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## Childlike Faith

Sometimes during the church service, I will whisper to little kids that there is candy on the stage behind the drums. I quietly laugh as they attempt to make it to the stage before their parents can chase them down. It entertains me because I used to be that dad, quietly “fast walking” with my head down as I would chase my kids during worship time, trying not to make a scene. I used to be self-conscious of this, but something changed in me as my children are growing up and as I get closer to being the age of a grandfather. I think every parent goes through this transformation whereas a parent, you are focused on one thing, but change as the children grow up. Even though I’m not a grandparent yet, I think I can look through the child’s eyes and enjoy life with them.

It’s in every Easter production when the little kids sing, and the parents are mortified at how their child is the one acting out. For the rest of us, it’s the best part of the program, watching them play while forgetting about everything they learned in practice. What a freedom it is to walk in and not care what anyone thinks while playing around on stage. There is so much life in the heart of children, and yet it’s so easy to outgrow that place of your youth.

The world calls it the loss of innocence when someone grows up or experiences hardship, and they lose the ability to see life as a child. They become skeptical of life and the world, and they can no longer return to that lost innocence. Every grown-up goes through this stage of seeing the world for what it really is. This is how life itself makes you tough, just trying to survive it.

I have often ministered to people who have difficulty trusting in God because they grew up having to fight. They had no one to trust in, and if they didn’t take care of themselves, no one else would. These people lost that ability to rely on others, including God. Yes, we do want to mature in the Lord, but we must also remain childlike in our faith towards God. Let’s get back to that innocence of simply believing we have a Father who loves us unconditionally.

It reads in Matthew 18. 1-4 *“At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven “Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”*

One time while attending a movie at a theater, I was incredibly excited to see this flick. It was a movie that I had seen as a kid, and twenty years later, they put it back in the theaters for a few days. I grabbed my popcorn and was ready to relive my childhood as the movie began. Suddenly, I was brought back to reality by a little kid a few seats away who was the same age I was when I first saw it. He would loudly voice the theme music every time it would play on the speakers.

I was just about to interrupt him and scold him for disturbing my special moment of reminiscing when I realized he was just a kid experiencing the joy of the same science fiction movie that captivated me in my childhood. Soon, I was watching him more than the show, and I was excited to see him jump in his seat and sing along with the music. I saw through his young eyes instead of my aged eyes.

Children know how to enjoy the wonders around them, they know how to laugh and play, and they know how to need the help of others. Religion has caused many of us to harden up where we take on the cares of this life head-on in our self-sufficiency. This causes us to stop relying on God, but if we remain a child in heart, we can hold onto the verse in 1 Peter 5:7 *“casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”*

Not too long ago, while enjoying a time in a swimming pool with the beautiful sun on my face, I was in my bubble of serenity when a cold splash of reality jolted me. A family with small kids entered my domain, and my quiet sunbathing was replaced with one kid taunting the other with cannonball jumps included. Before I could get in a mean look at the parents, I realized how much fun these kids were having. They were children enjoying life as children. They weren't disrespectful to me, and I can handle a little extra water because I was already in the pool after all. God most likely sent them there just to remind me to quit acting like a grown-up so much. I chose to look at the enjoyment and freedom of youth through their eyes instead of mine.

I think the church people need to hear this message of looking through young and innocent eyes. I preach largely on the topic of maturing in the Lord, but as we grow in God, we should never lose the childlike faith that brought us into the kingdom. Only through those childlike eyes will we find the power to believe that all things are possible with our Heavenly Father.

It's with childlike eyes that we can cast all our cares unto Him. You are His child, and He wants to be everything to you. My prayer for us today is that we can remain childlike with Him in every way. He will never let us down as we trust and believe in Him.