

The Kingdom And Little Children

Matthew 18:1-14

Intro:

- A. **The temple-tax collectors questioned Peter about Jesus paying the tax. 17:24**
 - 1. Peter answered in the affirmative.
 - 2. He then went to find the answer.

 - B. **Jesus intervened before Peter could get to the house. 17:25,26**
 - 1. Jesus used an illustration to show His sonship to the Father and that He had no obligation to pay the tax.
 - 2. In order to prevent offence to the tax collectors He instructs Peter to catch a fish and take a coin from its mouth and pay the tax.

 - C. **The verses we seek to understand are directly connected to the above event.**
 - 1. "At the same time..." **18:1a**
 - 2. "On the same occasion..." - TCNT
- I. Men Must Become As Little Children.
- A. **The question of the disciples.**
 - 1. "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heave?"
v.1b
 - 2. "Who ranks higher than others..." - Wey

 - B. **The answer of Jesus.**
 - 1. We are constantly admonishing our children to grow up and behave like an adult. Jesus pointed these grown-ups in a different direction.
 - 2. called = προσκαλεω = "to call to one's self."
V.2
 - 3. midst = μεσος = "middle"
 - 4. set = ιστημι = "to stand"
 - 5. greatest = μεγα = number, cost, estimation

 - C. **"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." V.3**

1. except = for εἰαν = "in case," "if perhaps."
μη = not = followed by the Aorist subjunctive, which may be rendered by the future perfect.
2. converted = στέρφω = "to turn in mind," "to be changed," "to become as it were another man"
3. little children = παιδιον = "little or young child."
4. become = γίνομαι = "denoting origin," "to come into being," "to be born", (followed by εἰς = denotes equivalence, "to become for or as")
5. "...you will never get into the kingdom of heave" - Gspd

D. **"Whoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." V.4**

1. humble = ταπεινω = "to depress", lower; "to bring low", "to bow down"
2. This must be done by one's self. It does not mean when it is done by an outside force, even almighty God. God can humiliate us. A man may humiliate us. Only we can humble ourselves.
3. This is not new to the Jewish ear. This has to do with positioning one's self for service. If one is to be used of God he must first weaken himself. When one weakens himself then whatever is done, God can be given the honor.
 - a. God weakened Israel before He saved her from Egypt.
 - b. Gideon could not understand God weakening Israel and calling him since he was a nobody. Judges 6:11-16. God diminished the number of Gideon's men from 32,000 to 300 men. God humbled them and put them in an impossible situation for one reason.
7:2
 - c. Jesus humbled Himself that He might be exalted, Isaiah 53:8-12.
 - d. Jesus taught this as a kingdom principle. Matthew 23:11-12. Jesus had taught these disciples that they could not love things or others and be used of Him. Matthew 10:37-38. Now He teaches them that hey

cannot love themselves. Paul learned the lesson well. Philippians 3:3-10. (feelings of self-sufficiency and adequacy), these aren't faith. Faith isn't believing that we can do something but that God will keep His word and do something or nothing, whichever pleases Him!

4. as this little child = Jesus has chosen a child and stood the child in the center of the disciples. The lesson does not stem from the character or attitude but it comes from its weakness, its helplessness, its inability to help its self, its powerlessness, its lack of standing in culture, its inability to defend itself. This little child was everything the world despises. Weakness, poverty, all of these things contribute to failure, not success. Jesus plans to reduce these disciples to the position of a little child and then tell them to go into all the world!
5. "the same is greatest"!
6. Where? In the kingdom of heaven!

II. The Disciples And Little Children.

A. **Those that receive them. V.5**

1. receive = δεχομαι = "to take to one's self what is presented or brought by another," "to accept or embrace," "receive hospitably," "admit," "approve," "allow."
2. The disciples did not learn the lesson Jesus taught them. Chapter 19:13-15
 - a. Suffer = αφημι = "let pass," "permit," "to send forth."
 - b. Forbid = κωλυω = "to cut off," "to weaken," "restrain."
3. The children were not to be excluded or hindered or restrained in being a part of the audience of Jesus. They were not to be shoved back deeper in the crowd if they manifested an interest in Him. This was addressed to the disciples, not the Pharisees who would have forbidden any child to come

close to Him for they believed Him to be a blasphemer.

