

# Church of God Sunday School

## JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

Matthew 18:1-6; 19:13-15; Mark 9:33-37; 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17

One time Jesus and His disciples came to the city of Capernaum (*kuh-PUHR-nee-uhm*). Jesus asked His disciples what they had been talking about as they had been walking along, on the way to the city. The disciples did not want to answer Jesus because they had been arguing about who was the greatest one among them and which one of the disciples was the most favored and the most honored in the Kingdom of Heaven?

Jesus knew their thoughts, so He called the twelve disciples to Him. He said, "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." Jesus meant that to be first in God's kingdom, a person must take the least, or last, place and be a helper, or a servant, to others.

Then Jesus set a little child in the middle of the group of disciples. When Jesus had the disciples' attention, He said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Jesus was telling them that first, they must be changed and become as little children or they could not even *enter* the Kingdom of Heaven, let alone be considered the greatest in the kingdom!

Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Little children are pure, honest, humble, and eager to learn. Jesus wants every one of His followers to be as little children are. If a person is like that, then that person is considered great in the Kingdom of Heaven. That means all God's people can be great!

Jesus also said, "And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me." In other words,

Jesus was saying that if a person is kind to a little child, it is the same as being kind to Him. It is the same whenever a person treats a child badly: that person is really treating Jesus badly.

Jesus said, "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." This simply

means that if someone would cause a little child to lose faith in Christ, it would be better for that one if he were dead!

Jesus showed His love for children wherever He went. One time when people were bringing their little children to Jesus so that He could lay His hands on them and pray for them, the disciples tried to turn them away. They were even rebuking them! But when Jesus found out, He was really displeased. He said, "Suffer little children [allow them], and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus did not want the children to be turned away. He might even have asked the crowd to move aside so that the

children could come forward to Him. Then Jesus picked up some of them and laid His hands on others—but He blessed them all.

The Apostle Paul gave instruction to children in Ephesians 6:1-3: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." Jesus expects children to love and obey, or mind, their parents. This is pleasing to the Lord.

Solomon said in Proverbs 20:11, "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right." A child who does the will of the



Lord is a happy, contented child. He behaves as the Lord expects him to behave.

In order for children to fulfill their rightful place in the home and be obedient, they must be taught by God-fearing parents. Jesus told parents in Ephesians 6:4 to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Solomon also had a message for parents in Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it [he will not forget that godly teaching]."

Mothers and fathers are the ones who are responsible for teaching children how to live for the Lord. Daily—in the home—children should be taught

about God and His Word and His principles for life. Children should not only be taught about God but they should also be able to see their mothers and fathers being godly examples in everyday life. This is what will help to ensure that the children grow up to know of their need for salvation and become good Christian men and women.

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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not."*  
—Mark 10:14  
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# Use Your Bible

**At the same time came the disciples unto \_\_\_\_\_, saying, Who is the greatest in the \_\_\_\_\_ of heaven?**

**And Jesus called a little \_\_\_\_\_ unto him, and set him in the \_\_\_\_\_ of them,**

**And said, Verily I say unto you, \_\_\_\_\_ ye be converted, and become as little \_\_\_\_\_, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_.**

**—Matthew 18:1-3**

