

Be Like Little Children

Matthew 18:1-5

Becoming As Little Children

- “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” ***Matt 18:1-5***
 - You must first be converted. **vs 3**
 - *The Greek word translated as “converted” is strephō. The basic meaning is to “to turn.”*
 - *Consider also Acts 3:19 – epistrephō – “turning, returning”*
 - *Consider James 5:19-20 – turns - epistrephō*

Becoming As Little Children

- “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” ***Matt 18:1-5***
 - You must first be converted. **vs 3**
 - *To truly be the “greatest in the kingdom of heaven,” a person must turn away from their sinful life and humble themselves before the Lord.*

Becoming As Little Children

- “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” ***Matt 18:1-5***
 - Jesus told them to “become as little children.”
vs 3
 - *Some attributes of childhood are not desirable for Christians. Cf. Eph 4:14*
 - *Immaturity.*
 - *Being gullible and easy to be led away.*
 - *Lacking in understanding.*

Becoming As Little Children

- “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” ***Matt 18:1-5***
 - “...whoever humbles himself as this little child is greatest...” ***vs 4; cf. Luke 18:16-17***
 - *The humility of the child can be seen in...*
 - *Their utter dependence upon their parents.*
 - *Their trust in their parents.*
 - *Their willingness to learn from their parents.*

Becoming As Little Children

- “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” ***Matt 18:1-5***
 - “...whoever humbles himself as this little child is greatest...” ***vs 4***
 - *Christians are children of God. Rom 8:12-17*

Becoming As Little Children

- “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” **Matt 18:1-5**
 - “...whoever humbles himself as this little child is greatest...” **vs 4**
 - *Christians possess the same childlike humility.*
 - *We recognize our utter dependence upon God.*
 - *Our trust in God is complete and unwavering.*
 - *We are eager to learn from our Father. **John 6:44-45; 1 Pet 2:1-2; Psa 119:97***

Becoming As Little Children

- “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” ***Matt 18:1-5***
 - The “little child” or children represent those who are converted and follow Jesus. **vs 5**
 - *When a person is converted to Jesus Christ, he is a babe in Christ.*
 - *The new convert needs love, teaching, correction, understanding, patience, etc.*
 - *We are to receive this new convert and help them to grow.*

Protecting the Converted

- Jesus warns against causing one of these “little ones” to sin. ***Matt 18:6-7***
 - “...whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to sin...” ***vs 6***
 - *Greek word skandalizō “signifies ‘to put a snare or stumblingblock in the way’” (Vine’s).*
 - *To cause a believer to stumble (to sin) is a terrible act upon one of God’s children.*
 - *“...it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” vs 6*

Protecting the Converted

- Jesus warns against causing one of these “little ones” to sin. ***Matt 18:6-7***
 - Those who believe in Jesus will face “offenses” (stumbling blocks). ***vs 7; Cf. Luke 17:1***
 - Woe to the person through whom the offenses come.
 - *The apostle Paul warned against putting a stumbling block in front of your brother.*
Rom 14:13; 1 Cor 8:9-13

Protecting the Converted

- The need to protect one's own soul.
Matt 18:8-9
- What is more important than your soul? ***Matt 16:26***
- We must remove the causes of sin. ***vs 8-9***
 - *Remove the causes before they lead to judgment. Cf. Matt 5:27-30*
 - *We must not continue in sin. 1 John 3:7-10*
 - *We are blessed if we endure temptations. James 1:12-16*

Conclusion

- Two takeaways:
 - To enter the kingdom of heaven, a person must turn to Jesus and humble himself before the Lord.
 - Once in the kingdom of heaven, a Christian must endure temptations by removing causes of sin from their lives.
 - *As Jesus asked, “Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” Matt 16:26*
 - *What stumbling block is worth keeping in your life at the cost of losing your soul?*