

Becoming As Little Children.

Mat 18:2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

Mat 18:3 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.

Luk 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not!

Phi 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

Phi 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

Phi 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Phi 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

At the moment my wife Jeanette and I are experiencing the joy of having a little granddaughter, now sixteen months, in our lives. We have the privilege of caring for her two days a week and she really brightens up those days.

In engaging with her, we automatically become as if we were much closer to her age. We talk more simply, play with Winnie the Pooh, watch Cbeebies together (TV for the very young) and enjoy it. We crawl on hands and knees, clap our hands and sing childish songs, loudly and with gusto. This way we enter into her world with her and our relationship grows. No good me talking to her about rocket science or algebra. Or theology.

In a similar way, the kingdom of heaven is only engaged with as we leave behind our maturity, our knowledge, our righteousness, our cleverness, our self confidence (arrogance maybe) and take our place as little children. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

So we engage with Jesus, who has no guile, is gentle, meek and mild. He is un-complicated, not blinding us with science but as He says, 'my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Turning and becoming as a little child is not optional if we wish to live in the kingdom of heaven (right here, right now.) It is mandatory.

The clever, learned scribes and Pharisees would not humble themselves and come under the wings of Jesus, the anointed saviour sent by God to take complete care of them. Pride can lead to destruction, especially if it keeps us from entering into an authentic relationship with the saviour Jesus. He must increase (become greater) and I must decrease (become lesser).

In Christianity, the world religion, many of us may have been conditioned to see value in acquiring knowledge of 'spiritual' things and to act in a mature fashion. Contrast this to the position of resting entirely in Jesus, in His love, His care, His wisdom, His knowledge, His provision, which He shares with us as we need it, through the Holy Spirit, if we abide in Him.

Trust, faith, hope and love are all apparent in the little ones we have the privilege of taking care of as parents, grandparents or friends. They trust us because we draw alongside, engage with them at their level and provide them the things and love they need. As we abide in the arms of Jesus, face to face, receiving His abundant care and grace, we will find trust, faith, hope and love growing in us also. And the joy unspeakable, full of glory, will overwhelm us too.

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