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Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

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## **The Greatness of Childlikeness**

### **Matthew 18:1-10**

#### I. Who is the Greatest?

***Matthew 18:1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"***

##### A. A Shameful Dispute

Actually Matthew greatly reduces this account, as he frequently did... the fuller story is told in Mark and Luke

As they were walking along the road, they were privately having this argument

***Mark 9:33-34 They came to Capernaum. When he was in the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?"<sup>34</sup> But they kept quiet because on the way they had argued about who was the greatest.***

The issue went deeper than merely which of them was the best person... it had to do with future positions in the coming Kingdom of Heaven, which they stubbornly persisted in seeing as a purely earthly regime, as they had always known

And each of them wanted to be sure he was in the position of preeminence over his fellow apostles!! Amazing, the cold-hearted, loveless jockeying for position

And it was shameful, and they knew it... because no one wanted to tell Jesus what they were arguing about

##### 1. Shameful because of the desire

- a. Rooted in Satan's ambition
- b. A desire to move up, up, up

##### 2. Shameful because of the timing

- a. Matthew stresses this... it was "*at that time*"
- b. Jesus had just spoken to them again about His impending death

***Matthew 17:22-23*** *When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. <sup>23</sup> They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life." And the disciples were filled with grief.*

- c. Apparently their grief over Jesus' coming death didn't last long
  - d. Nor did they fully understand its significance
  - e. So there they were arguing about which of them would be the greatest
3. Shameful because of the arrogance
  4. Shameful because of the example of Christ
  5. Shameful because of how deeply rooted this dispute would be
    - a. The night before Jesus was crucified, they were still arguing about it
    - b. AMAZING!!! That very night!!!
    - c. I believe that is exactly why Jesus washed the disciples' feet

#### B. The Relentlessness of Pride

1. Pride is the root evil... it is relentless
  - a. Augustine said pride is the root sin, giving birth to all the others
  - b. It is a relentless commitment to self... to self-interest, self promotion, self feeding, self preening
  - c. From this bitter root comes all other sin, said Augustine
  - d. It is the essence of what Paul calls the "flesh"... and we will battle it all the days of our lives
2. God's central desire... to crush our pride
  - a. Over and over in the Bible, we see God's deepest desire is to destroy all human pride
  - b. Pride led to Satan's fall... and to man's as well
  - c. God makes many such statements:

***1 Peter 5:5, James 4:6*** *"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."*

***Leviticus 26:19*** *I will break down your stubborn pride*

***Proverbs 8:13 To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance***

***Isaiah 2:17 The arrogance of man will be brought low and the pride of men humbled; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day,***

***Daniel 4:37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.***

3. God's greatest weapon in that battle: the gospel
  - a. The gospel exalts as Savior a humble Jewish carpenter whose bloody, ugly, agonized twisted body is our salvation
  - b. He stood under the wrath of God and put on display for all to see what we, each and every one of us deserved for our sin
  - c. Every lash of the scourge on Jesus' back proclaimed the justice of God against our sin
  - d. Every drop of blood pouring from His opened veins screamed to the world, O sinful humanity... this is what YOU deserved for your many transgressions against my holy law!!"
  - e. And even more humbling, this is God's assessment of all our efforts at self-salvation... all our "righteous works" are like raw sewage in God's holy sight, screaming of our pride in doing them
  - f. No, says God the Father... you will be saved only as you bow down to the bloody ground at the foot of Jesus' cross... there on the ground with all the other humbled sinners
  - g. Only as you enter through the low, narrow gate, stripped of all pride and good works religion and human philosophy and human power and human achievement will you be saved

***1 Corinthians 1:23-25 we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.***

So imagine the heartbreak of Jesus in hearing his chosen disciples arguing on the road about which of them will be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven

They have no idea what they are talking about

The Kingdom of Heaven is a place completely pure, beautiful in light and glory

There the angels hide their faces before Christ, and He is the very one who bows down low to serve us

### C. The Greatest is... Jesus

1. that title of honor—greatest in the Kingdom—has already been given... to Christ

***Philippians 2:5-11 Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! <sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***

2. the titles and positions given on the basis of humility

***Matthew 20:25-28 "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>26</sup> Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>27</sup> and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- <sup>28</sup> just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."***

3. downward mobility... the hardest lesson in life

## II. Becoming Like a Little Child

***Matthew 18:2-4 He called a little child and had him stand among them. <sup>3</sup> And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.***

