

RECOGNIZING THE LITTLE ONES

DEVOTIONAL 3



Read Matthew 18:2-10 [NIV]

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

“If anyone causes one of these little ones — those who believe in me — to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to stumble! Such things must come, but woe to the person through whom they come! If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.”

Jesus reminds the disciples of the value the Lord places on “these little ones,” in other words, children. He next demonstrates the importance God attaches to little children by giving the disciples the illustration of the lost sheep in Matthew 18:12-14. After describing a man who searches for one of his hundred sheep, Jesus asks, “Will he not leave them and search for the one until he finds it?” He points out that in the same way God is concerned about “these little ones” and does not want to lose any of them.

Questions for Thought or Discussion

1. *Why are children important to God?*
2. *What will happen to anyone who harms a child?*
3. *Why should we not look down on “these little ones”?*
4. *What threats do children face in our modern world?*
5. *How do you plan to value children in your life today?*