4. rebuked = (the disciples) επιτιμαω = "to find fault with," "admonish strongly."
5. Jesus identified Himself with the children. Those who took a child to themselves, (to teach and train in His teachings) were receiving Him. They were doing it to Jesus. When His disciples respond to the weak, the meek, the lowly, the poor, they are responding to Jesus.
6. When any church creates a special place for children and excludes them from worship or from learning the Word of God, they do wrong. A certain church had a visual presentation of hell and then forbade all under 10 years old from attending. This is exactly what Jesus condemned. If all cant' come, it shouldn't be done!

B. Those who offend them. V.6

1. offend = σκανδαλιζω = "to cause to stumble or to fall" In these verses the word means to cause one's faith or belief to weaken. The "little ones" believed in Jesus. To hinder this belief or to cause them to revert to doubt or unbelief is to bring eternal destruction on one's self.
2. little = μικρος = small
3. believe = πιστευω = "be persuaded," "to trust," "to rely upon" (with eis unto or into, implying direction towards the object of faith, to give one's self up to)
4. better = συμφερω = "to bear or bring together," "to be profitable to."

C. The world will offend them. V.7

1. The world system is at war with God. They (it) makes every attempt to turn children away from Him.
2. woe = An exclamation of horror, shock, and dread. It speaks of coming judgment. Satan's work, like God's work, is done by a man.

3. These offences are inevitable. We will never be able to isolate our children. We can strengthen them.

D. **The warning of Jesus.**

1. "If your hand or your foot is a hindrance to your faith; cut it off and throw it away" - Phi vs.8-9
2. "thine eye...pluck it out and throw it away." - Tay v.9
3. "...it is better..."
4. "...to be cast into everlasting fire..."

III. A Specific Warning To The Disciples.

A. **"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones" v.10**

1. take heed = ὁραω = "to see," "look to"
2. despise = καταφρονεω = "to think down upon or against anyone;" "to think slightly of" "not to be concerned about."
3. See to it that you do not think that these little ones are of little value...

B. **"...for I say to you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."**

1. The messengers of children have uninterrupted access to the very face of God.
2. This proves their value to Him.
3. All of us know that a child could never come into this world and live one day without the divine intervention and protection of God.

IV. Little Children And Jesus In The Temple.

A. **Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem. Matthew 21:1-11**

1. It was a fulfillment of prophecy.
2. "Hosanna to the Son of David"
3. "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."

B. **Jesus went into the temple of God. 21:12-17**

1. He cast out all them that sold and bought.
2. He overthrew the money changers. Tables.

3. He overthrew the seats of those who sold doves.

C. **Jesus specified the reason for His anger.**

1. The Temple was built for prayer. **V.13**
2. The money changers and sellers of dove had made it a den of thieves.
3. They had perverted the work of God.

D. **Jesus did many wonderful things. V.14-15**

1. He gave sight to the blind.
2. The lame walked.

E. **The children praised Jesus**

1. They cried out in the temple.
2. "Hosanna to the son of David."

F. **The sore displeasure of the religionists.**

1. "Hearest thou what these say"? **v.16a**
2. They criticized Jesus.
3. These children saw the anger of Jesus. They were eyewitnesses to violence.
4. Should they have had a special service?

G. **God had planned for the children to be there.**

1. "yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou has perfected praise. **V.16b.**
2. babes = νηπιος = "an infant," "a minor"
3. sucklings = θηλαζω = "to suck at the breast"
4. From Psalms 8:2

V. The Will Of God And Little Children.

A. **Jesus came to save them.**

1. Some say this is inserted later. **V.11**
2. If so, it is the truth.
3. It may show how people become so emotional and concerned about an issue they are willing to do anything to get something done.

B. **The illustration of Jesus.**

1. This would have been a common occurrence. **V.12-13**
2. Luke 15:1-7

C. **"Even so it is not the will of your Father which**

is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

1. will = θελημα = "wish," "desire," "active volition."
2. perish = απολλυμι = "to be finally ruined and destroyed."

VI. What Should We Do?

A. **As a parent.**

1. Live a consistent Christian life.
2. Teach Christian truth by word and deed.
3. Teach and tell the truth.
4. Don't leave your children on the side line.

B. **As a church.**

1. Teach them the Bible.
2. Teach the Bible as God's word.
3. Do not change for their benefit.
4. Have church according to the Bible.
5. Include the children.
6. Do not build a special place for the.
7. There was one Temple.
8. Let them participate.

