

# Humility

📖 Matthew 18:1-14

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Last time we looked at Matthew 17:14-27 and there were three basic things here; the casting out of the demoniac which teaches about the necessity of continual dependence on Christ, another revelation of His death and resurrection which they still did not understand and paying taxes to avoid unnecessary disruptions to our witness in the present age.

In 17:14, the demoniac. Jesus, Peter, James and John were returning from Mt Hermon. They had just had this wonderful experience but there was a man in this crowd who was not having a wonderful experience. This man fell on his knees desperate for help from Christ saying in 17:15, Lord, have mercy on my son. His son had a demon that came and went with great difficulty, causing epileptic seizures that threw him to the ground where he convulsed and foamed at the mouth. The demon even tried to throw him in the water to drown him or in fire to destroy him on occasion. Being deaf and mute, exorcism of the demon was to the Jews impossible. In 17:16 the father says "I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him." So he had tried Jewish exorcists, he had tried Jesus' disciples and neither could cure him. Jesus' disciples had cast out demons before but they could not cast this demon out. The particular reason was the lesson that Jesus would soon teach them about how to overcome difficult obstacles during the coming Church age. In 17:17 Jesus rebuked that generation saying, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me." Jesus viewed that generation as characterized by unbelief. The crowd was not believing, the father was not believing and even His disciples were not believing. That whole generation was characterized by lack of faith. In 17:18 Jesus rebuked the demon and the demon came out of the boy at once. For Him it was a piece of cake and if Israel came to Him in faith He could cast the demons out of this world and establish the kingdom. In 17:19 the disciples came to Him privately. They want to know why they could not drive this demon out. Jesus' answer is that they had but little faith, meaning that they only had faith that He was the Messiah. They did not have great faith, meaning they did not have continual faith that depended on Him for their daily needs. So by trying to use their ability to cast out demons as if it were an independent ability was unsuccessful. They would have to learn that for us to conquer any difficulty in the Christian life requires us to depend upon Him. He used the mustard seed to illustrate. The mustard seed started small but grew into a large

tree. The point was that if they had dependent faith as one might have a mustard seed then it would overcome mountains. Mountains were seemingly impossible obstacles to overcome but if they had a dependent faith in Him they would overcome seemingly impossible obstacles such as casting out this difficult demon. That has nothing to say about demon possession today or demon exorcism today since that was an apostolic ability when the kingdom was near, but it does have something to say about how we are to live our lives today when we face seemingly impossible obstacles. The way to overcome them is to live in dependent faith in Him. In verse 21 dependent faith is manifested by prayer and fasting.

In 17:22 He gave them the third direct revelation of His death and resurrection saying, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men; and they will kill Him, and He will be raised on the third day." How did they respond to this? Well, they did not rebuke Him this time but they were deeply grieved. Obviously if they had understood the resurrection they would not have had this wrong emotional response. The bottom line was they did not want to understand that He would die. They did not believe the Messiah would ever die. Because they were not believing what the OT Scriptures and He Himself said they were blocked from understanding. This is always the case and an important lesson; when you don't believe the word of God it blocks further understanding.

In 17:24, another lesson, paying taxes. When they entered Capernaum the tax collectors questioned Peter, "Does your teacher pay the two-drachma temple tax?" In 17:25, Peter said, yes. When he came into the house Jesus approached him first about this issue saying, "What do you think, Simon? In the civil arena, who do kings collect taxes from? Their own citizens or conquered foreigners? Conquered foreigners said Peter. Correct, then I am exempt because the Temple is My Father's house. And Peter, you are exempt too because you are associated with Me, you are a son of the kingdom. But, Jesus says, so that we don't offend them over a petty detail like paying taxes, which would give them cause to arrest us, go fishing and the first fish that comes up will have a shekel in its mouth and that will cover both of our taxes. The lesson is that we may not want to pay taxes to pagan governments but for the sake of peace and our testimony we pay them anyway. Some Christians don't want to pay them because they are used for evil things like abortion and they don't want to be complicit in evil but the way I have resolved this is the passages where God says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." So we pay our taxes and once we do that it is out of our hands and if they use it for evil then God will judge them for that. So I think we can pay our taxes in good conscience and because this is acting as a good and upstanding citizen our gospel witness has potential to result in salvation. We are good citizens proclaiming a good message.

