

re-thinking some of the parables ... No.21

99 + 1 = 100 'LITTLE-ONES' = Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 18:1-14 (KJV)

Subject: Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?

Answer = 'a little one' ... followed by an illustration.

(Mat 18:1) *At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest **in the kingdom of heaven?***

(2) *And Jesus called **a little child** unto him, and set him in the midst of them,*

(3) *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.*

BE CONVERTED ... AND ...then CHANGE BEGINS!

'Being converted' begins the whole salvation experience. But unless there is a teachable spirit in the converted one, there will be no evidence that they have a teachable spirit and that they are dependent upon *the Holy Spirit within to teach them all things* (John 14:26). There will be no more promotion of self ... 'I want' ... 'I know!' ... 'I can!' ... 'I will', but rather an increasing dependency upon Father for change in understanding, for growth and guidance etc. When you are converted it releases the mind of Christ from within you ... which we already have but He needs releasing (1 Cor.2:16). Being converted means that you start thinking differently.

The change that follows ... that of BECOMING like a dependent child ... will open the 'door' for you to ENTER into the Kingdom of God. *Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he can not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven* (John 3:5).

(4) *Whosoever therefore shall **humble himself as this little child**, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* (5) *And whoso shall receive one such (with) **little child** (faith) in my name **receives Me**.*

Did you notice what Jesus said? The way to receive Him ... with a pure childlike trusting attitude. 'In my name' means in the nature and character of Christ — how He would speak and act.

This 'little child' represents those who are totally dependent upon his parent ... having a childlike faith regarding the things of the Kingdom of Heaven.

REMOVE ALL HINDRANCES

(6) *But whoso shall **offend** one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.*

Offend in the Greek means to SCANDALIZE! Oh how some have brought disrepute on those who are seeing and walking in more of Christ than the so-called 'norm'.

(7) *Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to **that man** by whom the offence comes!*

'**That man**' is the man who lives out of the 'old Adamic thinking' that basically denies that Jesus Christ destroyed him at the cross. Move in your new life ... or else! This negative thinking can be affected from within as well as from without. Our minds need to be constantly renewed because it is simply amazing how much of what we have been through and what we have been taught affects our walk in Christ today.

(8) *Wherefore if thy hand (= what you do!) or thy foot (= where you go!) **offend thee, cut them off** (= separate yourself from those old ways), **and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life***

halt or maimed (= carrying scars), *rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire* (= age-abiding fire).

(9) *And if thine eye (= what you have seen) offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes (a double dose of bad memories or habits) to be cast into hell fire* (for an age of correction supervised by the God who is a consuming fire).

(10) *Take heed that ye despise not one of these **little ones**; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.*

(11) *For the Son of man (= our Pattern) is come to save that which was **lost**.*

Someone who is ‘lost’ is one who simply does not know the way back to the point they strayed from. Now Jesus challenges the people to really hear what He is saying!

AN ILLUSTRATION

THE 100 KINGDOM-OF-HEAVEN-LITTLE-ONES

In the context of the Kingdom of heaven, this parable is not concerning ‘salvation’ this sheep is not ‘lost eternally’ but lost to the rewards of the Kingdom. (refer to re-think No. 35).

(12) **How think ye?** *If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, does he not leave the ninety and nine, and goes into the mountains, and seeks that which is gone astray?*

One can go astray easily by getting off on a high and lofty track of far-out revelation (that ignores the Father’s Voice — directly or through others). The ‘99’ are still in Father’s appointed place.

(13) *And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoices more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.*

(14) *Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these **little ones** should perish* (= lose their way and be separated from their destiny).

100 sheep called ‘little ones’ in the Kingdom of Heaven expressing childlike faith and reliance upon our Father. They are kept by Him (The Good Shepherd) in a fold that should restrict their wandering. The ‘old man’ is thus harnessed and the thinking of God’s plan is released.

Fear not little flock (all 100 little ones), *it is the Father’s good pleasure* (God is real happy when you sit at His feet) *to give you the Kingdom* (Luke 12:32).

SET CREATION FREE

100 means deliverance or to set free in bible number meanings. The 100 sheep depict the liberating work that will be required of the sons of God as their work will include setting creation fully free (Rom.8:22-23). Note this well, ALL 100 ARE NEEDED. Jesus’s ministry was only about the Kingdom of Heaven/ God ... every parable or picture reveals more of His plan you have a ‘little flock’ of mature ones through whom He can achieve. As you walk humbly as a teachable and trusting little child, you will be classed as the greatest in the Kingdom of God.§