

AS A LITTLE CHILD

Int.

1. Aim: To show some valuable things we can learn from the life of a child.
2. Matt. 18:1-6 v.3&4 "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."
3. Human nature has been about the same in all ages
 - a. The disciples were bothered about who would be the greatest man in the kingdom.
 - b. This could have been caused by their conception of the nature of the kingdom,
 - i. Many of them were looking for an earthly kingdom.
 - ii. It was but human then for each of them to want a place of honor and greatness
 - c. But Jesus teaches them in v. 3 that they must become something before they can even enter the kingdom - become as a little child
 - d. We should concern ourselves with this first, then let the high places take care of themselves.
4. Jesus said: Matt. 6:33
 - a. But Humans like to start at the top of the ladder rather than start at the bottom and climb up
 - b. All things first have a small beginning
 - c. "Mighty oaks from little acorns grow."
5. Jesus used a child to illustrate this important truth - let us notice a child as it grows and some lessons that we can learn.

Discussion

I. MUST BE CONVERTED The first thing we learn is that we must be converted ...

A. Converted means - changed, transformed

1. We must change our viewpoint from material things to spiritual things
2. The gospel is the only thing that can be used in this conversion - Rm. 1:16

B. Many times church problems arise because some are not converted

1. We get more anxious to gather in the numbers than we do to convert them
2. One of the old pioneer preachers used to say, "We study more how to gather in the grain, than we do how to keep mildew and weevils out of that which is in the bin."
3. Sometimes people will say - Go ahead and baptize them and get them into the church then we can teach them.
4. This reverses the order of Jesus:
 - a. The first thing is to teach, convert
 - b. Then baptize and teach again
 - c. Matt. 28:19-20 Go teach, baptize, teach them to observe
5. We can place the name of unconverted people on the church roll but that does not mean that they are in the kingdom.
6. It is much better to baptize one converted person than to have a large number of unconverted ones.
7. To become as a little child we must first be converted.

II. HUMBLE

- A. I cannot go to God with the spirit of wanting to be the greatest. I must realize my weakness and His power. I must realize my dependence upon Him.
- B. The child knows that it must depend upon its parents for everything
1. The child does not possess a thing of his own - neither do we
 2. We must depend upon God for everything both material and spiritual
 3. Jas. 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."
 4. Prov. 18:12 "Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility."
 5. Therefore I must come to Jehovah with the spirit, "save me Master or I perish."
 6. We must not be like the self righteous Pharisee in Luke 18:9-14
- C. Let us be humble as a little child

III. DOES NOT EXERCISE OWN WILL

- A. The child does not exercise its own will, but that of the parents
1. Children think mother and daddy are the greatest
 2. You can often hear children say, "My daddy knows more than yours"
 3. A trained child does not think his parents' commands are non-essential, therefore he obeys them

B. What about the commands of God?

1. Some talk about His commands as being non-essential !
2. But Jesus said, "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Mt. 7:21
3. When men become like little children they will not hesitate to obey every command, never stopping to question or quibble.

IV. **TRUSTS**

A. A little child trusts his parents

1. There is a loud noise in the night, a storm coming up, the child is afraid, but in the arms of his mother or father he is calm and able to go to sleep.
2. Why? Because he trusts his parents to protect him.
3. In the home of the poor the family has little food to eat. But the little children are playing and having a good time, not worrying about their food. Why? They trust their parents

B. Examples are found in the Bible of men who had this trust in God

1. In the book of Job we see this
 - a. Job lost his property, his children, all at once. He lost his good health !
 - b. But he says "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Job. 13:15
2. Daniel had this same trust when he was cast into the lion's den. - Daniel 6:20-22
3. The three Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshac and Abednigo, had this trust and were delivered from the fiery furnace. - Dan. 3:17

4. Paul had this trust: 2 Tim. 1:12b "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

C. We commit our life, our soul and our whole being to God.

1. He commits to our hands a work to do. If we are faithful we need not fear about trusting him.
2. Men trust God to blot out their sins when they obey.
3. The Eunuch went on his way rejoicing because he had obeyed and was trusting God to carry out his part of forgiveness !

V. FORGIVENESS

A. I must become as a little child in my attitude toward my fellow man. - 1 Cor. 14:20
 "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."