Alright, let's review a bit. We're studying the Gospel of Matthew. Several people like J. Vernon McGee and J. Dwight Pentecost considered Matthew the most important book in the NT. Why did they think that? Why not Romans or Revelation? Because this is the only book that describes *why* there is a transition from Israel to the Gentiles and from the Kingdom to the Church. *Why* is there a transition? Because Israel rejected their prophesied King. The King offered Himself to the nation and that generation rejected Him saying He was doing His miracles

by Satan. Therefore, the kingdom was postponed and the nation Israel was given a second-offer in the Book of Acts but that offer was also rejected and so Israel is now under divine discipline, Gentiles are now in the place of blessing. What Jesus was doing in Matthew 16 was revealing the Church where Gentiles would predominate and how Jesus' disciples should live during this Church age. Remember, this entire Church age was a mystery, something never before revealed and so what Jesus is teaching here about how to live in the Church age is entirely new material. Alright, the important point here is that without Matthew you can't understand why there is a transition because only Matthew charts the offer, rejection and postponement of the kingdom.

Where are we in our study? Matthew 18 tonight. This is part of the fourth narrative-discourse section in Matthew. Matthew divided his gospel into six sections. Each section, except the last section, begins with a narrative and ends with a discourse and concludes with the statement, "When Jesus had finished these things..." The first narrative-discourse section is 1:1-7:29; the second is 8:1-11:1; the third is 11:2-13:53; and the fourth is 13:54-19:1. In each of these the narrative sets the context for the discourse and it's these discourses that Matthew is most well-known for. Mark, Luke and John don't record many discourses. They record other things. But Matthew contains more of Jesus' teachings than any other gospel. Since Matthew is so focused on the kingdom each discourse relates in some way to the kingdom. What's the first discourse? Matt 5-7. Please do not refer to this as the Sermon on the Mount. That tells you nothing except the location of the sermon. What should you call it? **The Discourse on Kingdom Righteousness**. The discourse is about the kind of righteousness necessary for that generation to enter the kingdom. What's the second discourse? Matt 10. This is the **Discourse on Kingdom Missions**. It's the marching orders to go to the nation Israel to bring them to repentance. Did that generation come to repentance? No. That's Matt 12, the rejection. What's the third discourse? Matt 13. What do we call it? **The Discourse on Kingdom Postponement**. Why? Because that generation rejected the kingdom is being postponed until a generation comes along and repents. Tonight we come to the fourth discourse. Where is it? Matt 18. What are we calling it? **The Discourse on Kingdom Greatness**. So scratch what I said last week about the discourse starting in 16:13. What we have here is a discourse on how one can acquire a great position or status in the coming kingdom. You see, the kingdom is still coming, it hasn't been cancelled, it hasn't been changed into the church; the same kingdom predicted by Israel's covenants is coming but there is a space of time before the kingdom comes and so there has to be a way to live during that time, a way to prepare for the coming kingdom, a way to acquire a great status in that kingdom. That is what this discourse is about. And there are three things required for greatness in the kingdom. First is humility, second is honesty and third is forgiveness. These three are stepping stones to greatness in the kingdom. Please understand that these are very important lessons because I want you to attain greatness in the kingdom.

The first one, humility, is covered in 18:1-14. I had mentioned last week that the discourse began in 16:13, forget that. A discourse was typically taught in one setting and before 18:1 He had been moving around up north in Caesarea Philippi and over at Mt Hermon. Here He has returned to the Galilee and is stationary. The parallel in Mark 9:33 says He was "at Capernaum." Capernaum was on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee. It was His

ministry base. He would go out and come back to Capernaum. It was the hometown of Peter and Mark 9:33 also tells us that this discourse was given in "the house." We reasonably conclude that this was Peter's house and that the little child Jesus called to Himself may have been one of Peter's children. If you visit Capernaum today, you will visit the traditional site of Peter's house. It lay in ruins but it has been uncovered and a structure has been built over it to protect it from the elements. You can look down through the structure into what was Peter's house. It was his house where the Discourse on Kingdom Greatness took place.

