

Honoring our King by Following His Heart

Our King is worthy of obedience, love, worship, honor, all we can give!

We want to bring a gift to the King of Kings that will bring joy to His heart.

When you welcome a King or a President or some great person, how do you prepare? (Let them tell.)

Do you just prepare any food?

Do you prepare pig meat if he is a Muslim? Or a Jew?

In some places people consider frog legs a delicacy. Congo

In some places people consider the intestines the best dish. Americans

Are there foods here that some like but others detest? What?

The point is, that you honor a great person by preparing what he likes. Not only in food but also in entertainment, in music, and so on.

We may not always know what another person likes, BUT WE KNOW A LOT ABOUT WHAT OUR KING OF KINGS LIKES.

THE BIBLE TELLS US A LOT ABOUT HIS HEART—WHAT HE REALLY LOVES—WHAT HE REALLY VALUES.

There are many things we could say. What are some things He values?

Love Truthfulness Peacemaking People His church
Goodness

I'd like to focus our attention on one of the things Jesus really loves and values. When we give attention to this, we honor Him. We bring Him joy.

Are you ready? JESUS LOVES CHILDREN.
(Sing "Jesus Loves the Little Children")

Jesus loves children. He yearns for their salvation.

Matthew 18:14

“It is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish” (Matthew 18:14).

The children in your family—Jesus longs for their salvation. His heart aches for their salvation. Jesus came to do His Father’s will, and it is not the will of the Father that ONE of these little ones should perish.

The children in your church, in the homes of your members
The children who live around your church
The children who live in your neighborhoods and villages and cities
The children who live in all of Nigeria
The children who live in all of Africa

What is Jesus’ heart for them? He LONGS that they be saved. OH, THAT THEY WOULD BE SAVED!

What is YOUR heart like towards the children? Are you running with Jesus? Or do you have your own thoughts and opinions?

It’s good when the servants of the king follow the heart of the king. And His heart is towards the children.

Children can be lost. Children can perish eternally.

How do I know that? The Greek word for “perish” in Matthew 18:14 is exactly the same word Jesus used in John 3:16. What does “perish” mean in John 3:16? It has to mean the same thing in Matthew 18:14.

Let’s look at the context of Matthew 18:14. Let’s look at the verses that precede it. The whole chapter is talking about little children. Verses 2-3-4-5-6-10—All talk about little children.

Just before verse 14, Jesus gives the parable of the one lost sheep. The shepherd seeks one lost sheep and rejoices when it is found. EVEN SO it is not the will of Your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”

The one sheep is LOST. He has GONE ASTRAY. EVEN SO—Jesus says this can be true of children.

When a child is old enough to willingly choose good and evil, he is responsible before God. He is lost, and he needs to be saved.

What is the heart of our King? Jesus longs for the children to be saved.

Children CAN be saved.

Our King doesn't ask an impossible task of us.

Matthew 18:6 “But whoever causes ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES WHO BELIEVE IN ME to sin, it would be better for him...”

The word “little ones” used here means “very little ones”.

The word “believe” is the same word used in John 3:16.

The believing the very little ones do is the same as the believing that saved you, an adult.

Many pastors don't believe little children can really believe in Jesus. Jesus said, “THESE LITTLE ONES WHO BELIEVE IN ME” (They repeat.)

What are you doing to honor the heart of our King?

Children all over this nation need to be saved. Children all over this nation can be saved. The Father wants them to be saved. Jesus wants them to be saved. What are we doing to HONOR THE HEART OF OUR KING IN THIS MATTER?

**What are you doing to lead the children around you to Jesus?
What are you as a church leader doing to encourage and build up children's ministries in your church so your church can reach the children?**

Jesus loves the humility of children. He holds it up as an example for us adults.

Matthew 18:4 “Therefore whoever HUMBLER HIMSELF AS THIS LITTLE CHILD is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Adults are very concerned with appearances—making themselves LOOK good.

Children are humble enough to be truthful, to be genuine, to admit their need.

In the discussion of who would be greatest in the Kingdom, who did Jesus set in their midst? A wise old man? A beautiful young woman? An educated professor? A person of great power and authority?

