Approaching Jesus as Little Children: Complete Authenticity

Believers must Be Authentic and Transparent to Enjoy a Relationship with God and Enter the Kingdom

Television shows have been structured around the things kids say because they are so authentic, open and transparent. These are qualities that everyone loves in a child. They are free to be real, to be who they really are rather than hide. The music starts and they instinctively dance! Their questions flow out of a childlike innocence. They have not been taught to be untruthful.

Hiding is a result of original sin. Adam and Eve hid after disobeying God. Mankind hides from a God who judges justly that all have sinned and fallen short of His glory. However, this series of articles have explained, mercy, triumphs over judgment. All He asks is that we acknowledge our failings and receive His blessed plan of restoration conceived before the beginning of time and implemented in the fullness of time.

Jesus invites believers to come as they are. Only His saving grace can change people. He never asked one person to clean themselves up before they received Him and believed on His name. If they could have done so, why would they need Him? He is divinely inclusive, not exclusive. Whosoever will, may come!

Part of the joy of the Gospel is that believers need not hide any more. How ridiculous to think that God does not already know one's heart. Religiosity rather than relationship causes disciples to hide from the only one who really loves, accepts and forgives. Is it not the honest depiction of Biblical characters that causes devotees to have hope for themselves?

If Jesus could love impetuous Peter who was continually changing one foot in his mouth for another, perhaps He can love others like him. To acknowledge Him in all our ways as Scripture emphasizes is to let Him into the dark places of one's heart. How can there be healing from the Great Physician, if He is excluded and locked out? He is pictured in Revelation as standing at the door and knocking. He will not force His way in. He desires to be invited

Young children have not been taught to be someone other than who they are. They are honest in their conduct and conversations. Regrettably, they are taught to masquerade and pretend to be someone other than their authentic self. The word hypocrite used by Jesus literally means to wear a mask. Adults have developed hypocrisy to an art form. Some people you want to shake and ask if anyone is in there! Will the real person, please stand up! Saint Paul describes a new transparency available as we with *"unveiled"* un-masked faces, behold the Lord and are changed from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18). He declares that what he desires for Timothy is a sincere faith which dwelled in his grandmother and mother (2 Corinthians 2:5). Sincere means without hypocrisy. It is the word describing the process of holding up a pot into the light of the sun to see if the potter dishonestly hid any flaws by filling them after the tempering fire, before painting them. This is a sincerity that stands up to the light of the Son indeed.

Transparency and authenticity with the Lord will result in those same qualities in relationships with fellow Christians. Paul also speaks of sincere love for the brethren. How badly the church needs to be a place where people do not have to put on their religious masks before entering the door. How we need significant others with whom we can be real and transparent so real time prayers can be offered for one another--prayers based on the revelation of who individuals really are, not who they would pretend to be.

But there is risk involved. Many have been hurt by being real and then consequently being rejected. Sadly, discretion and mercy has not yet penetrated personal relationships in Christ's church. Here also Christians must come to the One who can teach them such authenticity and transparency. He alone can heal the wounds that cause people to protect themselves from the Lover of souls and from one another.

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