

## BEING CHILD-LIKE

Matthew 19:13-14

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** Everyone loves little children, they are so innocent, so inquisitive, so dependent on their parents and seem to be unafraid of others. However as they grow older they can become very different. Jesus loved children and they would come running to Him and He would give them the attention they wanted. Jesus remarked one day that everybody should have that child-like attitude and the Kingdom of Heaven would be made of people with that attitude.

### I. BEING CHILD-LIKE IS NOT BEING CHILDISH

1. To be child-like is to have the spirit of a child.
  - It is to be happy in whatever atmosphere one is.
  - It is to still have an innocent attitude.
  - It is to live a lively and active life.
2. To be childish is to be immature.
  - It is to have no grasp of things.
  - It is to never face the facts straightforwardly.
  - It is to complain, gripe and whine when one's way is not had.
3. The Christian can either have a child-like or a childish attitude in his/her life.
  - A child-like heart can sing and serve because there is an unending love and he/she is a member of an eternal family with an eternal home with an eternal Father.
  - Such, said Jesus, is the kingdom of heaven.

### II. BEING CHILD-LIKE IS A SIGN OF GREATNESS

1. The greatest men in human history were morally and nobly great.
  - Every moral and nobly great person acts/acted with a child-like heart.
  - Who would define a great person as one being like a little child? Yet Jesus said that having a child-like attitude is what Christians need to have.
2. What of those who are careless, imprudent, locked away in some prison, grumpy, hateful, addicted, etc.
  - To lose the child-like spirit is to lose one's greatest asset.

### III. JESUS HAD THE SPIRIT OF CHILD-LIKENESS

1. *"...A little child shall lead them..."* said one of the prophets.
  - Jesus cared about and had compassion for all people.
    - He healed everyone who came to Him without judging them.
    - He raised the dead and gave back joy to the grieving family and friends.
2. No disappointment turned Him away, no pain dulled His love, even being betrayed by a close friend.
  - Jesus had the sweet spirit as of a little child.

#### **IV. LOSING ONE'S CHILD-LIKENESS CAN HAPPEN VERY SLOWLY**

1. Jesus never lost His child-likeness.
  - Pressures of daily living, exposed to worldliness can very slowly take away that child-likeness.
2. Child-likeness is so slowly lost that it is unnoticeable, it steals away quietly.
  - There is no loss more tragic than for a person to lose that child-like spirit.

#### **V. LOSING ONE'S CHILD-LIKENESS CAUSES ONE TO BE LESS RECEPTIVE**

1. Children have no haunting past memories, but are not anxious about what might happen in the future.
  - The time is just "now" and that is all that matters.
  - Adults are swamped with thoughts of yesterday's things and then worry about tomorrow's events.
2. Adults have a dull and boring routine but filled with things of the past and worries about the future.
3. To be child-like is to not worry about tomorrow, not to be burdened with some empty regret, unable to go back and re-do, re-live something of the past.
  - Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

#### **VI. LOSING ONE'S CHILD-LIKENESS CAUSES ONE TO STOP LIVING IN HIS/HER OWN WORLD**

1. Little children have their own world, bright, wonderful, full of visions, voices, bubbly, happy, excited.
2. The Christian, like a little child, lives in his/her new world, for old things have passed away and all things have become new, all in the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - The Christian has his/her world, just as little children do but it is founded and based all around the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - To stop being "child-like" is to withdraw from that special new world given to the believer by the Lord Jesus.

#### **VII. LOSING ONE'S CHILD-LIKENESS DISOLVES THE SIMPLICITY OF FAITH**

1. Children are so trusting, so eager, so curious from daylight to dark, but no matter what they are trusting.
  - If only Christians trusted God as little children are so trusting with others.
  - It is something to be trusted by others, but how happy God is when the Christian trusts Him.
2. The Christian can do more than trust, he/she can walk by faith, not by sight but when the child-like spirit dies within the Christian, he/she becomes worldly and loses his/her faith.
  - The child-spirit is what makes up the kingdom of heaven.

#### **VIII. LOSING ONE'S CHILD-LIKENESS CAUSES THE FEELING OF WONDER TO DISAPPEAR**

1. For the little child, everything is big and a wonder for him/her. The flowers, the sun, the clouds, the wind, the birds, the animals, the birthdays, the stories told by their parents and grandparents.
2. How sad when all of the child-like wonder passes away.
  - As children grow up they tend to lose that child-hood wonder and they become like everyone else, selfish, indifferent, no time for the simple pleasures they once enjoyed as little children.

3. When the Christian ceases to wonder about the things of the Lord, why he/she should have the Lord Jesus as his/her Savior, Shepherd, Lord, why He died on a cross for him/her, why He would constantly be forgiving of the many sins he/she commits, why he/she has been adopted into the family of God, that Christian has lost his/her child-likeness.

## **CONCLUSION:**

1. *"...Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven..."*
2. Jesus says that Christians are to have the attitude of little children concerning their relationship with Him.
3. Jesus has all the answers, all that the believer needs to live his/her life here on this earth and to live that life as he/she should and if only the believer would trusting as the little children are, how much more an abundant, active, productive life that believer could live.
4. Take an inventory of your own life. Do you have the simple, trusting attitude of a little child? Or are you full of anxiety, worry, frustration and fear?
5. Christian, learn how to go back to being a little child for the Lord in your attitude and trust and allow Him to be in charge for a change.