

w/b 19th March 2017

1&2 John - Letters from the Last Man Standing
BECOME LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN

Matthew 18:2-6

² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³ And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

Luke 18:17

¹⁷ Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

John 13:33-35

³³ 'My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: where I am going, you cannot come.

1 John 2:1

² My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One

1 John 2:28

²⁸ And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

1 John 3:7

⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

1 John 3:18

¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

1 John 4:4

⁴ You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

INTRODUCTION

We live in an increasingly modern, sophisticated and fast paced age. More and more solutions are available to us on the internet. Our diaries are increasingly tightly planned. A steady stream of news flow on any subject means we are becoming self appointed experts on just about everything. But does this adult sophistication have any benefit when it comes to living in the kingdom of God?

According to Christ the answer is 'no' - in fact quite the reverse. A return to childlike simplicity is what he asks for.

LAUNCH

- Think back to when you were a child.
What were the advantages to your childlike status and what were the disadvantages?
- Can you remember the last time you spoke with great authority on a subject you actually knew very little about? Did you get away with it?

DISCOVERY

- Read the above scriptures. As we consider Jesus's call to 'change and become like little children' what qualities of the child is he looking for in us?
- *'There is a sense in which every Christian is still a little child, a sense in which he ought to be so - always dependent upon the great Father, always ready to receive the word of the Father without question, always teachable, always restful in the Father's care, and full of love to Him who is his all in all. Of necessity we must always be children before God.'* CH Spurgeon
Read the superb quote above by CH Spurgeon on the childlike qualities that Christ is looking for in us. Dependence, obedience, teachability, resting and loving. Which of these would you like to develop over the next week? Think of a simple and practical way in which you can do so.
- Jesus also suggests that we should adopt the 'lowly position of a little child' in our Christian lives. What are the key qualities of this old fashioned word 'lowly' and how does this quality affect the way in which we should relate with one other?
- As you read through the 1 John instructions to little children, which ones would you like to apply to your own life and why?

APPLICATION

'When you were little in your own eyes, I anointed you. Now you are building monuments I reject you'
(1 Sam 15: 17-23)

Spend time praying for everyone in the group to be childlike and little in our own eyes.
To be humble and consecrated so that tomorrow, God may do a great thing among us.