

How to be a Loser
Step Two: Act Like a Child
September 6, 2009

Matthew 17:24-18:9

^{7:24} When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax went up to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the tax?" ²⁵ He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?" ²⁶ And when he said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. ²⁷ However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."

^{18:1} At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them ³ and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵ "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, ⁶ but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

⁷ "Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! ⁸ And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. ⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

Discussion Questions

How many of you like getting presents?
Is there anything you do not like about getting presents?
How do little kids receive presents?

Why did Jesus pay the tax?
What does that tell us about how to think about our own rights and responsibilities?

Why do the disciples ask that question in 18:1?

What is so admirable about children that Jesus states the disciples must become like them if they want to be 'great'?
In what way do children 'humble themselves'?

Why is it necessary that 'temptations come'?
In what way can humility keep us from sinning?

Does the world, in general, value humility?
Why or why not?
Why does Jesus ask us to be humble?