

Five Traits of Kingdom Citizens—Part 1

“Humility”

Matthew 18:1-6

I. A _____ (v. 1)

- a. **At that time** = right after the events of chapter 17, still in Capernaum, probably in Peter's home
- b. “⁴⁶**An argument started among them as to which of them might be the greatest.**” (Luke 9:46)
- c. Positives:
 - i. They did believe Jesus was the Christ
 - ii. They did believe in a **kingdom of heaven**
 - iii. There is nothing wrong with wanting to be great; if you understand what greatness is in the kingdom of heaven
- d. Negatives:
 - i. They were expecting Jesus to name one of them as the greatest; even though He had repeatedly taught that in His kingdom greatness was exemplified in ... “**the poor in spirit...the meek...the merciful...the peacemakers...the persecuted**” (cf. Matt. 5:1-12)
 - ii. Jesus had just predicted His humble suffering and sacrifice
 - iii. They still wanted an earthly king to rescue them from the Romans and not a spiritual King would rescue them from sin (cf. Matt. 20:20-21; Luke 22:24; Acts 1:6)

II. A _____ (vs. 2-4)

- a. **child = paidion (παῖδιον)** = “young child,” “below the age of puberty,” “a toddler” (cf. Mark 9:36)
- b. In the ancient world children were treated like second-class citizens
- c. In this chapter...we the church are the **little children...the lost sheep...the sinning brother... and the indebted servants** (cf. Matt. 18:1-6, 10, 12-14, 15-20, 21-35)

- d. Jesus called **the child**, and he humbly came!

- e. **“Truly I say to you,** = announcing a serious truth!

- f. **unless you are converted and become like children** = the disciples were asking the wrong question!

- i. **converted = strephō (στρέψω)** = “to turn around,” “to repent”
 - ii. There are only two paths you can go by (cf. Matt. 7:13-14; James 4:6; Matt. 23:12; cf. Ps. 138:6; Prov. 3:34; 1 Peter 5:5)

- g. **humbles himself as this child** = not acting like immature children, but in this context of the disciples' prideful desire for rank and privilege, the one clear trait of **this child** that all must adopt as Kingdom Citizens, is his HUMILITY!

- i. **Humbles = tapeinoō (ταπεινώω)** = “to make low” (cf. Phil. 2:3-11)

III. A _____ (vs. 5-6)

- a. **whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me** = Jesus and church are inseparably intertwined (cf. Matt. 24:31-46; Acts 9:4; cf. Luke 10:16; John 13:20; 15:5; 1 Cor. 6:15; 12:27; Rev. 21:2, 9)
 - i. This unbreakable bond is what makes this warning so serious!
- b. Believers must be careful that their freedom in Christ does not cause a brother or sister to stumble
 - i. **stumble = skandalizō (σκανδαλίζω)** which means “to cause someone to stumble or cease believing”
- c. Unbelievers must beware the consequences of trapping or luring one of God's children into sin or apostacy
 - i. **mylos onikos** (μύλος ὄνικος) = “millstone of a donkey”