

Greatness and Childlikeness (Matthew 18:1-14)

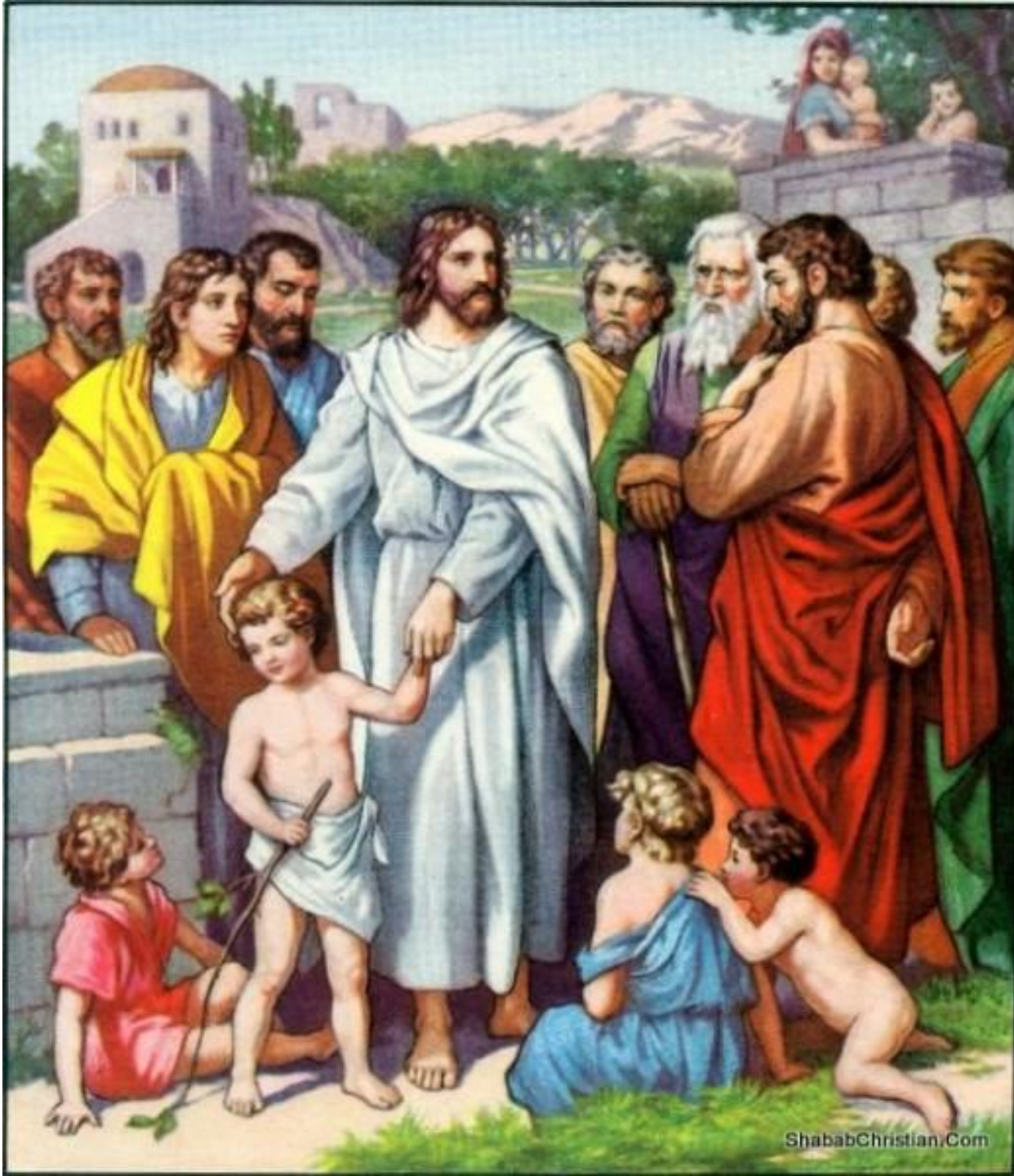
- Who Is the Greatest in the Kingdom? (1-4)
 - Temptations to Sin (5-9)
 - The Parable of the Lost Sheep (10-14)
- ³ **And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."**

Introduction

- Chapter 18: 4th Discourse-Christian Fellowship
 - Kingdom Community Life of Disciples (Church)
 - Pastoral Care and Discipline (Heb 12:10-11)
- I. 18:1-14 Greatness and Childlikeness
 - A. The Greatest in the Kingdom (1-9)
 - B. The Parable of the Lost Sheep (10-14)
- II. 18:15-35 Sin and Forgiveness
 - A. If Your Brother Sins (15-20)
 - B. The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (21-35)

Who Is the Greatest? (1-4)

- Problem of Rewards in Kingdom?
 - Secular Ideas vs. Kingdom Principle (Love)
- ❖ Becoming like Little Children
- “Kingdom of Heaven” and “Childlikeness”
 - Setting (1-2): “Disciples” and “a Little Child”
 - Humility and Greatness (3-4)
 - Privileges and Positions in Society (cf. Character)
 - Success-Status Symbols; Climbing the Ladders
 - Christ’s Incarnation (Humbling Oneself) [Phil 2:5]
 - “Little Low” Baptist Church



Childlikeness: [1Co 13:11, 14:20]

Not Learned in Graduate School

Robert Fulghum wrote in the KANSAS CITY TIMES, “Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the [graduate school](#) mountain, but there in the sandbox at nursery school.

“These are the things I learned:

- Share everything.
- Play fair.
- Don’t hit people.
- Put things back where you found them.
- Clean up your own mess.
- Don’t take things that aren’t yours.
- Say you’re sorry when you hurt somebody . . .
- When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands, and stick together. “

This writer has captured part of what Jesus meant when he said, **“Unless you become like little children, you won’t enter the kingdom of heaven.”** -

Hugh Duncan [Source unknown]

Temptations to Sin (5-10)

- Transition from “a little child” to “one of these little ones who believe in me” (5-6a)
 - “Little Ones” (Disciples) vs. Great Ones
- Heinousness of causing believers to sin (6-9)
 - Large “millstone of a donkey” (6b)
 - Woe to the world! woe to the man! (7)
 - If your hand or foot or eye causes you to sin (8-9)
- ❖ Not Offenses/Scandals (Stumbling-blocks); But Humble Service of Love as Christ

The Parable of the Lost Sheep (10-14)

- Life Principle (10)
 - “See that you **do not look down on one of these little ones**. For I tell you that **their angels in heaven** always see **the face of my Father** in heaven”
- Parable (12-14)
 - The Son of Man came to save what was lost (11)
 - What do you think? (12)
 - 100 sheep: **one** wandering sheep vs. **ninety-nine**
 - Truth of Happiness over **one** sheep found (13)
 - Father “is not willing that **any of these little ones** should be lost” (14)

Applications: True Greatness

- Desire for Greatness; YTCF Vision
- ❖ Need of Conversion to Enter the Kingdom
 - Self-Discovery in Christ (Childlike Humility)
 - New Kingdom Value: Childlikeness and Christ
 - World of Temptations and Sinful Habits
- ❖ Father's Shepherd Heart and Mind
 - Not Any "One of These Little Ones" - 1 : 99
- "Children of God" – Believers' Relationships
 - Trust and Obey; Love One Another