

As a Little Child

by David Wilkerson

Jesus desires a childlike faith from his people, and warns against offending new believers, as those who do will incur his wrath.

Scripture: Matthew 18:3

Topics: "Childlike Faith", "Humility in Christ"

Description

David Wilkerson emphasizes the necessity of childlike humility and faith in the relationship between believers and Christ, as illustrated by Jesus calling a little child to him. He explains that to enter the kingdom of heaven, one must undergo a significant transformation, turning away from self-dependency and embracing a simple devotion to God. Wilkerson warns against leading new believers astray by suggesting that faith in Christ alone is insufficient for salvation, stressing the importance of not placing stumbling blocks in front of them. He highlights the serious consequences for those who offend these 'little ones' in faith, urging church leaders to reflect on the gravity of their teachings. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a return to the foundational truth of the sufficiency of the cross for salvation.

Transcript

Matthew tells us Christ called a little child to him and took the youngster in his arms. He wanted to give his disciples a profound illustrated sermon. He told them, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me" (Matthew 18:3-5).

In these verses, Jesus lays out the kind of relationship he desires with his people. He's saying, "Look at this child. Here is my future church. This young one represents every new believer who's going to come to me in childlike faith, from every nation, race and tribe. I tell you, my church must relate to me as this child does."

The Greek word Jesus uses for converted here means "a sharp twist." Christ was telling these men, "You must undergo a sudden turning, a sharp twist, in your theology. You have to quickly turn away from all your thoughts of how to become special in my kingdom through your own works. That is the old way of doing things--and it is about to pass away."

Next he called for his disciples to humble themselves. He commanded them, "Become as little children." He was telling them, "I'm building my church on you. And if you want any part of it, you must become as humble as this little child I'm holding in my arms." I believe he's asking us for two simple things: repudiation of all self-dependency and an uncomplicated devotion. These traits, Jesus says, will characterize us as true kingdom servants: "Whosoever therefore will humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

Christ told his disciples very directly, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offenses. For it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh" (Matthew 18:6-7).

Jesus was expressing his wrath toward those who teach that the cross is not sufficient to save. He was talking to the very foundation stones of his church--his own disciples. He was warning them not to be offended by the cross. They had to accept the fact that he alone is full payment for our sins.

Likewise, Jesus is telling the church today: "Woe to any preacher, teacher or witness who puts a stumbling block before any of these baby converts. They come to me in simple faith and repentance. And you will incur my wrath if you offend them by saying, 'Jesus is not enough. If you really want to be saved, you've got to do more. Here are the specific doctrines and guidelines of our church....'"

Pastors, evangelists, teachers--let the seriousness of Jesus' harsh words sink into your soul. "...Better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

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