

Approaching Jesus as Little Children: Encountering New Experiences

Why Believers Must Become Like Little Children to Enter the Kingdom of God



“I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom.”: (Mark 10:14).

A brief journey through the Gospels shows Jesus placing great importance on children. He said in effect, do not hinder them from coming to me. In fact, He was saying make it easy for them to come. In Mark 10 he is reversing cultural norms by exalting children who were to be seen but not heard. He went to the extent to say that one cannot enter the kingdom unless they turn and become like children themselves.

This is a very strong exhortation. What can he mean that we must change and become like little children? Certainly He cannot mean that believers are to work at staying immature. Jesus was reported to have grown in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. To what qualities of childlikeness might He be referring?

One of many enduring childlike characteristics is the sense of wonder and adventure of a child encountering new experiences or realities. This writer and wife made the mistake of going to Disneyland during a conference in Orange County -- without children. It was just not the same. Going without them robbed us of the joy of seeing them respond to Fantasy Land USA! Children today are in danger of losing their childlike wonder at far too early an age due to modern technological advances and special effects. Both my wife and I are looking forward to grandchild *numero uno*. Just sharing the wonder and joy of discovery with them fills us with anticipation. No cynicism or skepticism has tainted a child's viewpoint.

Jesus is a wonder at his birth, his miraculous healing and deliverance ministry, His teaching which so often reversed religious morays, and His revelation of God as Father--a revolutionary concept. The synoptic Gospels continually report that the people He taught

and touched were amazed and astounded. Never had there been anyone like Him. In John's account, He is amazingly bold in His claims to be one with His Father. As C.S. Lewis states, "He did not leave people who were exposed to him the option of concluding that he was simply a prophet or great teacher. He is God the Son, or a diabolical deceiver, or mad. Those are the only three choices. The greatest wonder of all--that He loves even me!"

It is a sense of wonder that worship invites and encourages each time the Body of Christ gathers. As the Psalmist says so often, there is no one like the One we worship (Psalm 86:8,10). His love is beyond one's comprehension Saint Paul said (Ephesians 3:17f). The intricacies of the human body, the wonder of the universe and this special planet called earth are wonderful indeed. He calls it good, while we stand in awe of its beauty, order and majesty. Yet, all these things pale in comparison with the beauty and wonder of the Godhead. His beauty turned Moses aside. He had to see the burning bush that was not consumed. The Lord continually does wondrous things. Scripture states that the awesomeness of His end-time appearing, just His appearing, will be so glorious that it will destroy His enemies!

What a wonder He is! The next article in this series will discuss other aspects of changing and becoming like children.

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