Jesus said, (Matthew 18:5), “Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.”

Do you receive children into your churches?
Are children really welcome there?

Jesus loves the faith of little children.

Matthew 18:3 “Assuredly I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

According to Jesus, who is the example of faith? The adult or the child?

Matthew 18:6 “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin...”

Mark 10:15 “Assuredly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.”

Is there any indication that Jesus doubts the faith of little children?

Is there anything that would show that children need to wait or reach a certain age before they can have real faith?

There are certain church policies you have a say in. Do your church policies value the faith of children as Jesus does, or do they cast doubt on the faith of children?

Jesus loves the praise of little children.

When He entered Jerusalem, children were among the crowds who praised Him.

Matthew 21:15-16 “But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and **THE CHILDREN CRYING OUT IN THE TEMPLE** and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant.

Who was crying out in the temple?
Who was angry about it?

“And said to Him, ‘Do you hear what these are saying?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Yes. Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouths of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise’?

Who were the chief priests and scribes? (The religious leaders)
Who were they complaining to?
What was their complaint?

Jesus said:

1. The praise of children is so important that it was prophesied in the Old Testament. Psalm 8:2
2. The praise of young children is PERFECT praise.
“Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have PERFECTED PRAISE” Matthew 21:16

“Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.” Psalm 8:2b

The praise of CHILDREN is EFFECTIVE in SPIRITUAL WARFARE
against the ENEMY!

The praise of CHILDREN causes the ENEMY to be SILENCED!

How much praise of children is heard in your church?
How much praise of YOUNG children is heard in your church?

Luke 19:40

“But He answered and said to them, ‘I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out’.

The praise of children is NECESSARY. It is needed. When it is missing, the church is poorer for the lack of it.

JESUS LOVES THE PRAISE OF CHILDREN.

We want to honor our King. Let's bring Him what He loves.

Let's bring Him the praise of children.

Let's bring a special gift to Jesus—the praise of little children filling every church in this land.

Let's not force the stones of Nigeria to cry out. Let's let Jesus have what He wants, what He loves. Let's give Him the praise of children.

(Sing: Praise Him! Praise Him! All you little children)

Honoring our King by Following His Heart Part 2

Jesus also loves His church.

Matthew 16:18 “...I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

Ephesians 5:25 “...Christ also LOVED the church and gave Himself for her.”

Let’s build His church

We honor our King when we love His church, when we build His church.

50% of population

Most receptive

Most people who receive Christ do it by age 18

Did Jesus say, “Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to everyone over 18? To everyone over 12? To everyone over 8? To adults only?”

He did say, “Let the children come to Me” (Mark 10:14). Please! Please! Let the children come to Me! When they come to Jesus, aren’t they becoming part of His church?

Children can serve the God and the church now. What at gift for our King!

Can you think of some children who served God?

Children can pray. Children can praise.

Children can serve.

Children can bring others in.

Children are uninhibited evangelists. They can help you reach their families and their communities.

(Story of Stephen Paxson)

Is it Scriptural to teach children from unsaved families the Word of God?

Deuteronomy 31:12-13 “Gather the people together, men and women AND LITTLE ONES, AND THE STRANGER WHO IS WITHIN YOUR GATES, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the Lord your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, AND THAT THEIR CHILDREN, WHO HAVE NOT KNOWN IT, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God...”

Who are the children within your gates?

Those in your neighborhoods and your sphere of influence. Those around you. Those you have contact with.

**Children can serve God and the church THEIR WHOLE LIVES!
What a gift for our King!**

(Long candle—Short Candle illustration)

When you show an interest in children, you BUILD THE CHURCH now and SECURE THE FUTURE of the church as well.

What has God been saying to you?

What attitudes and words and actions do you need to repent of?

How will you start doing things differently? Will you ask God’s help in that right now?

What about your own children and your wider family? What should you be doing to win the children there?

What about your neighborhood and community?

What about your church?

What new programs should you start?

What do you need to encourage and strengthen?

What problems do you need to solve?

What leaders do you need to enlist or encourage?

What rules and practices do you need to change?

What can you do that will demonstrate to your congregation your new attitude toward the children?