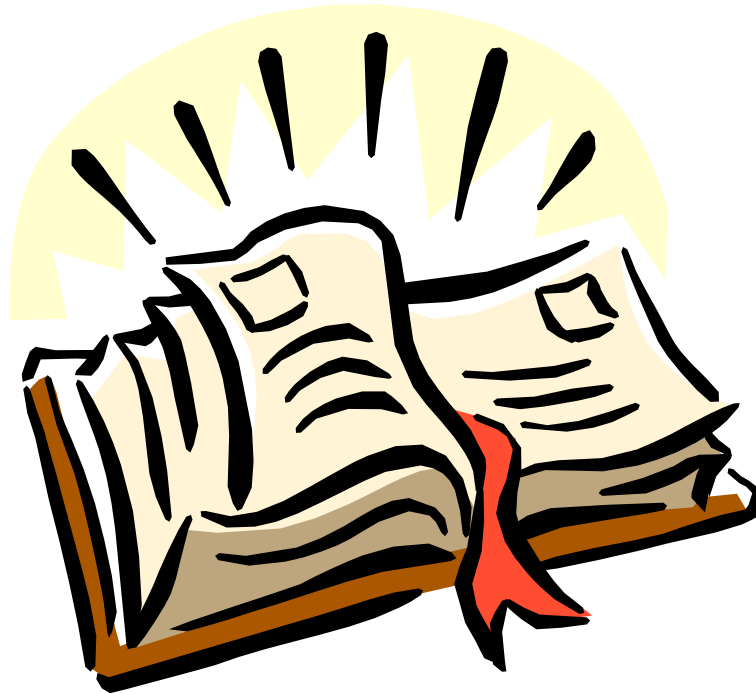


Bible Time for Kids!



CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF:



LESSON TITLE: Who is the Greatest?

THEME: Whoever humbles himself is the greatest in the kingdom of God!

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 18:1-5

Dear Parents...

Welcome to Bible Time for Kids! Bible Time for Kids is a series of daily devotions for children and their families. Our purpose is to supplement our Sunday morning curriculum and give you an opportunity to encourage your children to develop a daily devotional life. We hope you and your family will be blessed as you study **God's Word** together.

This week in Children's Church we learned about **Who is the Greatest?** Who is the greatest in God's kingdom? Is it the person who seems to be the most important? Is it the person who goes around telling everyone how great they are? Jesus said that if we want to be great that we need to be a servant of others. We need to serve others!

God's kingdom is a lot different than the kingdoms of this world. The world tells us that we need to be the greatest by being the strongest, most powerful or even by taking advantage of others. But the only way to **greatness in God's kingdom is by putting others before ourselves.** How can we do that? With the Holy Spirit's help and by becoming like little children!

The section of scripture that we studied was **Matthew 18:1-5.** The following five devotions are based on either the scripture and/or the theme for Sunday's lesson. As a starting point it would be good for you to review these verses with your children.

These devotions are designed to help you reinforce Sunday's lesson throughout the week with your children, provide some more ideas for the application of God's Word in your children's lives and provide a tool to help in family devotions.

Obviously children at various age levels will respond to the devotional in different ways. You may want to add your own ideas to these to make them more age appropriate.

May the Lord bless you as you study His Word together!

Day One

God's House

Text: John 14:2 - "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

Also read John 14:1-4

Have you ever met someone who lived in another country? Maybe you have met someone from China or Africa or Russia? It is always fun to ask them questions about their homeland. Maybe you would ask what it is like to live there or what it looks like, or what the kids are like there. If you have never been there, then all you have to go by for an explanation is the description that they give you. This is what it was like for Jesus as He described for the people who asked questions about heaven. You see Jesus came from heaven so certainly He could describe what it is like. No one had ever been there before, so all they knew about it was by listening to how Jesus described it. Jesus says often in the Bible the same phrase, "the kingdom of heaven is like..." and He would explain more about what His Father's house is like.

In our Bible passage (Matthew 18:1-5) we see that the disciples started asking Jesus what the kingdom of heaven was like. They wanted to know who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, probably because each one of them thought they should be that person. But Jesus set them straight and taught a valuable lesson. He also explains more about what His Father's house is like and who lives there.

In John 14:1-4, Jesus says, "In My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." Jesus is telling us that in God's house there is room for us. Jesus has prepared for you a place in His Father's house. If we want to know about God and Heaven, there is only one person to ask. Jesus is the only One to come from heaven to earth to explain it to us. When we read the Bible, we find out about God's house. Do you want to know more? I do! Let's find out more about heaven this week together!

- Have you ever met someone from another country? What did you learn?
- How can we learn about heaven?
- How did Jesus describe heaven?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Heaven: God's home and the home of all who love him. Jesus promised to prepare a place for his people in heaven.

