

Series: Citizens of the Kingdom

Week 3 – The Kingdom Belongs to the Little Ones

The Point: This week will be a reflection on why Jesus told his disciples to become like little children and what characteristics of children should we be emulating in our own walks.

Our Primary verse:

Matthew 18: 1-5 (NIV)

The Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³ And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵ And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

Our Secondary verse:

Matthew 19: 13-15 (NIV)

The Little Children and Jesus

13 Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them.

14 Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” 15 When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

Introduction:

To begin class ask if reflecting on the sins of our nation changed their perspective on our country. **This is not meant to be a political question.** Remember our government has always been run by fallible people, regardless of the political party. You can ask for volunteers to share, however, this is a hard question to answer in front of other people, as the teacher you might be the only one to talk about it.

Read the primary and secondary verse.

- What was the triggering event(s) that led Jesus to call the children to him? (note: most of my questions are not deep thoughts)
 - How were the disciples behaving in both situations?
- What are the (main) characteristics of a child?
 - Below are a few examples but please encourage brainstorming
 - Inquisitive
 - Unprejudiced
 - Seeking to Please
 - Trusting

Regarding the primary verse, the essential characteristic Jesus is pointing to is that of **humility**. This is evident in verse 4.

- What does humility look like?
 - What does humility look like in our lives, not just the concept of humility but what does it look like in practice?

Contrast this to the disciples in Chapter 18:1.

- How often are we concerned with our place in the kingdom of heaven, instead of just content that we get to even be here/there??
- As amazing as the song that says “I want a mansion, robe and crown” is, does this go against the concept and practice of humility?
 - Note: **I like to shy away from controversial questions so please feel free to avoid the above question.**

However, we do not want to emulate all aspects of children (1 Cor 13:11).

1 Corinthians 13:11 (NIV)

¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.

- How can we discern what aspects to put into practice and which ones to keep away from?
 - The answer to this is simple, we use scripture.
- As we transform from child to adult how do we decide which characteristics to keep and which ones to drop?
 - The answer to this will (most likely) be the same as above.

What would your relationship with God look like if you emulated a few of these characteristics?

What about your relationships with those around you? Spouse, Siblings, Kids, Parents?

Action Step(s) for this week

Act with humbleness this week. Every day, **do something** that puts others above yourself. Just one thing a day.