

# **“THE KINGDOM BELONGS TO SUCH AS THESE”**

## **(Matthew 19:13-14)**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Jesus was referring to the little children. There is something in them that Jesus sees that is required of us to have. Usually when we think of a child, we think of innocence and purity. Jesus wants us to be converted from our futile prideful way and to become like children (**Matthew 18:3**) not in the sense of immaturity and silliness but of **humility, forgiveness, sincerity, and confiding trust**. Therefore it is essential in our walk to be like a child in these wonderful attributes for such is the kingdom of heaven! (**Mark 10:14**) Children can learn from adults, certainly we can learn from them too! The purpose of this sermon is to study these great qualities of little children and I think we can readily see the difference between being like a child, and acting like a child. God condemns the one, but upholds the other (**1 Cor. 14:20**) – “Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature”

### **I. HUMILITY**

#### **A. Humility in a child**

1. There is no rank among children; there is no social, economic status or nationality discrimination in them. They are able to play and to get along with other kids regardless of any of these backgrounds. They are transparent; unconsciously they will play asserting the insignificance of things which men will differ.
2. A little child usually will not think of self solely but of others (example of Wendy and Natalie Hernandez) We as Christians are reminded to possess this humility, that is to think of others (**Philippians 2:3-4**) – “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; vs. 4 - do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others”
3. It takes humility to say “I am sorry daddy” it takes submission to follow other’s instruction.
4. If you were to select, from all of earth’s inhabitants, one whom you believed to be the very epitome of humility, whom would you select? Madre Teresa, Gandhi or what about the Pope in Rome? Would it not be a little child? Jesus did make that selection (**Matthew 18:4**)

[We talk about humility so far but...]

#### **B. What is humility?**

1. Definition from the Standard College Dictionary – “*The state or quality of being humble; a modest sense of one’s own merit. An act of submission or deference*”
2. Humility is not a weakness, rather it is a great virtue that requires great strength
  - a. Humility is not thinking too little of one’s self; humility is just not thinking of one’s self!

#### **C. Pride does not play a part in a child-like character**

1. It does not play because it will place man in an “anti-God” state.
  - a. Pride causes one to look down on people and things, and as long as we keep looking down, we fail to see what is above us, missing God altogether! Pride will cause to glorify our selves! And not the God above us!

- b. God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble (**James 4:6**), notice how God hates and resists the proud (**Proverbs 6:16-17**)
  - c. Pride is simply vain glory, it profits nothing! (**Galatians 5:26**) KJV –*“Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another”*
  - d. Christ Himself demonstrated this humility in several ways
    - 1) By washing the feet of His disciples, usually in the Middle East about the time of Jesus it was accustomed that the servant will wash the feet of the people who will get in the house that was his job. Jesus shows humility, servitude to His disciples by washing their feet (**John 13:4-17**)
    - 2) Even though God Himself became in the likeness of man and died willingly for us on the cross! (**Philippians 2:5-9**)
2. Notice please the following quote **“Humility is to make a right estimate of one’s self”** –Charles H. Spurgeon, English preacher of the 19<sup>th</sup> century 1834-1892.
  3. The great sermon on the Mount begins with humility, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (**Matthew 5:3**). We cannot begin serving the Lord, **-WITHOUT HUMILITY**. The very nature of Christianity demands it for Christ was and is gentle and humble in heart (**Matthew 11:29**) *“Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS”*

[Now, let us take a look at the next child-like attribute we must have in order to enter into the kingdom...]

## **II. FORGIVENESS**

### **A. Forgiveness in a child**

1. Children do not normally hold grudges. When a child is playing with other and becomes mad and ready to strike others as time passes soon is forgotten and all is forgiven and the warring parties are bosom friends again.
2. Have you ever asked forgiveness to one of your children? I have, they forget immediately; they do not hold any resentment in the contrary they show affection by hugging and kissing you.
3. There is a time when a parent must discipline his child for wrongdoing. By experience at first the child might frown upon his parent, but he or she might know at that time if not for certain in the latter years that it was for their own good (**Hebrews 12:11**)

### **B. Why do people not readily forgive?**

1. Forgiveness is not easy it is something we must work at it
  - a. There must be mercy and compassion before we can forgive
  - b. People do not forgive because they lack mercy, compassion and understanding and these qualities that most of the world does not have and sadly to say even so among God’s people.

### **C. Jesus our pattern for forgiveness**

1. Jesus had been brutally mistreated by way of blows, lashes and even shamefully ridicule by way of spitting into His face and placing a crown of thorns on His blessed head and when He was nailed to the cross and was suspended between heaven and earth they still mocked Him and ridiculed Him saying, *“save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross”* (**Matt. 27:40**) Save yourself! Were saying, in spite of all these and how Jesus was treated and being crucified our

gentle and humble in heart Jesus our Lord said, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34)

2. Jesus had so much understanding, though He had been greatly wronged, He had such compassion though His enemies deserved none. He was so kind and patient, though His persecutors were so bitter and quick to condemn. Our Savior was so child like in that He could forgive, regardless of the nature of the wrong against Him!
3. How many of us by this time will be with rage and emotionally driven to take revenge when are wrongful by someone?
4. If we would be, not only like a little child, but as “newborn babies,” we must “lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking...that we may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:1-2)
5. To be child-like in this matter, is like being God-like, and Christ-like (Ephesians 4:32) - “Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you” Also in (Colossians 3:13) - “bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you”

### III. SINCERITY

#### A. Sincerity in a child

1. When it comes to sincerity what a greater example we could find than that of a little child? Children are so frank so sincere with nothing to hide and ask questions to the point.
  - a. Example of Yaloani at McDonalds drive thru...asked a man with long hair and earrings in both ears if she why was he wearing earrings like a woman!
  - b. Children are so sincere so frank that most of the time most likely will embarrass their parents in some occasions. A child will say what it thinks and has no tendency to camouflage or color the situation as we sometimes do.
  - c. The child will tell things as they are! We need to be more honest like a child is in everything we do and say!

