

1.20.20 - Little Children

In answer to the question from the Apostles about who would be the greatest, Jesus used a little child to illustrate his answer. Here is the passage: **Mat 18:2-5 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.** We are going to look at some of the characteristics of little children and hopefully tie in some inferences to naturism.

Little children are rather helpless at birth and for some time thereafter and no one likes to be helpless, however we need to admit to this condition before we can become a Christian. We have nothing to compensate for our shortcomings following God's will for our lives i.e. sins. After that we need to learn our new family characteristics. As the little child needs help learning how to be an adult, we need help to reach spiritual maturity. In the spiritual realm this help would come from pastors, teachers, mentors, and friends. No, you are not allowed to blame your bad spiritual life on bad spiritual parents. It is your own responsibility to study for yourself whether you had good or bad spiritual parents, but more so if you need to make up for bad parents. Many of the problems in Christianity today are caused by people who did not study for themselves and have no idea what the Bible says about a certain subject...such is the case with nakedness.

Little children usually are not concerned about who is the greatest. I do remember a movie where two young boys were arguing about whether their dad could beat the other's dad. In the spiritual world, the born-again children have the same Daddy, so there is no room for arguing whose Daddy is the greatest. I have not seen this in the real world though, but it stuck with me for some reason. Without attempting to be the greatest, little children do not need to promote themselves which may be the reason they are so willing to shed their clothing whenever it is a bother or not needed for warmth or safety. They have nothing that needs hidden if they are not promoting themselves and nothing to be ashamed of either.

I remember a story in an article on the Sunny Day's website about two girls who were left in the car while the parents did something away from the car.

They got the idea to dance in the sun without their clothing. They were having a great time till the adults returned. The person writing the story pressed her mother for what they did that was wrong. Her mother finally admitted that the child had embarrassed her. That was an unusual answer for a textile believer, but the best answer for the child that could be given if clothing is required by your textile god.

Another story that seems to be a common theme amongst naturists is the slow day at the fishing hole. You know, it's a hot summer day and the fish aren't biting so everyone decides to go swimming instead of fishing. They came to fish so they have no swim suits. They would probably get in trouble coming home with wet and dirty clothing. The solution is to swim without clothing and take an air bath to dry off before getting dressed again. The experience is always positive if no adult prude shows up unexpectedly to spoil the innocent fun.

Children of poor parents in Bible time were more likely to be naked than adults simply because they grow out of their clothing rather fast and they would be more likely to get it dirty or damage it. The Reese Chronological Bible puts Mathew 18 in October. The internet gives 72 degrees Fahrenheit as the average high temperature for the month and 62 degrees for the average low temperature. Jesus did not appeal to the rich and famous. The child or children that He chose to use as an example could easily have been naked. That would support the point Jesus was trying to make. The child was probably playing with his friends out of range enough that they would not be a disturbance with no thought of who was or who would become the greatest. His nakedness would make him of no reputation i.e. just another child playing on the outside of the group. Jesus was God even here on earth and He became just an average man with no reputation other than obeying the Father in everything He did.

Children have very few decisions to make. They only need to follow their parent's commands. This is what we are expected to do in the spiritual realm...follow what Jesus would have us do. As we become more mature, we know what to do in more and more situations. We take on the family manner of doing things. Others should see our good works and praise or honor our family, not us, since without the family the young children become spoiled brats or worse.

Children are expected to mature intellectually, physically and emotionally. Life seems to be constantly testing us to see how we are maturing. Parents observe the results of these tests and allow more freedom and responsibility or withhold either depending on the test results. Our Heavenly Father does the same. He does not give us a "Job" test if we are not mature enough to handle it based on earlier test results.

Little children have an innocence that is lost as they grow up. They have not learned to be ashamed of or to be embarrassed about their bodies. They accept what their parents and teachers tell them as true. Yes, they learn to lie at an early age and to pass the blame, but they seem to think older people do not do those things. This makes them easy to influence for good or bad or deceive. New converts have the same innocence and are often led into bad doctrine or cults as a result.

Children are noted for their enjoyment of play time. Even this has a purpose. It develops skills relating to others near their age with small consequences for errors. These skills are needed the rest of their lives. Adults need to keep working on these skills, but they have more mature names to replace play like socializing or fellowshiping. We are expected to assemble and celebrate even in the New Testament age. From my nursery rhyme days, I remember:

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,

All play and no work makes Jack a mere toy.

I remember the first line better than the last line, but both are important and like so much of life, balance is the important part.

If you're looking for a picture of the child relationship as it relates to us and God you need look no further than Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. God was and is the parent and Adam and Eve were His children. God created them to enjoy this new playground that He had placed them in. He created them naked and not ashamed because that is how He wanted them to live. He even made the skin that covers our bodies to absorb sunshine creating a healthy dose of vitamins being produced as a result. He made the skin with receptors that create a sensation of well being from the sun, air and water touching it. He wanted them to be naked just as He wants us to be naked too. You ask for proof...He told the disciples that the kingdom of Heaven is made up of children (of such is the Kingdom of Heaven). He told the disciples that to come to Christ you must have the faith of a little child. He speaks of the millennial reign and tells us that a little child shall lead

them. You see, he expects us to have childlike faith in Him, that when He tosses us up in the air, we expect Him to catch us. When he stands in the pool with His arms out and tells us to jump, that we don't even hesitate...we jump.

When God asked Adam and Eve who told thee that thou wast naked...we know that He was asking them who told you that nakedness was bad, who told you to be ashamed of your naked bodies. Basically, He was asking who told you this lie! How do we know that? Because God had told them it was good. Now they hid...someone had told them to be ashamed. We know since God had told them it was good that it wasn't God who changed His mind, so Satan is the only one left. It sure does sound like a lot of well-meaning parents who tell their children to put their clothes back on. I personally find it a shame that Christians are the one's promoting Satan's lie to Adam and Eve with the most vigor in our modern society.

What can we learn from God's Word and Its repeated message that we Christians are to become as little children?

1. We need to have child like faith in the Father
2. We need to have child like humility when it comes to each other
3. We need to allow the Father to make the decisions for us and simply follow His orders
4. We need to enjoy life as a child enjoys playtime and as the Father originally intended and all that that entails

The Bible tells us that Jesus came to provide life and it then further goes on to say life more abundant. Stop living in the Pharisees world of restrictions and start living in the freedom that Grace provides. Start enjoying life again and especially the abundant life of a child of God's!