### A. An Object Lesson

1. Jesus is the greatest teacher in history
  - a. He uses creation and daily life experience to teach profound spiritual lessons
  - b. He points at the field and says "Consider the lilies of the field..."
  - c. He points at the birds and says "Watch how God provides for them"
  - d. He says "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree..."
  - e. His parables are full of the lessons of daily life

- i) A woman mixing yeast into dough
- ii) A fisherman separating good fish from bad
- iii) A farmer scattering seed that lands on different kinds of soil

2. Here He uses an object lesson... an actual, physical child

- a. No point in speculating who the child is...
- b. It could be any child
- c. The qualities of childhood Jesus is going to extol are universal
- d. The Greek word *paidion* used here identifies a very young child, sometimes even an infant; this one was probably a toddler, because he could come when called
- e. Picture the little child... standing in the center of the apostles, those “great men”
- f. He came as soon as Jesus called
- g. He standing in their midst and quietly looks up at them, blinking and smiling
- h. He is innocent, free from all their “great issues” and “great concerns”
- i. Soon the power of the lesson comes through...and perhaps they begin to feel ashamed of themselves

3. the lesson is clear: you must be converted... and you must humble yourselves even to enter heaven

#### B. Jesus Loves the Little Children

- 1. Jesus was almost constantly surrounded by children
- 2. they seem to love Him, and He clearly loves them
- 3. they feel safe around Him... He is gentle and tender with them
- 4. He touches them with His gentle hands
- 5. He prays for them, looks them in the eyes, smiles at them, speaks to them gently in words they can understand
- 6. AND He looks on ALL believers like His little children

*Matthew 18:6 one of these little ones who believe in me to sin*

*Matthew 10:42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.*

*Matthew 9:2 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."*

*Matthew 9:22 Jesus turned and saw her. "Take heart, daughter," he said, "your faith has healed you."*

Jesus was perhaps only thirty-one years old when He spoke this way... but He is also the Ancient of Days, from eternity past, through whom God the Father made all things

All of us are like children to him, born yesterday and knowing nothing

### C. The Amiable Characteristics of a Child

1. what did Jesus see in children that He made them the paradigm of human virtue?
2. clearly the Bible portrays children accurately and realistically: they are sinners like adults... *foolishness is bound up the heart of child (Proverbs 22:15)*
3. they are incomplete, immature, weak, dependent, undeveloped, unskilled, vulnerable
4. BUT they key is, they KNOW this about themselves, and are not arrogant about it!
5. and God is greatly exalted in a childlike dependence that understands our true weakness before God and before our powerful foes
6. what delights Jesus about children? Humble trust, a clear recognition of weakness and dependence... freedom from guile and trickery... readiness to obey and to believe what they are told

Michael Card: "Come to the cradle, come and find peace; alone in the cradle, simplicity sleeps; behold perfect wisdom, so gentle and mild in the **innocent upward trusting glance of a child...**"

*James 4:6 God opposes the proud but gives GRACE to the humble*

*2 Corinthians 12:9-10 "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."*

What an incredible statement... God's power is searching human hearts to find weakness where it can be made perfect—put perfectly on display; God's grace is searching for

brokenness and weakness and shame and lowliness where it can be made perfect in our childlike faith and repentance

***Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. <sup>10</sup> That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.***

#### D. Conversion Required for Heaven

***Matthew 18:3-4 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.***

1. the whole human race is infected with Satanic pride
2. we must TURN... the Greek word means this
3. but it is PASSIVE... we must BE TURNED

***Jeremiah 31:18 "Turn me, and I will be turned, for you are the Lord my God."***

4. unless we are converted, we can never enter the Kingdom of Heaven
  - a. and we must ENTER... we are born on the outside of the Kingdom of Heaven
  - b. at a decisive point in our lives, we must ENTER the Kingdom of Heaven

***Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup> But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.***

5. when God works this change, this turning from pride and sin and idols and self, He makes us humble like little children
6. but we also have a responsibility: for the rest of our lives, we must continually humble ourselves and make ourselves like little children in God's eyes, and in the eyes of others
7. we must lower ourselves and serve others... if we do, we will become great in the Kingdom of Heaven

Application: fight your own pride wherever you see it; when you want to take the better seat, offer it to someone else; when you want to take the better portion at the table, take the lesser; when there is a nasty job to do, be the first to volunteer to do it; think small thoughts of yourself and great thought of Christ and of others

Go down, down, down, lower and lower... speak low thoughts of yourself... not false humility but genuine

Express your dependence on Christ constantly: "If Christ helps me, I will do such and such"; or "Only with Jesus' help can I do this or that"

