

Remnant Life Church  
July 21, 2019  
**Child-Like Faith is Not Childish Faith**  
Matthew 23:1-11

Several times in the Scripture, Jesus said to the people who had come to hear Him, that they needed to become like little children to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

**Matt 11:25** - *I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children.*

**Matt 18:2-4** - *He called a little child to him and placed the child among them. And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

**Mark 10:13-16** - *People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.*

What does that mean?

- Very simply – the Christian faith is not complicated
- Jesus was saying that your maturity, your wisdom, your experience, your achievements do not bring you into the Kingdom of Heaven or save you from your sins
- Only simple faith does that – faith in Jesus Christ

What is Child-Like Faith?

1. It is genuine
  - a. Few things will destroy relationships faster than insincerity
    - i. If you know someone is not being genuine with you how does that make you feel? How does that change the dynamic of the relationship?
    - ii. Not only single, personal relationships but within families, business, and even churches
  - b. Jesus dealt with a number of insincere people throughout His ministry
    - i. The Pharisees certainly gained the distinction of being the official pebble in Jesus' sandal
    - ii. It wasn't that Jesus had a problem with their devotion to the law
    - iii. It was that they did not live it themselves and placed it over the love of God for people
  - c. **READ** – **Matt 23:1-11**
  - d. One of the biggest reasons Christians are often the greatest detriment to Christianity is hypocrisy

- i. I was reading an article on how to be a church where people who don't want to go to church would want to come
- ii. One of the subpoint titles was, Be Authentic Even it Means Being Different
- iii. "It's better to be authentic than relevant. Don't hide your quirks, embrace them. If Jesus doesn't cause us to live differently, what's the point? But here's the challenge: we need to live differently without coming across as "look at me, I'm better than you." Because we're not. For the best example of how to do this well, look at the life of Jesus."
- e. Child-like faith begins with being genuine

## 2. It is simple

- a. One of the most delightful things about children is the simple way they live
  - i. If we were honest most adults would say they would love to return to that kind of life again
- b. A great number of people overcomplicate things to the point of paralysis and losing all the joy of life
- c. Jesus inferred in His teachings that simplicity was a strong mark of those who would enter the Kingdom
  - i. Why would I say this?
  - ii. Because He said, *...unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* – **Matt 18:3-4**
- d. Humility always accompanies simplicity
- e. The same is also true about our walk as a Christian
  - i. Don't over-complicate your life
  - ii. And many times that happens by over-spiritualizing
  - iii. To live a simple Christian life begins with one questions – what does the Bible say?
  - iv. I have been to many conferences and heard many well-known speakers who promised a greater, deeper understanding of spiritual truth
    - 1. Do want to know what the primary thing I usually took away from every one of them?
    - 2. They are expensive to attend
  - v. God did not make the Christian walk complicated
    - 1. It is simple – simple enough for a child to get into the Kingdom
    - 2. Simple enough for me (perception of the gym teacher/class)

## 3. It is joyful

- a. The words joy, joyful, happy, delight, laugh, smile – 430+ in the Bible
  - i. If this is true – why do so many Christians walk around looking like they have no hope with the weight of the world on their shoulders?
  - ii. Why are most Christians like that so weary?
  - iii. They are missing the key ingredient to dealing with the struggles of life – joy

- iv. Difference between happy and joy
  - b. **Nehemiah 8** is the account of the people of Israel hearing the law read to them after being freed from Babylonian captivity
    - i. **Neh 8: 9** says all the people were weeping as they listened
    - ii. **Neh 8:10** - *Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*
  - c. Living without joy robs you of your spiritual, emotional, and even physical strength
  - d. Where is that joy found?
    - i. Your faith in God
    - ii. Choosing to focus on the many blessings of your life
    - iii. The promise of heaven
4. So if child-like faith is genuine, simple, and joyful, what makes faith childish?
- a. When the focus is on yourself
    - i. When my energy is being spent primarily on my own needs and wants
    - ii. When the majority of my prayer time is spent on myself instead of others
  - b. When I am hesitant or unwilling to do for others if it is inconvenient or does not promise a return (what's in it for me?)
  - c. When I keep what is mine (time, money, energy, etc..) instead of being generous with it as the Bible teaches us
  - d. EXAMPLE – if you do not tithe to the church you attend because you are afraid you cannot make it if you do – then your faith is not in God it is in yourself and your ability to provide for yourself
  - e. That is a childish faith not child-like
5. Child-like faith...
- a. In the natural, means jumping into the deep end of the pool, even though you're scared because you've never done it before, knowing your Dad or your Mom is going to catch you
  - b. In the spiritual, is embracing the beauty of being different from the world, because of the presence of Jesus Christ in your life, knowing your heavenly Father is there to go with you, guard and protect you
  - c. Child-like is nothing like childish
    - i. Child-like is being excited by the simple things of life
    - ii. Child-like is finding joy in the smallest of things
    - iii. Child-like is trusting wholly and fully in your Heavenly Father to love, protect, and provide for you in every circumstance of your life to His glory