



Who Is the Greatest?

by Thomas Trask

As we turned the calendar into the 21st century, there were those who created lists of who were the most notable men and women of the 20th century. Some were surprised at who made the list; others were amazed at who didn't make the list.

In Matthew 18, Jesus' disciples asked Him a similar question: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus' response was to call a child to himself and use the child as an illustration.

Childlike Faith

He said one must become childlike in faith. A child has a simplicity that one must have to become a believer. You tell a child about a certain matter, and he has not learned to question the matter. He simply believes what you told him was truth (verse 3).

Childlike Humility

He said one must be humble as a child. You see, a child has not yet learned pride, arrogance, or that he must think himself important. He hasn't yet known achievement or attain-

ment, so there is no reason for pride in one's ability. Titles or offices have not been given to him, so he doesn't know of self-importance. He hasn't yet learned that he doesn't know it all. So one of the true qualities that Jesus looks for is found in the heart of a child; humility (verse 4).

those who minister to children, those who value children, those who care for children, those who teach children.

If one should cause a child to be misled or deceived, it would be better that a millstone be placed about his neck and he be drowned. The lesson here is, don't tamper with the faith or trust a child has in the person of Jesus Christ. It is incumbent upon all to live and speak so that what we do and what we say does not undermine the faith of a child.

Why did Jesus place such value upon a child? Because the way their lives are shaped will determine what they will be when they are adults.



Leading the Children

If you receive a child in the name of the Lord, you receive Him [Jesus] (verse 5). The lesson for us in this verse is that Jesus places importance upon

Questions for Further Study—

1. What kind of person did Jesus say was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?
2. How would you define “childlike faith”?
3. How would you define “childlike humility”?
4. What is a lesson we should learn from Jesus’ statement that if we receive a child in His name, we receive Him?

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