### III. Welcoming a Little Child

***Matthew 18:5 "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.***

#### A. What This Means

Word literally means to "receive"... to accept, and take into your heart

Jesus wants his disciples, who will someday soon be the pillars of the worldwide church, the great leaders on whom the church will depend for doctrine and leadership and example and strength and courage... He wants them to maintain a humble demeanor toward others

Not lording it over others, not walking around like arrogant potentates who don't have time for the lowly and the small... rather they are to be continually humble, accessible to anyone

At another point in Jesus' ministry, the disciples would try to stop people from bringing children to Jesus; the message was that Jesus was too important to see little children, too important to be with them; Jesus actually got angry at his disciples about that:

***Mark 10:13-14 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. <sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.***

#### B. Welcoming Means Seeing by Faith

1. Seeing yourself... not too important!
2. Seeing them... very important!
3. Seeing Christ... a continual reminder of His presence and humility

#### C. Welcoming Christ by Welcoming a Child

1. Christ always wants us to see HIM in the weak and needy God brings us to care for
2. in the Sheep and the Goats, Jesus said
3. here He says you are welcoming HIM whenever you welcome a little child in his name

#### D. Do Not Despise a Little Child

***Matthew 18:10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."***

1. the opposite of receiving a little child in Christ's name is despising children, looking down of them as insignificant
2. this is what the high and mighty of the world do
3. the career-minded professions, men and women alike, pursuing the corner office, pursuing the six or seven-figure salary, pursuing the honors and accolades of an adoring world... they despise children, and they refuse to have them; they spurn marriage and use birth control, because children will hinder their plans
4. Jesus commanded His church to think very highly of children, to embrace them and cherish them and see eternity in their eyes
5. it is an immense privilege to be entrusted with a child's soul for a brief time, to shape and mold them through the gospel, fitting them for eternity
6. it is an awesome thing to have a little child into whose wide open, humble, ready heart, the pure truth of the word of God can be poured
7. so also it is an awesome thing for a church to craft ministries to parents to enable them to do this with great zeal, faith and delight, and to supplement the labors of parents with additional input in the Bible for Life programs and the Vacation Bible School ministries and other things
8. Also God many times chooses to speak profound truths through children, and to teach profound lessons through them as well

***Psalm 8:2 From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.***

9. so GUARD YOUR HEARTS against the worldly pride, the spirit of the age, that despises children

E. "Their Angels" in Heaven

***vs. 10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven."***

1. from this verse, more than any other, has come the concept of the "guardian angel"... form the possessive, "their angels in heaven"
2. the idea is that, at birth, God assigns a angel to watch over a child as it grows, protecting it

3. any parent welcomes this concept, especially when we see a child suddenly pull away from the hand of a mother and run out into a busy parking lot chasing a butterfly
4. some verses seem to support the concept:

***Hebrews 1:14 Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?***

***Acts 12:13-15 Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the door. <sup>14</sup> When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, "Peter is at the door!" <sup>15</sup> "You're out of your mind," they told her. When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, "It must be his angel."***

5. however, it is best not to go beyond what the Scripture teaches; God the Father definitely uses angels to rescue and protect us in this wicked and dangerous world
6. but the idea of a specific angel guarding a certain child the whole of his life goes beyond this verse
7. better approach: angels never despise children, but minister to them and have free access right to the throne of Almighty God on their behalf; God dispatches angels to protect children and is intensely interested in their physical and spiritual well-being
8. those angels stand in the very presence of the Emperor of the Universe and give their reports concerning their well-being
9. when at last those children come to faith in Christ through simple faith, there is great rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God... God celebrating with the angels over that blessed soul being saved
10. so how can we despise children?

#### IV. Tempting a Little Child

***Matthew 18:6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.***

##### A. A Severe Warning Against Sin

1. Jesus turns very serious here... speaking quite powerfully about spiritual threats to His little ones

2. there is not a person in this sanctuary who properly estimates the deadly danger of sin... it is a restless evil, full of deadly poison

J. C. Ryle's volume, *Holiness*, written in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, begins with this statement: **"He who would make great strides in holiness must first consider the greatness of sin."**

Anselm of Canterbury, writing in the Middle Ages, sought to answer the question of why God became man. In a dialogue between himself and a character named Boso, Anselm utters the famous line, **"You have not yet considered the gravity of sin."** Because he was reluctant to recognize our *need* for salvation, Boso was unable to see why the Lord Jesus Christ had to become incarnate in order to save his people. Our problem is sin.

