

# The Pharisee and the Tax Collector Object Lesson

(this idea is from [Creative Flame Blogspot](#))

## You will need:

A beautifully wrapped box, a smaller, torn and battered box, a gold bag filled with enough sweets to overflow out of the smaller box.

## Story Illustration

The beautifully wrapped box is like the Pharisee. He has a lot of things to tell God and others about how good he is. All his good works are on show for everyone to see. He wants everyone to notice him for his goodness.

The small, battered, and torn box is like the tax collector. People really don't like him. They think, like this box, that he is like rubbish. The tears symbolise the things he has done that probably aren't that good.

Put the small box at a distance from the wrapped box (make sure that the wrapped box has centre stage!)

When the Pharisee comes to the temple he tells God all the good things he is doing. We could say that he talks AT God.

The tax collector stands far off because he knows he isn't a good person but he ASKS God for his mercy (his love and forgiveness).

Which one of these people goes home right with God?

The answer is the tax collector, which seems quite unfair! He understands something, though, that the Pharisee doesn't seem to...

None of us, no matter how hard we try, will ever be perfect. We'll always end up doing something wrong that keeps us apart from God. If we come to Him, though, and ask God for his forgiveness, we can be made right with Him. Only God can do this for us! God has so much love and forgiveness for us (show gold bag), but we must be open enough to ask for it.

The Pharisee thinks his Good deeds will get him to heaven, but good deeds are not enough. Only God can make us right with Him. It's like a gift that only He can give. Try to pour sweets from the bag into the box. Because the lid is on the box, nothing will get inside! The Pharisee is not open to God. He trusts in himself alone to get into heaven and this will never work.



## Unit 2 Week 1

The tax collector, on the other hand comes to God and opens himself up, asking for God's mercy. Because he knows he needs God to make himself right, the tax collector is open to receiving God's gift of forgiveness (pour the sweets into the open box and let them flow out).

Invite the children to take a sweet from the open box as a reminder of the story.

