

## THE CHILD IN OUR MIDST

TEXT: Matt. 18:1-6 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. This incident might go by without much notice.
- B. Yet it is quite a revealing text.
- C. We all know how children can be.
  - 1. At times they can be very trying.
  - 2. Yet most of the time they are very lovely beings.
- D. What characteristics of children can we try to learn from?

### BODY;

#### I. CHILD IS MOST HUMBLE OF ALL PERSONS.

- A. The disciples needed this lesson and so do we.
- B. Humility is acquired it is not imposed on us.
  - 1. Matt. 18:4 Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
  - 2. James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.
  - 3. 1 Pet. 5:5-6 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,
  - 4. Rom. 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as

God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

C. Jesus "humbled Himself"--Phil.2:3-11 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## II. CHILD IS INNOCENT- Text Shows This.

A. Doctrine of Adamic sin is false.

B. Must yield to sin to be a sinner- Rom. 6:16-17 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

C. Notice the formula for sin- James 1:13-16 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

## III. CHILD IS GRATEFUL.

A. They soon learn to say thank you.

B. Disciples were exhorted to be thankful- Col. 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

C. Notice:

1. Col. 1:12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

2. 1 Thess. 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

D. A Christian has much to be thankful for.

#### IV. A CHILD IS FORGIVING.

A. The personification of the forgiving nature.

B. Can't stay peeved at playmate very long.

C. If we don't forgive, God won't.

1. Mk. 11:25-26 And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.

2. Matt. 18:35 So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.

D. Notice:

1. Lk. 17:4 And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

2. As Christ.

a. Eph. 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

b. Col. 3:13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.

#### V. CHILD IS TEACHABLE.

A. Fathers have a duty here- Eph. 6:4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

B. The Disciples were teachable- Lk. 11:1 Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

C. Blind man- Jn. 9:36 He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"

D. Paul- Acts 9:6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

E. Jailer- Acts 16:30 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be

saved?"

## VI. CHILD IS INQUISITIVE.

A. Must be answered- Ex. 12:26-28 "And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?' that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the Lord, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.' So the people bowed their heads and worshiped. Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

B. Parents should be able to answer.

C. Disciples were very inquisitive: In Mark only:

1. 4:10 But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable.

2. 7:17 When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable.

3. 9:11 And they asked Him, saying, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?"

4. 9:28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?"

5. 10:10 In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter.

6. 13:4 "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign when all these things will be fulfilled?"

## VII. CHILD IS AN IMITATOR.

A. Little girls like to wear make-up and mom's shoes and clothing.

B. Boys drag out dad's tools and work on toys.

1. Heb. 13:7 Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.

2. 1 Cor. 4:16 Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

3. Phil. 4:9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

## CONCLUSION:

A. Read text again: Matt. 18:1-6 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

B. Why not come to Jesus in child like faith today.