

KEEP A LITTLE CHILD-LIKE ATTITUDE

Matthew 18:3; Mark 10:15

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: "Act your age!" "Stop acting like a little baby..." "Grow up!" Often people scold other people for acting like a little child, yet Jesus said that unless one becomes like a little child, he/she cannot enter into heaven and in heaven everyone has the attitude of a little child. Are grown-ups supposed to act like little babies all their lives? NO! Jesus is talking about the attitude that little children have before they begin to "grow up" and lose their simple, natural, spontaneous attitudes. Just what about a little child does Jesus want everyone to keep?

I. LITTLE CHILD-LIKE ATTITUDES

1. There is no deceitfulness, no evasion of the truth, no desire to cover up, just plain truthfulness.
2. There is humility, a willingness to be known just as he/she is, no effort to conceal one's true, real character.
3. There is the assumption that everybody speaks the truth and what is heard is the truth, no matter who is speaking. Believing everything that God says and that every promise God makes is sure.
4. There is the natural inclination to be affectionate, to love. Treat little children kindly and one will win their young hearts. They need only to see love expressed toward them and they give their little hearts, returning love for love without fear.
5. There is faith and trust in everyone. There is no test to prove what someone says or does is true or not true. There is trust for everything one needs and there is no anxiety that someone might prove him/herself to be untrue. It is living day by day on simple faith.
6. There is frankness, no reason to prove this or that to be true or false. The whole heart is open to the truth and there is no need to fight against truth.

II. WHY KEEP A LITTLE CHILD-LIKE ATTITUDE?

1. Any other attitude than that of a little child is dishonest.
 - Who does not deliberately conceal what is in his/her heart?
 - Who does not put on a false front/appearance?
 - Who does not aspire to gain and is not ambitious?
 - Who has a trusting spirit and trusts every person he/she knows/meets?
2. Jesus says that those in the Kingdom of Heaven have the attitude of a little child.
 - Even the highest ranking angels have the spirit of little children.
 - "...*whosoever shall humble him/herself as this little child, he/she is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven...*"
 - God will not admit any who do not have a little child-like attitude/spirit.

3. A little child-like attitude is necessary to being taught of God.
 - How can God teach those who are not teachable? Who are afraid of the truth, who hate the light, who are afraid that their real persons will be revealed and reproved?
 - A little child loves to learn, has an open mind and can be taught anything.
 - Therefore it is necessary that being a part of the Kingdom of God, one must have the attitude of a little child.
4. God cannot teach or bless in any way those who will not come to Him in confidence.
 - Jesus couldn't do many things because of people's unbelief.
 - God cannot teach anybody unless they are simple-hearted and confiding.
5. Only in a little child-like spirit is there true submission to God's will.
6. Unless a person is totally submissive, he/she is not satisfied with God's ways, therefore how can God be pleased with him/her?
7. Only with a little child-like spirit can one's own spirit be at rest and be honest and trustful toward God.

CONCLUSION:

1. A little child-like spirit is often present with young converts but questions arise with all those who are older - was it real? Was it just a passing excitement? Was it from some sort of pressure?
2. Let a person grow past the little child-like attitude and how changed he/she becomes.
 - Selfish, proud, impatient, distrustful, lustful
 - Ever year becoming more offensive to God as a sinful, worldly attitude develops.
3. The reason why as people grow older and more learned and more distant to the gospel is that they become more self-deceptive, more dishonest, more ambitious, more aspiring and they lose the simplicity of their earlier years and just do not deal honestly with the truth.
4. What if every adult still had the attitude of a little child toward God? Toward others? Toward themselves? Toward the truth? Toward life?
5. Jesus said: *"...Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and BECOME as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven..." Matthew 18:3;*
 - *"...Verily I say unto you, WHOSOEVER shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein..." Mark 10:15*
6. Adulthood has responsibilities, but one can still maintain the ATTITUDE of a little child.
THINK ABOUT IT!