

117 – Now grow Up!

Father, it's our time with You and with Your word. We lay everything aside that we have been involved with today. All the comings and goings – the details; the minutia that can consume and overwhelm; the “*tyranny of the urgent*”; we put it off from us as we come to sit at Your feet, or in Your lap. Tell us Your story tonight, Father, we pray. Teach us; let us learn of You and from You...we pray in Jesus' name.

“Now to You, Who are able to do superexcessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to You be glory in the ecclesia and in Christ Jesus for all the generations of the eon of the eons! Amen!” (Eph. 3:20-21)

A few weeks ago we looked at what it means to come to God as a child, with all the natural freedom of joyful exuberance, absolute trust, unencumbered enthusiasm, and utter purity that *characterizes* a child. So, if you've been feeling like a 6 year-old lately, I celebrate with you. Meanwhile, it's time for us to look at the reality that children don't stay children and maturity is inevitable. For what it's worth, my take on this is that we get to maintain all the qualities of childlike joy, purity, wonder and faith that *serve* us and God's purpose, while we gain the *wisdom* that comes from the knowledge *of* Him and the experience of walking *with* Him.

Being a child is how one receives the kingdom:

Luke 18:17 –

Verily, I am saying to you, Whoever should not be receiving the kingdom of God as a little child, may under no circumstances be entering into it.

Before this statement, Jesus also said this:

Matthew 14:25-33

25 Now vast throngs went together with Him. And, being turned, He said to them,

26 "If anyone is coming to Me and is not hating his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, and still more his soul besides, he can not be My disciple.

27 And anyone who is not bearing his cross and coming after Me, can not be My disciple.

28 "For which of you, wanting to build a tower, is not first seated to calculate the expense, to see if he has the wherewithal?-

29 lest at some time, he laying a foundation and not being strong enough to finish up, all those beholding should begin to scoff at him, 30 saying that 'This man begins building and is not strong enough to finish up!'

31 "Or what king, going to engage another king in battle, will not, being seated, first plan to see if he is able to meet, with ten thousand, him who is coming against him with twenty thousand?

32 Otherwise, surely, at his being still at a distance, he, dispatching an embassy, is asking the terms of peace.

33 Thus, then, everyone of you who is not taking leave of all of his possessions, can not be My disciple.

We may receive the kingdom as a little child, that is, with the most innocent and endearing characteristics of a child. But kids don't take costs of what they do into account, do they? Kids just do stuff and find out later how it worked out. We all learned more by trial and error than by instruction and so did our kids, right?

So we have an apparent contradiction in the scriptures, where, in Chapter 14, Jesus talks about hating those closest to us, picking up our cross (our own execution stake, the CJB says), and following Him, counting the cost of doing so. None of those sound like what little children do, do they? Then in Chapter 18 Jesus talks about receiving the kingdom as a little child; in fact, He says it's impossible to receive the kingdom any other way!

We must remember the principle that when the scriptures seem to be in conflict, it is our understanding that needs raised, because the Word of God is always in agreement within itself.

Recently, I said that I believe that we, as the Body of Christ, are actually living in the kingdom administration now, because, as we are living by the spirit, the kingdom is indeed within us, as Jesus said. We have received His Lordship – His kingdom, if you will, with childlike faith and trust. We don't STOP at childhood is my point tonight, and, given how quickly events are transpiring in relationships and circumstances among those who we know, love and serve, it's not surprising that we only had a month to recognize, realize and enjoy our childhood, before God calls us into maturity, which is exactly what I see Him doing today.