#### B. The meaning of the word SINCERE

1. The word sincere comes from two Latin words which mean
  - a. “sin” = without and “cere” = wax, literally meaning “without wax”
  - b. Today is limited to one’s character, but originally it was more broader than that.
  - c. It was reference to the work with wood or to the work of a sculptor
    - 1) If a sculptor made use of wax to conceal his lack of skill, then his work of art **could not** be called “**sincere**” for he has concealed the imperfections with wax to cover his mistakes or lack of skill in other words there was a cover up!
2. In sincerity nothing is concealed or hidden and how true is with a child, and how untrue is with some older people! With grow ups **pretense** is so large and the heart of reality so small!

#### C. Our sincerity as Christians

1. We certainly hide nothing from God (Hebrews 4: 13) therefore let us not hide the truth from our fellow man
2. Our love towards each other must be sincere

- a. Our motives behind everything we do should be base in honesty and sincerity and not with our thinking of “if I do this what am I going to get in return” our love therefore should be sincere from the heart (**Romans 12:9**)
  - b. We must be such not for a limited time but it should be part of who we are Christians it should be part of us until we die (**Philippians 1:9-10**)
3. Not like the Pharisees
- a. Notice what is says in (**Psalm 12:2**). Flattery and double heart, the Pharisees were guilty of that (**Matt. 6:1-8**)
  - b. The Lord say not to be like them, for they appear to be very religious but in reality were not for their heart was not in them, for they did not a sincere heart in the things they did (**Matthew 23:2-3**)
  - c. They tried to impress people rather than truly worship God in sincerity and honesty (**Matthew 23:23-28**) for when we **try to make an impression that is the impression you make!**
4. Also there must be sincerity in doctrine (**Titus 2:7**)
- a. And in worship as well, when a song of praise is sung, or a prayer is uttered there must be sincerity, there must be genuineness in all that we do!

[My last point, a child also has...]

#### **IV. CONFIDING TRUST**

##### **A. The trust in a child**

1. A child has total and undeniable confidence; trust in his/her parents.
  - a. When a child wakes up in the morning, he expects to be fed and clothed for he believes that dad or mom will and can provide them with such.
  - b. They have total confidence and trust when we walk in the darkness as long as we hold their hands, they will go with us anywhere, because they know that we can provide that safety and refuge.
    - 1) Example of Brandon jumping from an elevation to my arms in the park

##### **B. Our trust in God**

1. The promises of God, for us to trust Him
  - a. Do we really believe that? Whatever the situation may be, do we believe that God will be there for us? (**Hebrews 13:5-6**) – “*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Vs. 6 - So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” KJV*
  - b. Can you sleep as well as baby or as a child at night, with no worries on how the next meal may come from or how are you going to pay the mortgage or the electric bill. Notice the life of David when he was persecuted, he was able to sleep and lie down even though he was persecuted from his enemies but why? (**Psalm 4:7-8**) because David was able to trust God to take refuge in Him, David knew that God will not forsake him (**Psalm 9:10**)
2. Just how strong is my faith? What about yours? Is it at all like Abraham’s? (**Romans 4:20**) – “*yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, Vs 21 - and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform”*

3. Do we have that confidence that a Christian should have? This confidence we should have that God will grant us everything, but listen very carefully! If we only ask **according to His will (1 John 4:14)**
4. That is why we can come boldly to the throne of grace (**Hebrews 4:16**)

**C. Do not worry, trust in God!**

1. Do you worry are you anxious do you become upset and frustrated? Do you lose your way, and do not know what way to turn? Are you prone to give up and quit? Cast your burden to God (**1 Peter 5:7**) He cares for you and me! Look at your child, or look at a child and his confiding trust, “for such is the kingdom of heaven” And unless you become “as this little child, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven!”
2. Let us imitate the good character of a child, please listen to the next prayer:  
“**Last night my little boy confessed to me  
Some childish wrong;  
And kneeling at my knee,  
He prayed with tears:  
‘Dear God make me a man,  
Like daddy – wise and strong!  
I know you can.’  
Then while he slept,  
I knelt beside his bed,  
Confessed my sins,  
And prayed with low bowed head:  
‘O God, make me a child,  
Like my child, here –  
Pure, guileless,  
Trusting Thee with faith sincere.’**”

**CONCLUSION:**

May God help us! May God help us to be like a child in all of their heavenly qualities they have. Why not become a child of God today? “For the kingdom belongs to such as these”

1. Believe in Jesus (**John 8:24**)
2. Repent of your sins (**Luke 13:3**)
3. Confess your faith in Jesus (**Romans 10:10**)
4. Need to be baptize for the forgiveness of sin (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38**)
5. Follow Jesus faithfully (**Rev. 2:10; John 14:15; 1 John 1:9**)

Can we help you in any way?

*Victor Alvarado  
Hermiston Oregon  
USA*