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'...AND BECOME LIKE CHILDREN...'

Shortly before facing the horrors of the cross, Jesus' disciples asked Him, "Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matthew 18:1) No doubt they were taken aback when He responded, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:2) While we may be quite well acquainted with these passages and the stated intent; take a step back for a moment and see another application. That being the benefits to be derived by staying young at heart and approaching life as would a child. Not being childish mind you, but child like.



What tremendous comfort it is to be able to as Peter writes, "Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you." (1Peter 5:7)

"A child's life is binary; to play or not play...There is liberation in having black-and-white choices..." The same should be true with us. We know the right thing to do, we just need to do it. "Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do, and does not do it, to him it is sin." (James 4:17) That is so simple and so basic, yet sadly so many still struggle. Why do we find the need

to complicate life?

In an article from Psychology Today, several mental health professionals set forth their findings about the habits of children that would behoove adults to adopt. In reading over them, it is amazing how they correlated with principles and teachings found in the Scriptures. "Children see the world through beginner's eyes. They aren't constrained by experience..." Consider this from the perspective of prejudice. Children have to be taught to be biased, it isn't by nature, it is clearly by nurture. I realize that this is highly idealistic, but imagine if all would embrace the teaching seen in James 2:8-9. "If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law, according to the Scriptures, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and convicted by the law as transgressors.'"

Consider another quote from the aforementioned Psychology Today article. "Young kids are exceptional sleepers...They instinctively know how to unconditionally surrender to sleep." What about us? Have we learned to let go and turn it over to God? To be fully trusting and confident in God and His will.

"When children feel upset, they run to someone who loves them and seek comfort. Adults withdraw or lash out—we've lost the instinct to receive support from loved ones." (ibid) Wouldn't it be wonderful if we were indeed more child like? To be able to find comfort, from someone who cares deeply. That comfort and help that we long for can be ours. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." (2Corinthians 1:3-4)

The Scriptures are replete with scores of passages that teach the need for us to be more child-like. But perhaps the one that resonates the most is seen in Paul's first epistle to the church in Corinth. "Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature." (14:20) In order to get to that ideal, we need to be like "new born babes" (1Peter 2:2) and have a longing for the word. Then in the strength provided by the spiritual food "press on to maturity." (Hebrews 6:1) (wbe)