

Prayer List

Sheila
Ophelia
Josh
Daniel
Olene

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

Who met his future wife at a well in Midian?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Uriah the Hittite - 2 Samuel 11:24

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Why We Need to Be More Like Kids

by David Posey

Paul said in 1 Cor. 14:20 that we are not to be like children in understanding; however, he said, we are to be like children in malice. There are some traits of children that we should not emulate. We should avoid all those forms of immaturity that impede our spiritual progress and wreck our relationships.

But most of us are well aware that Jesus had some high praise for kids. He said, among other things, that we must be converted and become like them, if we hope to enter therein (Mt. 18:3). That's not just a proof text to use in debates against those who teach total depravity. It is a strong statement about what kind of people God is looking for. There are not a lot of them around, so it behooves us to learn these lessons well.

Persistence

The things we are to learn from children are the things that both endear them to us and, at times, exasperate us. For example, a young child's persistence may be a mother's undoing while shopping. Yet, channeled properly, it is a sorely-needed trait that every Christian should develop. A child who wants something will not stop trying to get it until he is physically distracted. And even that may not work. Recently, our 9 month old grandchild eyed a box of peaches sitting on a little stool, well within her reach. There was no stopping her – she crawled to the box, pulled herself up, and grabbed the first peach that would fit into her tiny hand. You know where she put it – directly into her mouth, fuzz and all. She made a funny face, smacked her lips and then gave it another toothless bite. When she began dropping the peaches, we moved her to the other side of the room, but she hadn't forgotten her goal. She kept crawling to the box, seeking another red-orange beauty. Finally we put a

stuffed animal that frightens her on the top of the peaches. That kept her at bay for awhile, until she could figure a way around the fake guard dog.

Jesus told a parable of a widow and an unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8). Even though he was unjust, because she was so persistent – like our granddaughter going for the peaches – the judge gave her what she wanted. He told the story to illustrate the need for persistence in prayer. He ends with a poignant question: "...when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?" Oh, for the faith that persists instead of gives up. Watch your children and grandchildren, and learn.

Dependence

A second trait of children that is worthy of imitation is the utter dependence of the child on those who are older and wiser than he. We realize that this is a rapidly changing characteristic. Even at nine months, our granddaughter is already showing an independent streak. If she doesn't want to be held, she'll twist and turn in your arms until you put her down. Then off she crawls, "doing her own thing," until there is some need to redirect her.

But, despite her protests, she is utterly dependent on her parents and those who are caring for her at any given time. She knows that she is hungry, and lets us know, but she cannot feed herself. She cannot provide her bed or home or buy clothes for herself – someone else has to do those things for her. She lives like the birds Jesus talks about in Mt. 6 – she doesn't gather into barns, but takes the daily bread that is offered her. Her life is simple. She doesn't realize how complicated life is – she hasn't the foggiest notion that her parents are spending a small fortune just on Similac! She has no concept of what it takes to get her out the door and to worship services. She takes life a foot of carpet at a time and that's about it. She is dependent on us for everything else.

God wants His children to be more like that. To utterly trust Him for everything and to be less concerned – anxious, if you will – about the things that tie us to the world. He wants us to live like the birds and be like the lilies that neither toil nor spin, who do not know that God clothes them in apparel fit for a king. Even better. He wants us to be as dependent as a bird or flower, but with a critical difference: we know where our blessings come from and can thank Him. The trouble is, we think we provide these things for ourselves, so we don't thank Him.

Dependence on God is not a message about laziness or failing to provide for one's own. It is a message about trust and faith. Children do what they can do, and trust us for the rest. Do we trust God like that?

Curiosity

Someone once observed that children grow up and die, and we call the corpse an "adult." That stings. But that's exactly what happens when we lose all our intellectual curiosity and allow our minds to stagnate. When Christians who have been Christians for one year fifty times over

are still mouthing the same old clichés and platitudes, you know it has happened. When the best definition of "grace" they can come up with, after 30 years of classes and sermons, is "unmerited favor," and hardly know what that means, they're pushing up daisies, intellectually.

A child is curious if he is anything at all. Everything is new, everything is a discovery, and adventure. Our granddaughter makes this funny face when she's exited – for those of you who remember Spanky in the Little Rascals, it was the face he made when he was scared. One of the ladies here at Folsom calls it her "Cheerio face" because she purses her lips into an O and her eyes get real big and her eyebrows fly upward. She does it a lot because she is very curious and so she sees lots of new things that excite her.

If there's one thing that will kill Christians spiritually, it is a lack of intellectual curiosity. I say intellectual curiosity, a desire to learn, to discover truth. I'm not talking about an evil form of curiosity, a desire to try different kinds of sins so that one might "experience the deep things of Satan." Paul told us flatly to avoid all forms of evil (1 Th. 5:22). I'm talking about the childlike curiosity that remains alive to the world. For Christians, it is the kind of curiosity that is alive to the living and active word of God. I'm talking about a curiosity that causes us to ask, "why did Luke put this in here?" or "why did Peter use this word instead of ____?" It has nothing to do with age. At Folsom, Gladys, above ninety, still spends most of her day watching video tapes of classes on books of the Bible, taking notes all along the way. She hasn't lost her curiosity.

A dynamic Christian is a childlike one, of any age; a man or woman who combines intellectual curiosity with childlike dependence and persistence. He hungers and thirsts for righteousness and seeks out the answers until he finds them. Then, finding them, he submits fully to the dictates therein, no questions asked (in this, he may be distinguished from a child; he is not a child in "understanding" or maturity. But he demonstrates a childlike trust in God and His word.) God says, "of such is the kingdom of God" (Mt. 19:14).