3. so in these sobering verses, Jesus mobilizes these apostles to protect his little ones (and themselves) from the great, incalculable danger of sin

#### B. Causing a Child to Sin

1. as children of God, we are constantly surrounded by temptations
2. temptations are external enticements that link up with already established evil desires
3. Satan has crafted the whole world's system to drag us away from pure faith in Christ; to discourage us, to attack us for our Christian witness, to instill sinful habits in our bodies and minds, to addict us to lust and materialism and selfishness
4. Satan uses human beings to do it: ad agencies that portray attractive young models wearing sexually alluring clothing that promises excitement and pleasure and acceptance and fun, but which hides the effects of the sin—single parenting, sexually transmitted diseases, poverty, loneliness, unbelief, addiction, and ultimately death

#### C. Severe Judgment Against the Tempters

***Matthew 18:6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.***

***Vs. 7 "Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come!"***

1. any father in this congregation can relate to this sense of protectiveness that Jesus displays here
  - a. we will bear far more abuse directed toward us than anything done to our little children

- b. imagine if you saw some street ruffian push your five year-old son down in the gutter, then begin to kick him and punch him
- c. how much rage would well up inside your heart, with what zeal you would instantly rush to the scene and end the abuse
- d. but our zeal to protect our children physically is nothing compared to the rage that wells up inside Christ concerning the spiritual protection of His children

2. describing that rage:

- a. Jesus is addressing anyone who crafts a temptation directed toward one of His little ones
- b. Jesus says it would be better for that individual if he'd had a large millstone hung around his neck and was thrown in the depths of the sea
- c. The words are powerful and the image is picturesque: there were small millstones that women could use to grind a small amount of grain; then there were larger ones that had to be turned by a donkey... it might weigh hundreds and hundreds of pounds; it would have a hole in the center of it for a mounting post; Jesus pictures this wicked tempter of His little ones having his head inserted in this half-ton stone, carried in a boat out to the deepest part of the ocean, and thrown overboard... down, down, down this wicked man sinks, never to rise again
- d. It would be BETTER for that man if that happened!!!
- e. The real future is the lake of fire, where he will suffer with the devil and his angels for all eternity

D. Severe Steps by the Tempted

1. the inevitability of temptation

*vs. 7 "Such things must come..."*

- a. Temptation is anything that assaults our hearts, alluring them, drawing them away from Christ

***NASB, vs. 7 "Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes!"***

The image is of someone placing a stone in the middle of the road to trip someone up who is running a race

Illus.: a few years ago, I attended a funeral for a motorcyclist who was killed t dusk one day as he came around the bend and crashed into a tree that had been felled across the road after a blind curve; it was murder, nothing less, and the police department pursued it as such

Stumbling blocks are traps for the soul, laying across the road, seeking to destroy our walks with Christ... seeking our very souls!!!

***1 John 2:16 ...all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life***

2. Jesus does not intend to take us out of the world, with all of its evil allurements and temptations... here He merely indicates that the wrath of God is coming because of these things
3. in order to get to heaven, we must walk through a spiritual minefield which can explode with sin at any moment
4. no one resists temptation with enough zeal or diligence
5. this is the second time in Matthew's gospel that Jesus has urged His precious followers, His "little ones" to fight sin with every fiber of their being
6. the basic lesson here is that we should SPARE NOTHING to fight against sin

***Matthew 18:8-9 If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. <sup>9</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.***

- a. Your hand or your foot is something ordinarily precious and valuable to you... but in some way it has proven itself to be a stumbling block to your soul
  - b. Sometimes in a hospital a doctor must make the choice to amputate a limb; it is a wretched choice... but a disease has crept into the limb that threatens the persons very life; if the limb isn't removed immediately, gangrene will spread through the blood stream and death will come quickly
  - c. While we were in Haiti last month, the doctors on our trip had to make just such a decision
7. Here Jesus says you must do your own diagnosis concerning your lifestyle, your habits
    - a. If watching TV causes you to lust or covet, stop watching

- b. If renting DVDs from Blockbuster makes you lust or burn with violence through those images, cut it off
  - c. If going to the mall makes you yearn for a different lifestyle, stop going to the mall
  - d. If surfing the internet causes you to lust or covet or become lazy, stop doing it
8. the threat: HELL...
- a. Jesus links sin with the eternal fire of hell
  - b. We are not so concerned with sin as Jesus... this passage is generally underemphasized in the American Church today
  - c. Christ says we should burn with zeal for personal holiness and be ruthless in our lifestyle choices to be sure we are not led into sin

