

Sermon Study Questions

May 1st, 2022

1. Read Matthew 18:1-7
2. Matthew tells us that the disciples came to ask Jesus, “Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven,” but we know from Mark and Luke that this was preceded by an argument between them as to who was the greatest (Mark 9:33-37, Luke 9:46-48). What do they mean by *greatness*, and why is it ironic that the disciples would be concerned with who is the greatest at this time?
3. Why would it have been so shocking for Jesus to set a child in their midst in response to their question about who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?
4. In v.3 Jesus says, “You must become like children,” and in v.4 He clarifies that by saying, “Whoever humbles himself like this child.” What exactly is Jesus saying by telling us we must humble ourselves like this child? Is He saying that children are a model of humility? If not, what is He saying? (You may find other translations like the NIV helpful in answering).
5. According to Jesus’ teaching here, greatness in God’s Kingdom doesn’t look like greatness in the kingdoms of this world. Contrast greatness in these two kingdoms.
6. Seeing what greatness looks like in God’s Kingdom shows the paradoxical nature of His kingdom, that the principles and ethics and way it operates are completely different from the kingdoms of this world. In a practical sense, why is it important for you as a Christian to understand that?
7. If you notice, the disciples asked Jesus in v.1 who is the greatest in the KOH, but Jesus’ answer in v.3 tells them what is needed to enter His kingdom. He then answers their question about who is the greatest in the KOH in v.4. But in doing so, Jesus tells them that the same thing is required for both entering and being the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, namely, becoming like a child. What is He telling us about life in His kingdom by telling us that entering into it and being the greatest in it require the same thing? How should this impact you?
8. What is Jesus’ point in saying, “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me”?
9. How does the theme of humility; of not seeing yourself as great, but as a child, tie into what Jesus says in v.6-7 about not causing one of these little ones to stumble?
10. Pray!