

# Childlike Wonder

(Matthew 18:1-4)

Yearly Theme: *“Peace is...”*

Series Title: *“Eternal Peace”*

December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021

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## Something to think about:

As we grow older, we tend to lose a sense of the childlike wonder that we once had. Things that once used to thrill us and captivate us no longer capture our attention. Childlike wonder often gives way to more adult things like working, paying bills, and busying ourselves with a lot of mundane things (you know... adult stuff). But Jesus had something to say about this. Listen to what he says:

*Matthew 18:1-4 (NLT),*

***About that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?”***

***<sup>2</sup>Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. <sup>3</sup>Then he said, “I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. <sup>4</sup>So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.***

<sup>1</sup>

So, what did Jesus mean by this? How can we become like children again? And, really, who can enter the kingdom of God if none of us can become like children?

***Key Point: “Childlike wonder and faith are the means to true peace and freedom in Christ.”***

William Barclay says there are three very distinct things in the message of Jesus here. When Jesus said we must “become like little children” what he was saying was that...

## **1. We must learn to be humble.**

*Philippians 2:3-8 (NLT),<sup>3</sup> Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.*

<sup>5</sup> You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had.

<sup>6</sup> Though he was God,  
he did not think of equality with God  
as something to cling to.

<sup>7</sup> Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;  
he took the humble position of a slave  
and was born as a human being.

When he appeared in human form,  
<sup>8</sup> he humbled himself in obedience to God  
and died a criminal’s death on a cross.

## **2. We must learn to be dependent.**

*1 Peter 5:7 (NLT), Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.*

## **3. We must learn to trust.**

*Romans 8:28 (NLT), And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*

## **Something to take home:**

Barclay says that “The child’s humility is the pattern of the Christian’s behavior to his fellow-men, and the child’s dependence and trust are the pattern of the Christian’s attitude towards God, the Father of all.”<sup>2</sup>

As adults we need to learn once again to find that childlike wonder and faith that we once had. We need to tap back into the freedom we once had as children. Like children, we need to stand in awe at the miracle of snow, the beauty of the mountains, the calming of a summer breeze, the soothing sound of the spring rains, and the sight of the millions of stars on a clear night.

Like children we need to lift our heads out of the doldrums and into the realm of possibility and creativity. We need to learn to explore again, to hope again, to trust again. We need to learn to dream again, to live again in the wonder of God who saves us from our sins.

***Key Point: “Childlike wonder and faith are the means to true peace and freedom in Christ.”***

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<sup>1</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Mt 18:1–4). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>2</sup> *The Daily Study Bible Series, The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. 2, 176.*