

"WALKING WITH THE CHOSEN" | FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 1

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE: "JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN" | EPISODE 3

You have shown me the way of life, and you will fill me with the joy of your presence. ~ Acts 2:28 NLT

OPENING PRAYER

Abba Father, you invite us to use this name of endearment. Because we are your children, you sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts, asking us to call you Abba, just as Jesus did. (Galatians 4:6) We recognize that when we grow older, our child-like faith fades. Therefore, redirect us to the security of the simple path where we trust you completely and know, love, and follow Jesus. It is in his name we pray. Amen.

CONNECTING QUESTION

As a child, what was your favorite Bible story about Jesus? If you did not know Jesus as a child, what is your favorite story about him today?

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 11:6-9; Matthew 18:1-5; 19:13-15

WATCH VIDEO

The Chosen | Season 1 | Episode 3 *(Please note that artistic license has been taken with character portrayals and dialogue.)*

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EXPLORE THE TEXT

Invite the Holy Spirit to lead as you work through the questions in this guide. Cover what your time allows and encourage everyone to finish the guide on his or her own.

1. Biblical scholars consider Isaiah 11:6-9 Messianic in nature. Who do you think the child is in verse 6? No matter the circumstances, what confidence for the future can you cling to in verse 9? (See also Job 5:23; Ezekiel 34:25; Hosea 2:18.)
2. What are your thoughts on Jesus' words to the disciples in Matthew 18:1-5? What quality did Jesus value most in children? (See verse 4.) Is there wisdom for you in those verses? Please explain.
3. The disciples scolded the parents for wanting Jesus to bless their children. How did Jesus respond to their interference? What is Jesus' priority in connecting with children and where he wants them to belong? (Matthew 19:13-15) (Also see Matthew 11:25-26)

4. "Not only did Jesus become like us to keep us, He also promises to make us more like Him." How do Paul's words in Galatians 5:16-26 guide you back to a child-like faith? Make a list of what the Holy Spirit desires your life to reflect.

5. What does it mean to you to be a "child of God?" (See John 1:12-13; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:26-29; 1 John 3:1-2) From your perspective, what child-like qualities are lost in adulthood? Which ones do you want to recover and make part of your daily walk with Jesus?

6. "To be alive is to be broken; to be broken is to stand in need of grace. Honesty keeps us in touch with our neediness and the truth that we can only find our hope and healing in the simplicity of childlike trust in God's grace." (Brennan Manning) How can you cultivate trust and humility in your relationship with God? In what ways can you bring his peace and harmony into your relationships with others?

JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN

Child-like faith is found in God's presence.

JESUS: I'm telling you this because even though you are children, and the elders in your life have lived longer, many times adults need the faith of children. And if you hold on to this faith, really tightly, someday soon you will understand all of what I am saying to you. (Dialogue from Episode 3, titled "Jesus Loves the Little Children")

Episode 3 is "not just about children. When it comes to God's love, it's not about our age, our appearance, our abilities, or anything else we may or may not bring to the table. It's about what already is. We are precious to our Maker."

For this week and into the future, ask Jesus to constantly refresh you with a more innocent and obedient heart to restore a more child-like faith. Schedule time to be still in God's presence, search for and write down the Bible verses that encourage you, record the prayers that foster intimate conversations with the King of the universe, and celebrate the ways the Lord confirms that you are cherished and precious to him.

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus, we humbly come to you in prayer and praise for the Father's gift of eternal goodness. He adopted us as his children through your sacrificial act of gracious love. Through your mercy and compassion, you keep us from stumbling. Through your forgiveness, you present us before the Father without fault and with great joy. (Jude 1:24-25) May our faith grow in child-like ways as we seek to simply trust you with confidence and blessed assurance. It is in your name, we once again say thank you for covering us with your undeserved but gratefully received generosity. Amen!

Our Father...

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