

# Who then is the GREATEST in the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

## Matthew 18:1-14

### Open in prayer

**Brief recap of sermon** — “Who Then is the Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven” Matthew 18:1-14

**Icebreaker**      *Whose face do you see when you think of a humble person?*

### **Introduction**

- *Talked about some of the ‘greatest’ according to world standards: Nebuchadnezzar, Beatles, Muhammad Ali, Michael Jordan*

### **Matthew 18:1-5 Humility**

- *Disciples expected an answer based on worldly standards (who is greatest in heaven?)*
- *Human tendency is a craving for status and recognition*
- *Jesus responds first with how to even get to heaven, and then focuses on humility*

### **Matthew 18:6-9 Blameless**

- *We must live a blameless life; do not cause others to sin or be an offense to them*
- *We must deal with sin immediately; it may be keeping someone else from eternal salvation*
- *Not dealing with our sin means eternity in hell’s fire*

### **Matthew 18:10-14 Care**

- *We must care for others; we must not look down upon anyone*
- *“...at the foot of the cross the ground is level”; nobody is better than or above another*
- *Some believe this verse is where the idea of ‘guardian angels’ comes from*
- *Every soul has value to God; we must care for everyone without prejudice*
- *“It is the will of God that all men be saved”*

### **Conclusion**

- *Greatest in heaven is the one who is humble, refuses to make others stumble, and who deeply value/protect others (particularly the vulnerable, lowly & overlooked)*
- *Will we: continually humble ourselves, take our sin seriously, and value every soul?*
- *When we walk this way, we are walking in the footsteps of Christ Himself*
- *We should strive for kingdom living (godliness) rather than worldly living (greatness per the world)*

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### Discussion Points –

**Proverbs 11:2, 16:18, 22:4; Philippians 2:3-8; James 4:10; Eph 4:1-3**

As residents of an eternal, spiritual kingdom, we are called to be humble. When you think of a humble person, who is the first person whose face pops into your mind? What are some of his/her traits? Who are some good examples of humble people from the Bible?

**1 Tim 2:1-4; Philippians 2:14-18; Micah 6:8; Psalm 15**

What did Jesus say about people who cause believers to sin? Pastor Kim called us to be blameless, and to deal with our sin immediately. Discuss things in our society which are commonly accepted from a worldly point of view, but which could be a stumbling block for someone else. What can we do to in our personal lives to help others avoid sin?

**Ps 138:6; James 1:27; Deut 10:18-19; Prov 19:17; Isaiah 1:17**

*“Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones...”* is a command from Jesus. We are called to care for the little ones. How do you interpret this verse? Is it referring to only young children? To whom else may it be referring? Jesus also told His disciples that *“...it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”* First, I find it comforting to hear the words “your Father”. Jesus is again emphasizing that they (and we!) are God’s children. The bigger point of the verse is referring to the one lost sheep. Earlier in these verses Jesus tells us that we must not lead another into sin. Now He takes it one step further. What is that? What are some ways we can be like the shepherd who goes after the one lost sheep?

**Heb 1:13-14; Matt 4:11; Acts 12:6-10; Luke 1:19, 26-27; Isaiah 6:1-3; Acts 12:23; Ps 91:11**

Do you believe in angels? What do you think they look like? Have you ever encountered one yourself – that you know of? Name some instances from the Bible where angels were present or discussed. What roles did/do they play?

### Personal Applications

Greatness. Our world has taught us how to define greatness from an earthly perspective. Yet Jesus defined heavenly greatness much differently. He calls us to a life of humility, blamelessness, and caregiving. This week, consider how you want to define ‘greatness’. Then watch your life for worldliness creeping in, identify it, and squash it before it has a chance to plant its seeds.

### Group Prayer

### Memory verse for the week

*“For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.” Matthew 18:11*

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