## V. Application

### A. How Stubborn a Problem is Pride

1. these are the best of all Jews... the chosen and called Apostles
2. and Jesus said that every one of them had to be radically transformed, made like little children to enter the kingdom of heaven
3. how great must be this problem of sin
4. therefore, detect it in yourself... see how often it rears its ugly head
5. see it whenever you prefer yourself, your reputation, your advantages and privileges over others'
6. see it whenever you push yourself or your children forward for the best seat in the house, the most advantageous position, the biggest piece of the pie
7. see it whenever you boast about your achievements... or brag about your children
8. see it in how you respond whenever crossed or denied something you think you deserve
9. see it in how hesitant you are to obey a command by a superior... and how you murmur against that superior or feel that you could do a better job

Illus. My son is in a basketball league for 7-8 year old boys... they are too young to be anything but sweet on the court, and they smile and laugh the whole time they're playing; it

would never enter their heads to yell at a referee... but one of the parents I was with spent much of the game questioning a referee under his breath, wondering aloud why he was making such bad calls

10. See this problem in your life... ask God to show it to you; then... REPENT by obeying Christ's command

***Humble yourself like a little child***

**B. See How Great a Change Must Come Over Us to Fit Us for Heaven**

1. heaven is a pleasant, amiable, delightful place, where the stench of pride has never yet been detected
2. the mightiest archangel and the most honored saint have the childlike disposition Christ demands
3. HOW MUCH MUST WE BE CHANGED before we can be fit for heaven
4. no natural man, no unconverted sinner can go to heaven stinking of pride like a drunk stinks of whiskey
5. we must be thoroughly purged, cleansed, transformed from our natural state of pride
6. only the cross of Christ has the power to do this!
7. COME TO THE CROSS
  - a. Perhaps now for the very first time... "you must be converted" Jesus said... "You must be born again"
  - b. But so also we come to realize as we journey with Christ, we are not done being transformed into childlikeness
  - c. We are not done being humbled
  - d. We must HUMBLE OURSELVES daily before the cross of Christ
  - e. Come back again and again to the first principles, what we learned when we first heard the gospel:
    - i) God is perfectly holy
    - ii) I am a sinner deserving of hell for my many rebellions
    - iii) God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross
    - iv) His blood is my only hope for salvation

v) I now trust in that blood... I trust in Christ alone

f. This childlike fleeing to the cross is the central act of your salvation... both the beginning, middle and end

g. Even the most advanced of Jesus' disciples still need to be childishly simple at their core

Karl Barth was one of the most brilliant theologians in the history of the church. He single-handedly dismantled classical liberalism with his deep, profound commentary on the Book of Romans; his works are dense and hard to read.

Once a young student asked Barth if he could sum up what was most important about his life's work and theology in just a few words. The question was posed even with gasps from the audience. Barth just thought for a moment and then smiled, "Yes, in the words of a song my mother used to sing me, 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.'"

8. Meditate often on how happy a place must be heaven that is completely filled with mighty, glorious beings that are perfectly childlike in their love, their self-appraisal, their instant obedience to God, their total freedom from self-conscious posturing or prideful displays

#### C. Parents: Take Full Advantage of your Children's Growing Up Years

1. Reese Kauffman, president of Child Evangelism Fellowship, spoke at FBC a few years ago... he made a point about evangelism of children I'll never forget: Jesus said that everyone has to be converted and become like a little child to enter the Kingdom of Heaven; therefore in every evangelistic opportunity you have with adults, you have to expend a great deal of effort in chopping down the pride of a lost adult until they are ready to trust Christ... a child is already there!!
2. Parents: saturate your children's hearts with the gospel day after day
3. show them their sin... they will not fight you like older people will
4. show them Christ... they will readily receive Him by faith

#### D. Delight in Children

1. ours is a child-hating society
2. lead out in delighting in children... not despising them
3. welcome little children in Jesus' name
4. and be very careful not to tempt a little child to sin... treat them with holy seriousness, and their delightful hearts with protection

### E. Fight Sin with Everything You Have

1. Jesus said it would be better for you to cut off your own hand or foot than to sin and thereby go to hell
2. we deal too lightly with temptation and sin; Jesus meant that the Christian life should be one of constant fighting of sin... of warfare
3. avoid seeing, hearing, touching, watching, reading, tasting ANYTHING that causes you to sin

O be careful little eyes what you see  
O be careful little eyes what you see  
There's a Father up above  
And He's looking down in love  
So, be careful little eyes what you see