

SWISS ARMY KNIFE

Week 2

SHARE

What is a funny thing you have heard a child say, or seen a child do?

SEEK

Being with Children

The philosopher G.K. Chesterton is attributed to saying that he had learned more about philosophy by observing children than he had by reading myriad books on philosophy. What does he mean? He means that something as ordinary as a child is actually not ordinary at all. There is something special about children. Likewise, in Matthew 18, Jesus demonstrates how children help reframe the vision of His kingdom.

Early in the chapter Jesus says, “Change and become like little children, or else you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (18.3). Of course Jesus is not saying, “Act like a baby;” rather, He’s saying, “Unless your trust in Me is as simple and wholly reliant as a child is toward their guardian, then you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” Such a lowly and fully trusting position is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (v4).

Likewise, children are so important to Jesus and His kingdom that it would be better to die a torturous death than cause His children to stumble (v6)! He continues in the chapter to show the value in watching the things that cause you to cause *others* (in the context of children) to stumble. No matter how you view chapter 18, children take a front-and-center role in the formation of how believers are to live in His kingdom.

What does this mean for us? We would be wise to reflect on the nature of children once again. A young child is completely reliant on their guardian. Without the guardian they would starve, be alone, never develop physically, mentally, and/or emotionally. A child is entirely dependent on someone else for their wellbeing and growth. A child is brutally honest and significantly purer when it comes to truth, justice, and morality. All of these things require much more reflection to better understand what it is like for us to become like children once again in God’s kingdom.

SEE

BEING WITH CHILDREN

WHY DO YOU THINK G.K. CHESTERTON SAID HE HAD LEARNED MORE ABOUT PHILOSOPHY BY OBSERVING CHILDREN THAN BY STUDYING PHILOSOPHY BOOKS?

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE VERBS “CHANGE” AND “BECOME” IN MATTHEW 18.3? IT SAYS, “UNLESS YOU *CHANGE* AND *BECOME* LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN...” SINCE WE ARE ALREADY ADULTS AND CANNOT BECOME CHILDREN, WHAT KIND OF “CHANGING” AND “BECOMING” IS JESUS TALKING ABOUT?

AMERICANS (AMONG OTHER CULTURES) ARE TAUGHT THAT THE MORE KNOWLEDGABLE AND OLDER ONE BECOMES, THE MORE INDEPENDENT THEY ARE TO BECOME. JESUS SEEMS TO BE SAYING, “THE MORE KNOWLEDGABLE AND OLDER YOU BECOME IN ME, THE MORE DEPENDENT ON ME YOU SHOULD BECOME.” DO YOU AGREE? WHY OR WHY NOT?

BASED ON JESUS’ OTHER STATEMENTS ABOUT CHILDREN IN MATTHEW 18 (CHECK OUT THE CHAPTER!), WHAT CAN YOU GATHER ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDREN AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN? WHAT MIGHT YOU DO THIS WEEK TO LEARN AND BECOME MORE LIKE A CHILD IN CHRIST? I RECOMMEND TALKING TO OUR CHILDREN’S DIRECTOR AND SEEING IF YOU CAN’T SPEND A SUNDAY OBSERVING THE CHILDREN!

Please take a few moments to pray with and for one another