

## Like Little Children

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The next time you find yourself a little annoyed with children, just try to remember the situation surrounding Jesus and His disciples in both Matthew 19:13 and Luke 18:15-17, *“And they were bringing even their little children to Him so that He might touch them, but when the disciples saw it they began rebuking them. But Jesus called for them, saying, ‘Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all.’”* So what is it that we lose when we become adults? What are the child-like qualities that we should never let go in the business of maturing?

### *Our Attitude Toward Evil*

*“Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature”* (1 Corinthians 14:20). The phrase *“in evil be babes”* should indicate to us that there is something pure about children. They are unstained by sin, having no great understanding of it or its consequences. They do not know what most sins are, such as bitterness, homosexuality, greed, pornography, etc. This fact sets them apart from adults; they are singularly innocent of all guile, malice, strife, lewdness, and immorality, whereas adults have the daily problem of “putting these all aside” (Colossians 3:8). Their ignorance is not a weakness to them, but an endearing quality which makes even the youngest of them admirable.

### *Awareness of Curious Things*

Adults are so consumed by jobs, money, television, and time that we forget to notice the curious things of the world. I admire that a child has the ability to lose all track of time in his study of a caterpillar, a tadpole in a pond, an icicle, or a leaf. When did we lose that sense of wonder? When did we stop being curious about this strange, exciting, dangerous, beautiful creation? Consider reading some scriptures like Psalm 104 or Job 38-39, in which God chides Job for his failure to observe the creation. As we see the hawk soaring, the morning sun rising, clouds forming, the death and birth of the animals, we are struck with a sense of awe – we can learn about God by examining His handiwork.

### *Honesty*

While it is a great cause for embarrassment to many parents, a child’s honesty is somewhat refreshing – in a world of duplicitous, lukewarm, hypocritical people, it is nice to see a child simply “say it how it is”. Jesus was also accused of being brutally honest. His disciples inform Him in Matthew 15:12 that the Pharisees were offended by His criticism of them. Would many of us be embarrassed by Jesus, the same way we are of children?

## Simple Faith and Trust

*“Surely I have composed and quieted my soul; like a weaned child rests against his mother, my soul is like a weaned child within me”* (Psalm 131:2). Little children have a tendency to trust others implicitly, and this simplistic view of faith is appealing when we consider our relationship to God. One writer said, *“Several years ago a father and his little son had the hair-raising experience of being in a wagon hitched to a runaway team. It was a horrifying experience. . . but the child later commented, ‘I wasn’t afraid, because my daddy was with me’”* (Brownlow, 28). Isaiah shared such an attitude, as we can see from Isaiah 12:2, *“I will trust and not be afraid.”* This idea of trust is summed up well in Proverbs 3:5-6, *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.”* Adults have a hard time with this because we have trained ourselves to be so self-reliant. We become distrustful and suspicious of others, while children seem free from prejudice and willing to trust.