While the kingdom of God is within us, as Jesus said, you've also heard me say that we are destined for a far higher place than His Earthly kingdom:

Ephesians 1:3-6

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who blesses us with every spiritual blessing **among the celestials**, in Christ,
4 according as He chooses us in Him before the disruption of the world, we to be holy and flawless in His sight,
5 in love designating us beforehand for **the place of a son** for Him through Christ Jesus; in accord with the delight of His will,
6 for **the laud of the glory of His grace, which graces us in the Beloved**

Ephesians 2:4-7

4 yet God, being rich in mercy, because of His vast love with which He loves us
5 (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), **vivifies us together in Christ** (in grace are you saved!) – **[This will happen literally at the resurrection prior to Christ's return]**
6 and **rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus,**
7 that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying the **transcendent riches of His grace** in His kindness **to us in Christ Jesus.**

This is seriously grown-up stuff we're into here. Look back at Ephesians 1:3-6:

1. Our blessing is ***"among the celestials,"*** not the "terrestrials."
2. We occupy now ***"the place of a son,"*** not the place of a servant.
3. ***"The laud of the glory of His grace"*** is certainly not limited to the Earthly kingdom of Christ's millennial reign. It's also not limited to the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and Earth of the Great Eon prior to the consummation that Paul introduced in 1 Cor. 15.
4. As wonderful as the kingdom will be for those living in it and ministering in it to the nations, the kingdom isn't what ***"graces us in the Beloved."***

What does grace ***us in the beloved?*** Look back now at Ephesians 2:4-7

1. God has already ***"vivified"*** us; He has made us alive ***"together in Christ."*** We yet await the physical and "psychic" change, if I may use that term, according to the Apostle Paul's declaration in Philippians:

Phil. 4:20-21

20 For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ,

21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself.

2. God ***"rouses us together and seats us together among the celestials, in Christ Jesus."*** Notice that this is all present tense and that NOW this rousing and seating is ***"in Christ Jesus."*** In that day – that is, the Day of The Lord Jesus – it will not only be in Christ, but it will literally take place, according to the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the Thessalonians:

1 Thess. 4:14-17

14 For, if we are believing that Jesus died and rose, thus also, those who are put to repose, will God, through Jesus, lead forth together with Him.

15 For this we are saying to you by the word of the Lord, that we, the living, who are surviving to the presence of the Lord, should by no means outstrip those who are put to

repose,

16 for the Lord Himself will be descending from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Chief Messenger, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall be rising first.

17 Thereupon we, the living who are surviving, shall at the same time be snatched away together with them in clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be together with the Lord.

3. Finally, God's "display" of "***the transcendent riches of His grace in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus***" aren't found in an Earthly kingdom, no matter whether were talking about this Earth or the new one coming at the Great Eon. We're looking into a celestial realm.

Wouldn't you agree that this is anything but child-like or child-ish stuff? Right, because the goal is maturity:

Colossians 2:6-8

6 Yet wisdom are we speaking **among the mature**, yet a wisdom not of this eon, neither of the chief men of this eon, who are being discarded,

7 but we are speaking God's wisdom in a secret, wisdom which has been concealed, which God designates before -- before the eons, for our glory,

8 which not one of the chief men of this eon knows, for if they know, they would not crucify the Lord of glory.

Ephesians 4:10-14

10 He Who descends is the Same Who ascends also, up over all who are of the heavens, that He should be completing all.

11 And the same One gives these, indeed, as apostles, yet these as prophets, yet these as evangelists, yet these as pastors and teachers,

12 toward the adjusting of the saints for the work of dispensing, for the upbuilding of the body of Christ,

13 unto the end that we should all attain to the unity of the faith and of

the realization of the son of God, to a **mature man**, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ,
14 that **we may by no means still be minors**, surging hither and thither and being carried about by every wind of teaching, by human caprice, by craftiness with a view to the systematizing of the deception.

See if you find anything childish or child-like here:

Philippians 3 –

8 But, to be sure, I am also deeming all to be a forfeit because of the superiority of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, because of Whom I forfeited all, and am deeming it to be refuse, that I should be gaining Christ,

9 and may be found in Him, not having my righteousness, which is of law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is from God for faith:

10 to know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, conforming to His death,

11 if somehow I should be attaining to the resurrection that is out from among the dead.

