

Entering the Kingdom

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Matthew 18:1-8.

B. The most common name the people of God are called by is “children.”

C. This is a term that links us to God. (I John 2:12)

II. The disciples were looking at the kingdom through an earthly definition. (Mark 9, Matthew 16:4)

A. Jesus was talking about self-denial and humility all along, but the disciples wanted power. (Matthew 20)

B. Jesus deals with the disciples’ delusions of grandeur by launching into a discourse about children.

III. Lessons about the childlikeness of the believer.

A. The people of the kingdom must enter like children. (v.3-4)

1. The kingdom of heaven is the sphere of God’s rule. (Matthew 19:23)

2. The kingdom of God emphasizes the character of God’s rule, while the kingdom of heaven emphasizes His rule.

3. There are many facets to the rule. (Matthew 25:1, 13:24-27)

4. Entering the kingdom means to be saved. (Matthew 7:21, 18:3, 19:23, 18:8, 5:21, 17)

a. One must repent to enter the kingdom, which means to turn from one’s sin.

b. Submission to deity is necessary for entering the kingdom.

c. Conversion is the will that brings about repentance, which is a turn to God. (I Thessalonians 1:9, Acts 3:19, 11:21, 15:19, 26:18-20)

d. Salvation is a result of election. Then comes instruction (Psalm 119:7, Romans 10). Then comes conviction (Psalm 119:159, Lamentations 3:40, Psalm 78:34). Conviction leads to repentance (II Corinthians 7:10). Repentance leads to conversion. Conversion leads to obedience.

e. One turns around by becoming a little child. In the kingdom, humility is the key.

B. The people of the kingdom must be treated like children. (v.5-9)

C. The people of the kingdom must be cared for like children. (v. 10-14)

D. The people of the kingdom must be disciplined like children. (v.15-20)

E. The people of the kingdom must be forgiven like children. (v. 21-35)

Application questions:

1. What does it mean to be like “children” in entering the kingdom?

2. In what ways do you struggle with humility?

3. How would you counsel someone seeking help with pride in his or her life? Explain.