B. A child has a forgiving spirit

1. You can watch two children playing. They have a falling out, fight and fuss.
2. In a few minutes they are playing together again.
3. The whole thing has been forgiven

C. Some who claim to be Christians will not even speak to other Christians.

1. How do they think they would get along in heaven, if they should get there, if they can't speak to each other here.
2. They need not worry about it for the one that does not forgive others here burns the bridge over which he himself must go to heaven. - Matt. 18:35

D. A little child has a forgiving spirit

VI. DESIRES TO GROW

- A. A little child desires food and wants to grow.
1. If one of our children refuses to eat for a period of time we take him to a doctor to see what is wrong.
 2. I have never known of a child who wanted to stay small all the time.
 3. They want to grow and be big like mommy or daddy.
- B. We do not find that desire in all people from a spiritual standpoint
1. We have too many bottle babies in the church today.
 2. They do not partake of the right kind of food.
 3. 1 Pet. 2:2 NKJV "as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,"
 4. 2 Pet. 3:18 NKJV "but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."
 5. We will not grow by feasting upon cheap trashy literature.
 - a. Reading of books written by men will not help you to grow
 - b. Some people will read the paper every day - then some other magazines
 - c. But seldom if ever read the Bible
 6. Many people use the Bible as a storage place for valuable papers. They consider it a safe place for it is seldom used.
 7. What kind of answer can we give when we stand before the judgment bar of God and we are still babes in Christ, years after being baptized?
- C. A little child desires to grow and become grown.

VII. LOVES HIS PARENTS

- A. A child loves his parents above all others
- B. Do we love the Father and Son above all others?
 - 1. John said - "We love him, because he first loved us." 1 Jn. 4:19
 - 2. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not burdensome." 1 John 5:3 NKJV
 - 3. If a child says he loves his parents and then does not do what they tell him to do, he has told a lie.
 - 4. So it is with us. There is no need for us to say that we love God if we fail to do his will

VIII. DEFEND HIS PARENTS

- A. A child will defend his parents with all his strength against attacks either by word or action.
 - 1. If someone attacks his parents the child will rally to his parent.
 - 2. Ill. When I was about 10 years old a man hit my father !
- B. What happens when the church is attacked?
 - 1. There are times when the word of the Lord and the church which was bought with the blood of our Master are attacked by enemies.
 - 2. People that claim to be Christians will stand idly by and never raise their voice in defense of the truth
 - 3. Some excuse this because they cannot afford to engage in controversy because it might hurt their business or standing in the community.

4. Peter says: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." 1 Pet. 3:15
 5. When the truth is attacked and I keep silent it is equal to a denial, because I did not uphold the Master before the world.
 6. Matt. 10:33 "But whosoever shall deny me before my Father which is in heaven."
- C. A little child will defend his parents.

IX. Support

- A. When a child grows up they will support their parents if they need it.
 1. If I should say that I loved and respected my parents and they were in need of food, clothing, and shelter, and I refused to furnish them, you would say I was a hypocrite.
 2. As a child I will support them because they cared and supported me and loved me when I was small.
- B. I will support the lord.
 1. If we love and honor the Lord we will not be afraid to support his work with our time, talent, influence, and money.
 2. All of it comes from God.
 3. It is but reasonable then that we should use it to support his work here upon earth.
 4. If all of us would do this the church would grow by leaps and bounds
- C. Because as a little child grows up he will support his parents so will we support God.

X. NAME OF HIS PARENTS

- A. A child that would refuse to wear the name of his father shows by this that he does not love, honor or respect his father.
- B. God has given his children a name, "Christian" Acts 11:26
 - 1. When men wear man made names that is a good sign they do not love, honor or respect the God of heaven as they should.
 - 2. I am proud of the name that my father handed down to me, and I refuse to wear any other, the same is true of spiritual name.
 - 3. I am proud to be called a Christian. It denotes my connection with the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.
- C. A child will wear the name of his parents

XI. INHERITANCE

- A. The child will inherit the goods of his father
 - 1. This of course depends upon the child remaining a good obedient child.
 - 2. It is possible for him to be disinherited.
- B. Spiritually
 - 1. If we remain faithful to our heavenly father we will receive a reward
 - 2. "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom. 8:17
 - 3. "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you," 1 Pet. 1:4

Conclusion

1. Matt. 18:4 "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."
2. If we aspire to greatness let us then become like a little child.
 - (1) Converted
 - (2) Humble
 - (3) Does not exercise His own Will
 - (4) Trusts
 - (5) Forgiveness
 - (6) Desires to Grow
 - (7) Loves his Parents
 - (8) Defends his parents
 - (9) Supports
 - (10) Name
 - (11) Inheritance
3. We can learn these lessons from a child

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