

# Child-like Faith

By

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*“He called a little child and had him stand among them. And He said, ‘I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.’” Matthew 18:2-4*

Do you know the lyrics to the classic song, “Young at Heart?” You know how they say “Art imitates Life.” Well, so often, I see how “Art imitates Scripture.” Check out these lyrics:

Fairy tales can come true, it can happen to you  
If you're young at heart.  
For it's hard, you will find, to be narrow of mind  
If you're young at heart.

You can go to extremes with impossible schemes.  
You can laugh when your dreams fall apart at the seams.  
And life gets more exciting with each passing day.  
And love is either in your heart, or on its way.

Don't you know that it's worth every treasure on earth  
To be young at heart.  
For as rich as you are, it's much better by far  
To be young at heart.

And if you should survive to 105,  
Look at all you'll derive out of being alive!  
And here is the best part, you have a head start  
If you are among the very young at heart.

I was blessed in my 40's with the birth of my fourth daughter, Meredith. It is so interesting to go to her pre-school class with all the other parents in their 20's and 30's. We have to make sure they know that we are her parents, not her grandparents. Hopefully, with our age, comes a little wisdom in parenting. If nothing else, I have an appreciation for little details of Meredith's life, since I realize this is probably my last rodeo as a pre-school parent. As I watch these little 5 year olds in Meredith's class

interact, I begin to understand why Jesus took a little child and used him as an example of what our faith should look like. These little kids are so loving and kind. They are supportive of one another, quick to give a helping hand when needed. They are blind to race, status or popularity. They smile all the time and break out in dance or song at the drop of a hat. I realize they were each born with original sin, but you would be hard-pressed to describe any of these children as sinful. They are so innocent and so full of life. They readily engage with others, realizing life wasn't meant to be spent alone.

I've always been a bit baffled when someone shares the fact they don't like children. I always want to say, "You were one of them once!" Yes, all of us were 5 years old at one time. Life was so simple and so full of joy. Slowly and surely, the hardness and sinfulness of the world began to chip away at our spirits. A harsh word, an embarrassment, an abuse, a rejection...little by little, blow by blow, our hearts became hardened and we grew up. Now, that joyful little child is nowhere to be found.

But Jesus is telling us he is still there. If you've ever seen someone who has given their life to Christ, you should see a change. It is as if the innocence of childhood comes pouring out of their heart. You see a love and joy and peace like I see when I look at that class of 5 year olds. This must be what Jesus was talking about as he pointed to that child in the scripture above. This is what the songwriter describes in his secret of life of being "young at heart."

I think this can be helpful as we interact with others, as well. Any time you have a problem with someone, for whatever reason, and you are feeling negatively toward them, ask the Lord to help you see them when they were 5 years old. If that same person morphed in front of you into themselves at 5, you would see a sweet innocent child standing before you. You would see them before life got hold of them. If you can truly do this, you will have a hard time staying upset with this person. You will have a new perspective. Now, you will see them the way God sees them, and the way He sees you. You will find yourself becoming like a child again, free from the bonds of prejudice, pride and judgment. You will be one step closer to the Kingdom of Heaven.