BEING REAL

It's hard to love someone you do not know. And it is hard to get to know someone who wears a mask. In this Bible passage, you will meet two people who pray in different ways. Remember that the Pharisee was a very religious person and the tax collector was probably the most hated person in the community.

THE PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX COLLECTOR

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men-robbers, evildoers, adulterers-or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' 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.'

"1 tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. "Luke 18:9-14

1. How do you feel about the Pharisee in this story? D I feel sorry for him.
D I feel a little angry. D I feel like punching him in the nose.
D I have the same attitude that he does.

2. How do you feel about the tax collector?
D I think he was being just as much of a phony as the Pharisee. D At least he's honest.
D I can relate to this guy. D After cheating people, he has some nerve!

3. How much of your own problems could you share with each of these people? Put an "X" on the line to indicate your response-somewhere in between the two extremes.
WITH THE PHARISEE, I COULD SHARE: Everything Nothing
WITH THE TAX COLLECTOR, I COULD SHARE: Everything Nothing

4. For the person with whom you could share the most, why do you feel this way?
0 He is more spiritual. 0 He is more honest. 0 He is more like me.
0 He is more like the person I want to be. 0 He is more likely to understand me.

5. If the tax collector in the parable came to your group or church, how would he be received?
0 with open arms 0 with suspicion 0 with disgust 0 like one of us

6. If the Pharisee in the parable showed up at your group or church, how would he be received?
0 with open arms 0 with raised eyebrows0 with a few snickers
0 with cold stares 0 with sympathy

7. How much of the Pharisee and the tax collector do you see in yourself? Put a percentage for each-and the two must add up to 100%. I see myself as__% Pharisee and__% tax collector.

8. Why do you think so many people confess their sins in bars rather than in churches?

9. With whom do you "get real" and share your problems? D my spouse D my parent(s)
D my boyfriend or girlfriend D this group D another family member
D a close friend D my pastor or small group leader 0 no one D other:

10. How do you feel about sharing personal matters in your life with this group?
D uncomfortable-I don't talk about these things.
D scared-I don't know if I want to talk about these things. D okay-I can handle it.
D thrilled-I love this stuff! D I'm not sure.

11. How would you like this group to remember you in prayer this week