Matthew says **the disciples came to Jesus** but the parallel in Mark 9 says that before they came to Him Jesus had asked them what they were discussing. They kept silent because they knew their discussion was not appropriate. You have to look at the disciples as very self-absorbed and only concerned about their own status relative to one another in the kingdom. That's the picture.

Now, what events might have led them to discuss their status relative to one another in the kingdom? There were several recent events which led them to discuss this issue. Jesus certainly seemed to be singling out Peter. Peter alone had walked on the water with Jesus. Peter alone had been given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Peter alone had his taxes paid by a miracle. Peter had also gotten to see the transfiguration. So there might have been talk about Peter being the greatest in the kingdom. James and John were also in the running since they had also seen the transfiguration. In any case, these distinctions had given rise to a discussion of relative prominence in the kingdom. You want to note again that they still expected the kingdom to come and they were right in that expectation, and they also expected there to be degrees of status in the kingdom and they were right on that count too, but what was wrong was their attitude toward acquiring status in the kingdom.

Anyway, after Jesus dragged out of them their discussion they **said, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"** What do You say? What happened next was probably shocking. Wiersbe said, "The disciples waited breathlessly for Jesus to name the greatest man among them. But He bypassed them completely and called a little child into their midst."<sup>1</sup> Verse 2, **and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."** There are several things that make this a difficult statement and the commentaries are all over the board reflecting that this is a difficult statement. One difficulty is discovering what characteristic of a child is He using as a point of comparison? Most point to humility but that doesn't solve everything because a discussion of the humility of a child in that culture still needs explanation. Another difficulty is why does He say in verse 2 that you have to become like a child to *enter the kingdom* and then in verse 3 that you have to become humble to be *great in the kingdom*? Is there a difference between entering the kingdom and being greatest in the kingdom? Before we get into it there has been one earlier statement about greatness and the kingdom and so to keep balance we want to look back at it. Turn to Matt 11. This is John the Baptist and Jesus' commendation of John before the people. He said in 11:11, "Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist! Yet the one who is least in the

kingdom of heaven is greater than he." We said that John was the greatest born of women because he had the greatest privilege of any human. He had the privilege of being the forerunner of the King. But even the one who is the smallest in the kingdom is greater in privilege than he. So even to be in the kingdom is a great privilege. Keep that in mind for a balanced perspective. But understand that the discussion here relates to greater degrees of privilege in the kingdom, and in fact how to become the greatest in the kingdom.

So He called a child to Himself, perhaps one of Peter's children, and set him before them, that is, in their midst. The child was being used as an object lesson. Then He said to them, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." The Greek word translated converted is the trouble because people read into that salvation. You have to be saved to get into the kingdom. Of course, that's true but that is not what Jesus is talking about. Constable says, "The word "converted" in the NASB is misleading. Jesus was not speaking about getting saved."<sup>2</sup> What then was He talking about? What is the context? How to attain greatness in the kingdom. It's not about simply getting into the kingdom. People read this and say, well, it says if you don't do this you will not enter the kingdom of heaven so this must be about getting into the kingdom of heaven. But that is not the subject of the conversation. The subject is entering the kingdom with greatness. It was unnecessary to add "with greatness." He could have said it, He says it in verse 4, but it's not necessary to repeat it over and over when that's the entire context. Nobody does that in natural conversation and what is not natural to conversation should not be imposed on this conversation.

If you can grant that, what is He saying? The word translated **converted** is *στραφητε* from *στρεφω* and means "to go back, to return."<sup>3</sup> He's saying you have to go back and return to being like a child. It's in a third class conditional clause meaning maybe you will, maybe you won't return back and be like a child, which means entering the kingdom with greatness is conditional, but if you do you will enter with greatness.

Now what was it about a child in that culture that He was referring to? Be like them in what sense? A child in that time had no status in society. They were the least in all society. It was this aspect that was the key to humility in this context. Jesus clarifies this in the next verse, expanding on what He just said in verse 3.