12 Not that I already obtained, or am already perfected. Yet I am pursuing, if I may be grasping also that for which I was grasped also by Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, not as yet am I reckoning myself to have grasped, yet one thing -- forgetting, indeed, those things which are behind, yet stretching out to those in front --

14 toward the goal am I pursuing for the prize of God's calling above in Christ Jesus.

15 **Whoever, then, are mature, may be disposed to this**, and if in anything you are differently disposed, this also shall God reveal to you.

Colossians 1:

24 I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and am filling up in my flesh, in His stead, the deficiencies of the afflictions of Christ, for His body, which is the ecclesia

25 of which I became a dispenser, in accord with the administration of

God, which is granted to me for you, to complete the word of God --
26 the secret which has been concealed from the eons and from the generations, yet now was made manifest to His saints,
27 to whom God wills to make known what are the glorious riches of this secret among the nations, which is: Christ among you, the expectation of glory --
28 Whom we are announcing, admonishing every **man** and teaching every **man** in all wisdom, that **we should be presenting every man mature in Christ Jesus**;
29 for which I am toiling also, struggling in accord with His operation, which is operating in me with power.

Colossians 4:12

that you may stand **mature** and fully assured in all the will of God.

Hebrews 5:13-14

13 For everyone who is partaking of milk is untried in the word of righteousness, for he is a **minor**.
14 Now solid nourishment is for the **mature**, who, because of habit, have faculties exercised for discriminating between the ideal and the evil.

James 1:4-

Now let endurance have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and unimpaired, lacking in nothing.

Paul called the ecclesias to a distinct maturity in Christ:

1 Cor. 13:

10 Now whenever **maturity** may be coming, that which is out of an instalment shall be discarded.
11 When **I was a minor**, I spoke as a minor, I was disposed as a minor, I took account of things as a minor. Yet when I have become a man, I have **discarded** that which is a minor's.

1 Cor. 14:

20 Brethren, do not become little children in disposition. But in evil be minors, yet in disposition [in your mind, in your faculty of perceiving and judging - [Thayer](#)] become **mature**.

Mature is “full grown, adult, of full age” - [Thayer](#)

Let's review:

Romans 8:16 says, “*The spirit itself is testifying together with our spirit that we are children of God.*”

So there is a place, in relationship to God, for us to be Children; “**beloved children**” at that (**Ephesians 5:1**), and “**children of light**” (**Ephesians 5:9**). Even in relationship to our spiritual elders, we are children:

1 John 2:1 – My little children

Galatians 4:19 – Little children mine

Hebrews 2:13 – I and the little children who are given Me by God

As to following Christ, becoming His disciple, picking up our Cross, hating every other relationship and giving up any claim to possessions and even our own souls, we are called into maturity:

Ephesians 4:13

the realization of the son of God, **to a mature man**, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ.

How do we achieve the mental disposition of a child, while maturing into “**a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the complement of the Christ**”? I suggest only that the phenomenon is achievable by God's Spirit living in us.

Matthew 19:26

"With men this is impossible, yet with God all is possible."

Father, we place ourselves, our relationships, our possessions, even our lives, in Your holy, loving, and utterly capable hands. We recognize and acknowledge that we do not know how to be little children and grow up into mature sons and daughters at the same time. But You know, Father, and we trust in You as little Children, while we gain knowledge of You and as we experience Your ways. We request wisdom, Father, as Your word says we ought when we lack it. I pray above all that we present ourselves to You qualified in the Day of the Lord Jesus.

Oh God, our God, we worship and praise and honor You as we breathe and think and believe and act throughout every waking moment until the trumpet sounds and we are changed and rise to meet the Lord in the air. Truly, with men this IS impossible, yet with You ALL is possible, and so we leave everything in Your hands, stepping back with our own hands open to receive Your word, Your Love, and Your direction for our lives in every area. In Jesus name, AMEN.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you: the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26)