

Children in the Father's House

It is interesting to see how during His earthly ministry, children were always around Jesus. Children were often disregarded and unimportant and kept very much in the background, but Jesus was always welcoming, loving, patient, and kind. For Jesus, everyone mattered. Matthew 18 is all about relationships in the church. *How do we function together?* If the church is being what it needs to be — then it can effectively and credibly do what it needs to do.

I. Understanding the Background

- A. Matthew 18:1 - Here we see again the incessant debate among the disciples over who would be the **greatest**.
- B. Matthew 18:2 - *Jesus calls a **small child** and had him stand among them.*

II. Understanding Matthew 18.3-10

- A. 18.3-4 - **Become as a little child**. This is our very personal challenge.
- B. 18.5 - **We treat others as fellow children**
 1. *And whoever **welcomes** one child like this in my name welcomes me.*
 2. *Welcomes*, means to “welcome as a guest.” Kindness, love, and affection.
 3. How we treat others who wear the name of Christ is how we treat Jesus.
 - a) Acts 9:4 - *Why are you persecuting **ME**?*
 - b) Matthew 18.5 - When we see another believer — we need to see Jesus.
- C. 18.6-9 - **We protect each other like children**
 1. *But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to fall away—it would be better for him if a heavy **millstone** were hung around his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea.*
 2. Avoid at all costs. How can we keep from it?
 - a) Don't lead others into sin. Don't indirectly tempt others.
 - b) Don't fail in influencing others for good. Don't forget your example.
 3. 18.7 - stumbling blocks will come ... but **woe** to the person who creates them.
 4. 18.8-9 - Personal holiness matters: *It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into **hellfire**.*
- D. 18.10 - **We value each other**.
 1. *See to it that you don't **despise** one of these little ones, because I tell you that in heaven their angels continually view the face of my Father in heaven.*
 2. “Don't despise.” Do not treat with contempt or disdain or view as worthless.
 3. Galatians 3.28: *There is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus.*
 4. Two passages:
 - a) Romans 12:18: *If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with **everyone**.*
 - b) James 1:19–20: *My dear brothers and sisters, understand this: Everyone should be quick to listen, **slow** to speak, and slow to anger, for human anger does not accomplish God's righteousness.*

III. As We Close...

- A. Will we do as Jesus does? Will we value each other as God values us?