

PARK HEIGHTS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Thus Saith the Lord

A LITTLE CHILD

By Jeff Sweeten

To be saved, one must become as a little child. Jesus said, *“Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven”* (Matthew 18:3). Little children are the template for our salvation. Jesus was not encouraging us to become spoiled, self-absorbed, brats given to fist-banging tantrums when they do not get their way (that mistaken paradigm adopted by way too many so-called Christians). No, in fact, Jesus explained exactly what childlike characteristic we are to incorporate. *“Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven”* (v. 4).

The realization of helplessness, humility of submission, and desire for Divine dependency is the issue in this directive. Even the most belligerent child is under no illusions about independence, strength or self sufficiency. The minute a genuine threat rears its ugly head, the challenged child will predictably run screaming to mommy or daddy for protection, consolation or healing. That’s just how they roll. And, this attitude flies in the face of our “it’s-all-about-me” culture. Many labor under the delusion that they are self-reliant and independent; some like to think of themselves as capable of pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps, hoeing their own row and charting their own path, taking credit for the self-made product, simultaneously absolving themselves of any and all responsibility for the damaged product this mindset renders. It is pure arrogance to think “the truth comes from within” when Jesus bluntly states: *“I am the way, the truth, and the life...”* (John 14:6). This egotistic, self-absorbed kind of thinking has no place in Christianity.

In order to even become a child of God, we must understand salvation to be a product of God’s grace realized in our obedience; meritorious works – God never owes us anything – are ineffectual (Ephesians 2:8). The idea that we can earn passage through the “Pearly Gates” is a pernicious lie. Jesus said: *“So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do”* (Luke 17:10, KJV). No matter what we do (and we **must** choose to obey the Father in every detail), this obedient, submissive approach to God completely concedes that it is God who saves the little child.

JOIN US ON SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY!

SUNDAY: 9:30 a.m. Bible Study • 10:25 a.m. Morning Worship • 1:30 p.m. Bible Study

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 p.m. Bible Study • Contact the minister at 254-370-4130