



These Little Ones

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Matt. 18:1-14

Matthew 18:1-2

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

And He called a child to Himself and set him before them,

Matthew 18:3-4

and said, “Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18:5-6

And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me;

but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

What is a Child Like?

- Simple
- Trusting
- Submissive
- Innocent
- Teachable
- Humble

These Little Ones - Outline

Matthew 18:1-14

- 1-5 Greatest in the Kingdom
- 6-9 Stumbling Others or Yourself
- 10-14 A Stray Sheep is Found

Matthew 18:1-2

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

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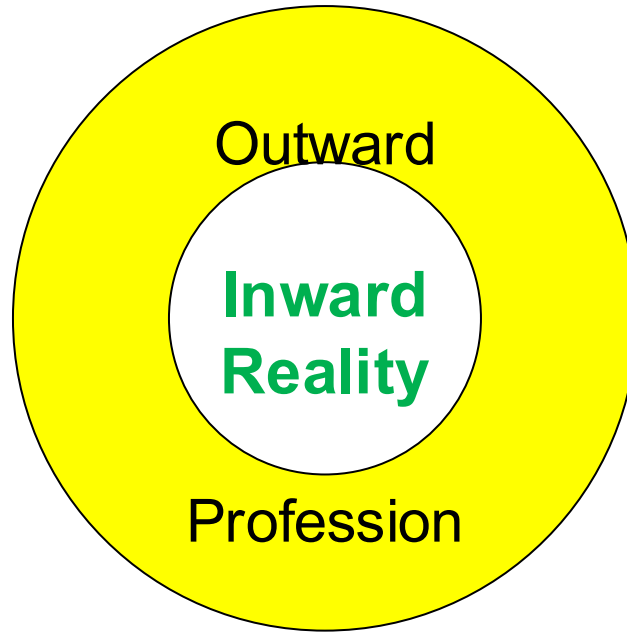
Kingdom of Heaven

- The realm where heaven's (God's) rule is acknowledged.
- Spoken of 30 times in Matthew by the Lord Jesus.
- Similar to "Kingdom of God" used in the other gospels.

What Would the Kingdom Have Meant To Jews of That Time?

- Several Old Testament Scriptures spoke of a future everlasting kingdom.
- The Jews viewed it more as political (earthly) than spiritual (heavenly).

Two Aspects of the Kingdom



Illustrated by
parable of
wheat & tares
in Matthew 13

Matthew 18:3-4

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Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Humbles Himself

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;

- Philippians 2:3

Contentment

I have learned to be content in
whatever circumstances I am.

- Philippians 4:11

Matthew 18:5

And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me;

Receive Jesus

He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

- Matthew 10:40

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,

- John 1:12

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Matthew 18:6-7

but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

Woe to the world because of *its* stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes!

One of These Little Ones

- Transition to “one of these little ones”
 - They “believe in Me”

“And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to **one of these little ones** even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.”
- **Matthew 10:42**

Stumbling Others

- The deed?
 - Causing a little one to stumble
- The punishment?
 - Worse than being forcibly drowned

Matthew 18:8-9

If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame, than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.

Stumbling Yourself

- Jesus switches His teaching from stumbling others to being stumbled yourself.
- Repeats teaching from Sermon on Mount
 - Reverses order; adds “your foot.”
- Jesus teaches that hell is real and you don’t want to end up there.

These Little Ones - Outline

Matthew 18:1-14

- 1-5 Greatest in the Kingdom
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Matthew 18:10-11

See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven.

[For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.]

Back to These Little Ones

- The command?
 - Don't look down on even one of these little ones.

Let no one look down on [despise] your
youthfulness... - 1 Timothy 4:12

Back to These Little Ones

- The command?
 - Don't look down on even one of these little ones.
- The reason?
 - Their angels in heaven continually see the face of Jesus' Father.

Who or What are Angels?

- Serve as messengers from God (1:20)
- Ministered to Jesus after temptation (4:11)
- Reapers at the end of the age (13:39,41)
- Accompany Jesus at His return (16:27; 25:31)
- Do not marry (22:30)
- Eternal fire is for devil and his angels (25:41)
- There are many legions of angels (26:53)

Psalm 91: 1, 11-12

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. ...

For He will give **His angels** charge
concerning you,

To guard you in all your ways.

They will bear you up in their hands,

That you do not strike your foot against a stone.

Hebrews 1:13-14

But to which of the **angels** has He ever said,
“SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,
UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES
A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET”?

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out
to render service for the sake of those who
will inherit salvation?

Matthew 18:12-13

What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?

If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray.

Matthew 18:14

So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones **perish**.

Bad Life Endings

- 6 Drown by Force
- 8 Cast into the eternal fire
- 9 Cast into the fiery hell
- 14 Perish

God's Will for Everyone

God our Savior ... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

- 1 Timothy 2:3-4

The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

- 2 Peter 3:9

John 3:16

For God so loved the world,
that He gave His only begotten Son,
that **whoever believes in Him**
shall not perish,
but have eternal life.



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