

Remnant Life Church
October 8, 2023
Living Child-Like
Matthew 19:14

But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children." (New Living Translation)

Mark and **Luke** add – “...*anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.*”

- Children in the first century Jewish culture were quite different than they are today
 - Then it was a fully patriarchal society
 - Women took care of the home and family
 - Children were seen and not heard
 - Boys were held in higher regard and at the age of 13 were deemed accountable
 - The time of apprenticeship to learn a craft was from age 14 to 29
 - At 30 the man has reached maturity and is accorded full authority and respect
(Jesus began His ministry at the age of 30)
- There are elements of a child and being a child that are completely unique
 - A child will say anything to anyone at any time at any volume
 - A child gives love quickly and freely
 - A child is completely resilient with boundless energy
 - A child has a way of keeping life in perspective
- When Jesus said the Kingdom of Heaven belonged to people like the children He did not mean-
 - Immature
 - Whiney
 - Selfish
 - Stubborn
 - Those are the qualities of being childish
- We should all desire to be child-like in our attitude and outlook on life
- Why?
 - Because virtually every negative behavior of life is learned

What child-like behaviors should we as adults strive to have as a part of our lives?

1. Honesty – children are brutally honest about things adults will avoid
 - a. The scriptures speak of honesty, truthfulness and against deceitfulness nearly 170 times
 - b. **Proverbs**, **Isaiah** and **Zechariah** all say it very clearly, “*Speak the truth*”
 - c. The 10 Commandments – do not lie; do not bear false witness
 - d. Honesty is a quality that has virtually disappeared

- i. In fact, lying has come to be expected in many parts of our lives today
 - ii. Being dishonest can even come from a place of caring - sparing someone's feelings
 - iii. Being kind to them
 - iv. You may not want to escalate an already bad situation
 - v. Covering the deceit by calling it a "white lie" – in other words 'no big deal'
 - e. The problem is that when we become used to these "white lies" it becomes easier and easier to believe things about each other, God's promises and even about ourselves that are not true
2. Love in the purest sense
- a. *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:30-31)*
 - b. Love begins with the love of God in our hearts
 - c. Each of us is loved beyond what we could even imagine or believe
 - i. *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart;... (Jer. 1:5)*
 - ii. That word "knew" in the original language is *Ya-deh*
 - iii. Means to know by experience
 - iv. Our relationship with God is one of experience – the events and elements of our lives
 - v. The love of God is a constant in our lives
 - d. *And now these things remain: faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love." (I Cor. 13:13)*
3. Appreciate what God has given you
- a. When you hand a gift to a child, no matter how big or small, they act like you just handed them a gold bar
 - b. **Eccl 3:2** tells us that we are given only so much time to live
 - c. Why do we insist on wasting so much of it concerned over things that just don't matter very much? (Majoring on the minors)
 - d. Like a child, don't take the events of your life or yourselves so seriously
 - i. Jesus often spoke to the Pharisees and Sadducees in a way that brought them down a peg or two
 - ii. Jesus was not impressed with what people did on the outside but who they were on the inside
 - iii. So too we should be mindful of that

A very important aspect of balance and perspective is trust

- Do we trust God in our lives to be who He says He is and do what He says He will do?
- *For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.*
(2 Cor 1:20)