**18:4, Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.** The one who **humbles himself** is the disciple who takes on the least status as a servant. Like a child who has no status the one who **humbles himself** does not view himself as deserving of status. That was what they were doing even having the discussion about who is the greatest in the kingdom. They were looking at themselves as deserving status. If they continued in this attitude they would view themselves as too good to serve others. That would not result in being the greatest in the kingdom but in being the least. The parallel in Mk 9:35 says, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." Taking the position of least of all and servant of all is the path to greatness. But in this world most of us are seeking to take the position of first of all and being served. This is the path to leastness in the kingdom. The parallel in Luke 9:48 says virtually the same thing, "For

the one who is least of among all of you, this is the one who is great." Walvoord said, "These were great lessons for the disciples to learn."<sup>4</sup> I would add that these are great lessons for us to learn.

There is a lot of talk about humility and we want to be clear about what true humility is and is not. First, true humility is not self-depreciation. Downplaying one's significance may not be fatal but it is not the nature of true humility. Self-depreciation in large quantities may, in fact, become a way of drawing attention to oneself to get admiration. So it may be incidental at times but it is not the true nature of humility. Second, true humility is not self-appreciation. This should be obvious. Self-appreciation is fatal since it is pride, the opposite of humility. No amount of self-aggrandizement is acceptable. Third, what then is true humility? True humility is the proper evaluation of one's position and place in the plan of God. It is a right and reasoned evaluation of oneself in light of His plans and purposes. So then true humility is the proper evaluation of one's place and position in the plan of God. When one realizes this he is like a child of that time who knew his place and position in society. Toussaint says, "...humility is the objective discernment of one's position before God...What the Lord has in mind in Matthew 18 is an awareness of what one is in God's sight and in His program."<sup>5</sup> To make this objective discernment one has to have objective knowledge of God's plan and purpose at this time. Since the kingdom was in postponement and a new age was dawning one must understand this new age and the Church which fits within it. The core of God's plan and purpose for our lives during the Church is to be in service in the right capacity. Service in this capacity is the path to greatness in the kingdom.

As 18:5 shows servanthood involves acceptance and welcoming of other disciples. **And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me.** The **child** is not a literal child but representative of another disciple who has true humility. As Constable said, "The child in view in these verses is not a literal child but the disciple who has humbled himself or herself and in so doing has become childlike (vv. 3-4). Jesus was speaking of receiving a humble disciple..."<sup>6</sup> The disciples seemed to understand what He was talking about and John called up an instance where they might have violated this in Luke 9:49 saying, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow along with us." Had they received this fellow disciple? No. What had they done? They had rejected him. On what basis? On the basis that he was not a part of their elite group. Did they have a proper evaluation of themselves? Were they truly humble? No. They put themselves above this disciple because he was not a part of their group. Jesus said to them, "Do not hinder him; for he who is not against you is for you." This is a great lesson. It shows that there may be others outside your group that are just as much disciples as you are. Sometimes we assume there are no people out there in other churches who are as much disciples as we are. This is an incorrect attitude. They may be rare but they are out there. When we find them what should we do? Just what Jesus says to do in this verse; **receive** them. This word means "to welcome" them and includes extending hospitality and support and encouragement to them. If one welcomes him who else is he welcoming? Jesus Himself. It is remarkable that what one does with a disciple of Jesus he also does with Jesus Himself. This shows the close connection between Jesus and His disciples.

On the opposite side in verse 6, whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. Jesus goes to the extreme other end of the spectrum in a disciples' treatment of another believer. Note that He is not just talking about a disciple causing another disciple to stumble but a disciple causing any other believer to stumble. All humble disciples are believers but not all believers are humble disciples. How a humble disciple treats fellow believers is extremely important as evidenced by Jesus' extreme statement. It would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. The word for heavy millstone is the word for "a millstone turned by a donkey," not the small handheld millstones. To have one of these hung around your neck and dropped overboard into the open sea would result in drowning. It is a graphic picture that is truly a horror. However, though drowning in this way would be a horror it would be better than a truly humble disciple causing another believer to stumble. The word stumble sometimes relates to falling into sin or leading into apostasy, but since it stands in contrast to receiving one in verse 5 then it essentially means the reverse. Rather than receiving the believer warmly and supporting him the humble disciple is rejecting him and not supporting his work. In such a case he would be opposing Christ and His work. Wiersbe said, "The truly humble person helps to build up others, not to tear them down. He is a stepping-stone, not a stumbling block."<sup>7</sup>

