to encourage them with charity.