

“Like a Little Child”

Matthew 18:1-6, 10

BECOMING LIKE CHILDREN. v.1-4

- 1. The question the disciples asked. v.1** → Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?
 - ‘Kingdom’ is a major theme in Matthew. ‘kingdom of heaven’ 31 x’s in Matt.; ‘kingdom of God’ in the others
 - “Repent, for the kingdom is at hand.” John the Baptizer (3:2); Jesus (4:17); the disciples (10:7)
- 2. Jesus answered their question with a child. v.2-3**
 - He called a child to himself and placed him in front of them. **v.2**
 - He used childlikeness as the pre-requisite to enter the kingdom. **v.3**
 - turn = “unless you turn around so as to go in an opposite direction”
 - become like children = dependent, needy, willingly accept what they cannot provide for themselves
- 3. Humility is greatness in the kingdom heaven. v.4**
 - ‘Whoever humbles himself like this child...’
 - You must not seek to be great. You must become child-like. Ref. Matt. 20:25-28; Psalm 131

WELCOMING CHILDREN. v.5-6

- 1. Receiving a child. v.5**
 - Receive = to welcome, to receive as a guest
 - Whoever does this in Jesus’ name... welcomes and receives Jesus.
- 2. Causing a child to stumble, sin. v.6, 10**
 - The offense. Lit. to intentionally put out your foot to trip a young child; to offend
 - The punishment.

SOME OF THE CORE NEEDS OF EVERY CHILD

- What does every child need? What are the basic necessities of life for growing children to maturity?
- 1. Basic care and nurture.**
 - Provision. Healthy food to eat. Proper rest. Medical and dental care.
 - 2. A safe and secure environment – home is a place to “settle” oneself. ‘return to joy/contentment’**
 - 3. Relational connection and belonging.**
 - Attachment (connecting) and attunement (checking in with them).
 - 4. To learn boundaries. ‘right and wrong’**
 - “Your home is safe. The world is not.”
→ Children with boundaries are generally happy and contented children.
 - Discipline. General (Make your bed every day.) and special (When they don’t make their bed.) Heb 12:6-11
→ I love you, but you cannot have your own way.
 - 5. Regular reinforcement of personal worth**
 - Repeated messages that the child is valued, unique, and special.
 - 6. Encouragement to grow and develop personal gifts and talents.**
 - Try new things; see what you enjoy/don’t enjoy, what you’re good at/not good at.
 - 7. A pathway to healthy sexuality.**
 - What does it mean to be a man? A woman? How are they to relate? Male headship in the home.
 - The reality of living in a pornographic culture.
 - 8. A healthy pathway to fellowship with God.**
 - Modeling. Teaching. Repairing.

1 Corinthians 13:11: When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.