In 18:7 Jesus turns to the world and its coming judgment because of its stumbling blocks and warns humble disciples against following them in being stumbling blocks. **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 word **woe** is used twice. It is a way of announcing judgment. The **world** is under judgment because of its opposition to Him and His disciples. **It is inevitable that** the world will oppose humble disciples who know their place in His plan; **but** judgment will come on those who do.

In 18:8 Jesus makes application to the humble disciple who might follow the world in being a stumbling block to a fellow believer. **If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; it is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be cast into the eternal fire. If your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye, than to have two eyes and be cast into the fiery hell.** These are terribly graphic pictures of the seriousness of a humble disciple making another believer's work difficult. Jesus was not instructing believers to cut off their hands or feet or pluck out their eyes and throw them away since those are not the real causes of sin but only the instruments of sin. The real cause is personal pride of not wanting other believers to be successful because their ministries might overshadow ours. A truly humble disciple should make sure and remove any cause of stumbling within ourselves. When we see another disciples' ministry expanding we should not allow ourselves to become jealous. The real issue in the context is the importance of not jockeying for position in ministering. The disciples felt challenged by the other man who cast out demons but was not a part of their group. They tried to hinder him. They had fallen into this trap. This is a very common

problem. We should recognize that every believer has gifts and capacities and that when they are being used successfully we should not allow our pride to be the cause of their downfall. In reality we are all on the same team. We are not in a competition with them. It's understandable that the world would try to stop them but if we try to stop them are we not joining hands with the world? The extreme language used to contrast the advantage of being crippled, lame or blind over being cast into the eternal lake of fire is meant to point up the seriousness of this offense. We should never try to hinder a fellow disciple's ministry.

18:10 gives another reason we should not become jealous of another disciple's ministry. **See that you do not despise one of these little ones.** The **little ones**, again, are not literal children but humble disciples. The word **despise** is *καταφρονεω* and means "to look down on someone with contempt or aversion." We should not look down on other humble disciples with contempt. Why? The reason set forth here is because **their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven.** Because of this verse and the one in Heb 1:14 which says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" many people think that children have guardian angels. If someone thinks they have a guardian angel it is probably best not to argue with them. However, the concept of a unique guardian angel to each child or person is not biblical. First, **little ones** is not being used literally of children but of humble disciples. So if one wants to use it for guardian angels it is better to see it as guardian angels of humble disciples. Second, however, there is a problem because **their angels continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven.** How can they be continually guarding us on earth if they are continually in heaven viewing the face of the Father? When taken in conjunction with Heb 1:14 the true doctrine seems to be that there are angels in heaven who are periodically sent out to render service on behalf of humble disciples. Are there guardian angels for small children? I cannot find any verse to support that notion. What I can find are verses that support the idea that some angels are messengers who give special assistance to humble disciples. That was the reason Jesus put forth for not looking down on humble disciples. They have angels assisting them in their ministries and so help them, do not hinder them.

18:11 is not in the oldest and best manuscripts. It seems like it was added by a scribe from Luke 19:10. The differing contexts argue strongly for not including this verse at this point. Metzger says, "There can be little doubt that the words ἦλθεν γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (ζητήσαι καὶ) σῶσαι τὸ ἀπολωλός are spurious here, being absent from the earliest witnesses representing several textual types (Alexandrian, Egyptian, Antiochian), and manifestly borrowed by copyists from Lk 19:10. The reason for the interpolation was apparently to provide a connection between ver. 10 and verses 12–14."<sup>8</sup> However, the verse does not help in the true connection, only a false one. The true connection is between the angels sent to minister to humble disciples who may have been hindered in their work for the Lord.

So in 18:12-14 He asks the question, What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying?



