

**SAY YES
Greatness
Matthew 18:1-10**

Who comes to mind when you think of a GREAT PERSON? Most likely, you think of someone who held a HIGH RANK in history or someone that ACCOMPLISHED something significant on the BATTLEFIELD, or in SCIENCE, or POLITICS, or even ATHLETICS. Right now, the world is celebrating the accomplishments of GREAT OLYMPIC ATHELETES who are winning gold, silver, and bronze metals for their phenomenal displays of strength and grace on the ice and the snow. It is beautiful to watch. They are truly great. But are any of these the highest examples of greatness?

Once, the DISCIPLES asked Jesus this same question. "Who is the GREATEST in the Kingdom of Heaven?" They wanted to know the names of those that were of the HIGHEST RANK; those that were the MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE (the VIP'S) in God's Kingdom. Of course, they were hoping that he would mention their names on this list. He did not. **Jesus shocked them all with his answer.** That answer still shocks us today. [Matthew 18:1-4 NIV](#)

[1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2 He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. 3 And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.](#)

You want to see someone GREAT? Go find a CHILD! **[Picture of my grandkids!]** Now, all of us would say that, to some degree, we LOVE and VALUE children. But none of us would probably put a CHILD at the front of the line when we are asked to name those that are the greatest among us. Children are beautiful, yes. But they are also BOTHERSOME - especially if they are not OURS! They take up our valuable time, and they COMPLICATE our lives. They require a lot of time and energy and attention that we would rather spend on people and things that are much more rewarding and less demanding.

At our **Men's Retreat** last October, my brother John shared a thought that took our breath away. When the prophet Samuel was led by God to the house of Jesse to anoint a new king, Jesse brought all of his sons before Samuel but David. When none of those sons were chosen by God, Samuel asked if Jesse had another son. Jesse's reply was revealing. He called David the "Katan." On the surface, he simply said that David, his "youngest," was out in the field tending sheep. Jesse's failure to bring him into the house to meet Samuel for this important event revealed that he did not think David was important enough to bring in for Samuel. He was just the RUNT.

"Katan" (young) (Also could mean **small, least, insignificant, unimportant**)

-Remember John's use of the word at Men's retreat: **"Hakatan" - Worthless**

-Saul said of himself that he was unimportant and worthless [\[1 Samuel 9:21\]](#)

-There was even a man named "Hakatan" in scripture! [\[Ezra 8:12\]](#)

Viewing and treating children this way is exactly what Jesus said NOT to do! Jesus reiterated the truth several times over that CHILDREN are first in importance in heaven's view. This is why Jesus said these words: **Matthew 18:10 NIV**

10 "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that **their angels** in heaven **always see the face of my Father** in heaven.

This message is all about one plea:

Say YES to God in answer to his CALL for you to SERVE the NEXT GENERATION.

Are YOU serving the generation that is just appearing on the morning horizon of humanity? Do you even think that you are remotely RESPONSIBLE to help this next generation of young people in any way? **Does this mean that God is not concerned about OLD PEOPLE coming to Jesus? (Of course not!)** Jesus established a completely NEW STANDARD for us in the way that we are to treat children when he walked this earth. In his day, children were viewed more as a commodity than as a highly valued human being. Behind the veneer of modern civilization, the same is true today. **[Read from Who Is This Man? By John Ortberg - P. 28, 30]**

KEY TRUTHS ABOUT THE NEXT GENERATION FOR US TO CONSIDER:

Every child is a potential PRINCE or PRINCESS in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Matthew 19:14 NIV

14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven **belongs** to such as these."

God's greatest works in this earth have MOST OFTEN been accomplished through those that knew God from a VERY YOUNG AGE:

*Joseph *Moses *Samuel *David *Solomon *Jeremiah *Josiah *Jeremiah *Daniel
[My perspective of REVIVAL with regard to KIDS!]

The WORLD KNOWS just WHEN and HOW to get ahold of people: As Children!
Research: Blood Diamond (Movie) – African nations that recruit 8-year-old boys to become warriors for their clan. Awful, yet very real, truth about how children can be trained for evil.

***Jesus said that to WELCOME children in his name was to welcome HIM.**

*To welcome means, "to take by the hand, to grant access to, to receive into one's own family, to make one's own."

Our GOAL ought to be that of BRINGING children into the PRESENCE of GOD!

***DON'T DISRUPT a child's relationship with God! Matthew 18:6 NIV**

6 "If anyone causes one of these little ones--those who believe in me--to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

To **STUMBLE** = to put a stumbling block or impediment in the way, upon which another may trip and fall. To cause a person to begin to distrust and desert one whom he ought to trust and obey.

How do we cause children to stumble?

*We USE them and ABUSE them! [Verbal/Physical/Sexual Abuse]

*We fail to PROTECT them from UNGODLY MODELS and GODLESS MINDSETS.

- We DISCOURAGE FAITH with foolish words. [Educators and Infidels]

-We give them unrestricted ACCESS to HARMFUL IMAGES and INFORMATION.

*We FAIL to EXPOSE them to SPIRITUAL TRUTH!

***Jesus DEFENDS anyone who brings children to him! Mark 10:13-16 NIV**

13 People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 When Jesus saw this, **he was indignant**. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15 Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." 16 **And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.**

-The Kingdom BELONGS to such as them! [Princes and Princesses!]

-This included children and babies (those who couldn't appreciate this face to face meeting with God?)

*This implies a HELPLESSNESS and desperate NEED to be BROUGHT!

*This is not just about BABIES. There are many TEENS and MILLINIALS that HAVE NO CLUE about Jesus!

***We can make God APPROACHABLE for them. (See Vs. 16 above)**

-They do not need to FEAR his TOUCH; they need to learn to DESIRE it!

*This helps give them an appropriate perspective about God and his love.

-We can TEACH them HOW to "beat a path" to God in their everyday lives.

JOSIAH was a young child who – at age 16 – "beat a path" to the Lord.

*How did this happen? He had people who helped to BRING HIM to the Lord.

[Hilkiah the High Priest and Shaphan the Secretary brought him the TORAH]

-We can PRAY for them . . . regularly.

What is our RESISTANCE to serving the NEXT GENERATION?

*We are OLDER now and don't have the ENERGY to work with kids!

*We don't have TIME to spend on other people's kids!

*Children should be SEEN but not HEARD!

*Children are ROWDY and LOUD and DIFFICULT to lead.

*Teenagers are REBELLIOUS and MOODY.

*Millennials are FRUSTRATING and LAZY.
"Youth is wasted on the young!" **NOT!**

HOW WE SHOULD TREAT THE NEXT GENERATION AT CHC: **Refer to BROCHURE**

STORY: D-Now in 2005 where God showed up!

- Resistance by some
- Joy for many

Young people IGNITED all of the greatest movements of God I have ever seen!

- Vilonia
- Moss Bluff
- CHC

Will YOU COMMIT to working with the Next Generation at CHC . . . TODAY?

Let's pray.