

The Conditions for Greatness

Mathew 18: 01–04

(Mk 9:33-37; Lk 9:46-48)

1. *Two true assumptions*

- a. First, a person is great if he is in the kingdom
- b. Second, there are degrees of greatness
- c. Jesus used a child to illustrate the truth

2. *Condition 1: Conversion*

- a. How:
Turning and become as a child,
trust and depend on God
- b. Why:
Will be rejected if not converted

3. *Condition 2: Humility*

- a. How:
Live as a child —
trust and depend on God
- b. The result:
Will be the greatest in heaven

1 At that time
the disciples came to Jesus and asked,
“Who is the greatest
in the kingdom of heaven?”

2 He called a little child
and had him stand among them.

3 And he said:
“I tell you the truth,
unless you change
and become like little children,
you will never enter
the kingdom of heaven.

4 Therefore,
whoever humbles himself
like this child
is the greatest
in the kingdom of heaven.”

The Warning Against Offending, Mistreating a Child

Mathew 18: 05–10

(Mk 9:42-48)

1. *The child represents Christ*

2. *Offense 1: Leading a child astray*

- a. The child who believes
- b. The worst conceivable sin
- c. The severe judgment

3. *Offense 2: Being a stumbling block*

- a. The certainty of sin in a sinful world
- b. The warning to the sinner
- c. The way to handle the sin of being a stumbling block
 - 1) Cut off the hand that sins
 - 2) Cut off the foot that sins
 - 3) Pluck out the eye that sins
- d. The escaping of the punishment is worth any price:
Because it will be
the eternal fire of hell, v. 8

4. *Offense 3: Despising and degrading a child*

- a. A caution: Take heed
- b. The reason:
Children have direct access to God
and are watched over by angels,
Psa 34:7; 91:11; Heb 1:14

5 “And whoever welcomes
a little child like this in my name
welcomes me.

6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones
who believe in me to sin,
it would be better for him
to have a large millstone hung around his neck
and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

7 Woe to the world
because of the things that cause people to sin!
Such things must come,
but woe to the man through whom they come!

8 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 maimed or crippled
than to have two hands or two feet
and be thrown into eternal fire.

9 And if your eye causes you to sin,
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.

10 See that you do not look down
on one of these little ones.
For I tell you
that their angels in heaven always see
the face of my Father in heaven.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep: The Supreme Example of Caring

Mathew 18: 11–14

(Lk 15:1-7)

1. ***Jesus came to save the lost***

11 * The Son of Man came
to save what was lost. (* Not in NIV)

2. ***Jesus seeks every lost one***

12 “What do you think?
If a man owns a hundred sheep,
and one of them wanders away,
will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills
and go to look for the one that wandered off?

a. The sheep wandered away

b. The sheep was sought:
By the shepherd

c. The sheep was sought:
In the mountains

3. ***Jesus may
or may not find the lost one***

13 And if he finds it,
I tell you the truth,
he is happier about that one sheep
than about the ninety-nine
that did not wander off.

4. ***Jesus forgives and rejoices
over the lost one who is found***

5. ***Jesus declares a wonderful truth:
God wills that not a single soul
be lost***

14 In the same way
your Father in heaven is not willing
that any of these little ones should be lost.