The man with the hundred sheep represents God. The hundred sheep are humble disciples. The one who has gone astray is the humble disciple who has been hindered in his ministry by either the world or another believer. What do you think God would do in such a situation? Does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying. It is the simple picture of how much God loves every one of His humble disciples. It does not mean that he does not love the other ninety-nine humble disciples just as much. If God cares so much for every humble disciple of His then what do you think? Do you think that we should cause one of them to go astray? Plummer said, "If God takes so much trouble to recover a little one that has strayed, how grievous it must be to cause it to stray."<sup>9</sup> How does He recover such a little one? Perhaps through the angels sent to minister to them in time of need. We know very little of how an angel might do such a thing but the seven letters of Rev 2-3 were written to angels of seven churches. Since every other usage of angels in Revelation refers to literal angelic beings and not pastors or other human messengers then it shows that angels have some relationship to the local churches. We are very much in the dark on the nature of that relationship but we are not in the dark on the fact of the relationship.

In 18:13, still drawing from the shepherd-sheep motif. If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. The reason is because God has great concern for every humble disciple who is led astray. This brings Him great joy to have recovered a humble disciple to his purpose and task in this life. Again, "This does not mean that God loves His wayward sheep more than He loves His faithful sheep. It means that when wayward sheep return to Him it gives Him special joy."<sup>10</sup> God is a person and has a personal response. He is not a stone statue in heaven. He is not sitting up there as the unmoved mover of Greek philosophy. He is a personal God and if He wants to be moved He can be moved. At the same time, if He does not want to be moved He cannot be moved. God is in complete control of His emotions.

The last verse, 18:14, is the application to us. **So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish.** For the last time, **the little ones** are not little children or all believers but humble disciples. The Father's **will**, desire or wish, with respect to them is that not even **one of these little ones perish.** How could a humble disciple **perish**? The Greek word **perish** is *απολλυμι* and simply means "to cause to go to ruin." It has nothing to do with an eternal ruin but a temporal ruin. When a humble disciple is caused to go astray by either the world or another humble disciple it can result in him coming to temporal ruin. Many a person trying to minister for the Lord was discouraged by the world and other believers to the point that they gave up. It is not God's desire that this happen, though it does happen. There is responsibility on everyone's part. The humble disciple is to not be discouraged, the fellow humble disciples are not to be stumbling blocks that despise him, the angels are sent to minister to Him and God is the one who sends them. No one is without a responsibility. Constable was far and away the best on this section. He said of this verse, "The heavenly Father does not want one of Jesus' humble disciples to wander away from his calling in life as a disciple because someone has discouraged, rejected, or opposed him. Moreover, He does not want His disciples, of all people, to

be responsible for this. Perishing in this context does not mean loss of salvation but the ultimate result of failing to achieve God's goal for him or her as a disciple, namely a wasted life."<sup>11</sup>

I found this to be a very difficult passage but the overall picture is plain; greatness in the kingdom requires that the disciple become humble as a child. A child was humble in the sense that he had no position in society and did not jockey for position. He knew his purpose and place. In the same way a humble disciple knows his purpose and place in the plan of God. He doesn't jockey for position, depreciate himself or appreciate himself. He simply knows his place, his role, his calling, his gifts and uses them in service of others for the glory of God. He recognizes other humble disciples and welcomes them and encourages them in their purpose and calling. He takes measures to root out any pride that might cause him to despise them and recognizes that God loves them so much that if they go astray or are discouraged He sends forth angels to help restore them. In conclusion, the path of a humble disciple is not an easy one but God is for him. Who then is the greatest in the kingdom? He who is servant of all!

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<sup>1</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 64.

<sup>2</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 18:3.

<sup>3</sup> BDAG entry, *στρεφω*.

<sup>4</sup> John Walvoord, *Thy Kingdom Come*, p 135.

<sup>5</sup> Stanley Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 215.

<sup>6</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 18:5.

<sup>7</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 65.

<sup>8</sup> Bruce Manning Metzger, United Bible Societies, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament, Second Edition a Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (4th Rev. Ed.)* (London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 36.

<sup>9</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 18:12.

<sup>10</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 18:12.

<sup>11</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 18:14.