Day Two

"I'm Just a Humble Servant"

Text: Matthew 18:4 - "Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Also read Matthew 18:1-5

When I was younger there was a friend of mine that used to call himself a humble servant. Whenever all of us guys would get together he would often remind us that he was a humble servant for Jesus. He was sincere and did want to serve Jesus, but it is not very humble to go around telling everyone how humble you are. It is kind of like saying, "I'm just an incredible person for Jesus. I'm just great for God, that's all I am." You see, Jesus said that if you want to be great for God, you have to be a servant of all. And certainly everyone wants to be great for God. But we shouldn't go telling everyone else how great we are. So to call yourself a humble servant is to say you are great for God. This might have been true for this guy but we really didn't want to hear it over and over and over.

If you are a Christian then hopefully you have Christian friends. If not, you need to do your best to show yourself friendly. The Bible says in Proverbs that if you want to have friends, then be friendly. If you want to be a good friend, then you need to show yourself as a serving friend. There is an old saying that goes like this, "people do not have to hear you say how much you love them, but they want to see you show them how much you love them." This is what the Bible says about being a humble servant. Servanthood is action. If we are servants it will show by our actions that we are truly humble servants and we can then be good friends to others.

My friend finally did get to show us that he was a humble servant. One time, while going to college, in the middle of the night during final exams, he went to pick up another friend who was stranded in his car by the roadside. This was four hours away! He went when none of us would go! He truly was a servant, but we liked it more when he showed us, than when he told us. Let that be true for all of us!

- What did Jesus say is necessary to be great in His kingdom?
- Do you think we ought to go around and tell everyone about it?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Humble Servant: Someone who thinks of others first and is willing to serve them and put their needs first.

Great for God

Text: Luke 9:46 - "Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest."

Also read Luke 9:46-48

How many great people do you know? Well, that would depend on what you think is great. There used to be a famous boxer that would say, "I'm the greatest boxer of all times." And he was an exceptional fighter, maybe even a great fighter, but does that make him a great person? Who is able to set a standard for greatness? Is there anyone we could go to that we could ask the question, "what makes a person great?" Well the disciples knew whom to ask as we see in our Bible reading. They came to Jesus.

If there is anyone qualified to tell us who is great, it would be Jesus. The disciples wanted to know who is the greatest in God's eyes. They did not want to just be great; they wanted to be the greatest. I do not know if their hearts were in the right place, but greatness is a good pursuit: especially if it is greatness for God. To want to be the best at whatever we do is a good pursuit. Do you want to be great at something? If so, what do you want to be great at? If you are going to go after greatness, the first place to start is being great for God.

Jesus said that greatness to Him is a person who gives his life to God by accepting Jesus as his Lord and Savior. He said first be converted. You will never be great without Jesus as your Savior. Secondly you must be like a child. Spiritually, we must come to Him as a little child. A young child has the right attitude for greatness. A little child is a great follower. A little child looks at all people the same. None are more important than others. All are equal; red and yellow, black and white, handicapped or disabled, ugly or beautiful, famous or rejected. Young children are humble. Humility is what is great to God. If you want to be great for God, be a follower of Jesus who is humble like a little child.

- What would you like to be great at?
- How can you be great in God's kingdom?
- How does being like a child help us to be great in God's kingdom?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Great: To be remarkable or outstanding. It is good to be great for the Lord. In order to be great in the Lord's eyes, we need to be humble.

Day Four

The King of the Hill

"I'm Better Than You Are"

Text: Matthew 20:21 - "And He said to her, 'What do you wish?' She said to Him, 'Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom.'"

Also read Matthew 20:20-28

Have you ever seen two children argue over which one is better than the other. The only thing worse would be two adults doing the same. But what if the two adults were leaders in the church? This was the situation Jesus was put in when His disciples came to Him asking who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Maybe you could picture twelve kids playing king of the hill on a mound of dirt, pushing and shoving to get to the top and raise their arms and shout "I'm king of the hill." This is what the disciples were doing only they were trying to get the most important position in Jesus' kingdom.

In Matthew chapter 20 we see this battle of "I am better than you are" get really bad. Two of Jesus' disciples were brothers, James and John. Their mother asked Jesus the question that was on all of the disciples' mind. She asked if her sons could have the top spots in Jesus' kingdom. This made the rest of the disciples really angry. They were mad because they also wanted those top spots. Apparently they all thought they were better than the others. Now let's look closely at Jesus' answer to them. He told them that His kingdom was totally different than man's kingdoms. Jesus' kingdom works on God's principles. Jesus said, "...whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your servant."

We need to learn this same lesson from Jesus. Jesus came to earth to serve all of mankind. He did not come to force us to do anything, but to serve us and help us to come to know God. If we want to be the best, then we need to serve those around us. Do not try to climb over your friends to the top, but lift and push your friends to the top. Then you will be on top of the true King's hill.

- What did James and John's mother ask Jesus to do?
- What was going on in all of the disciples' hearts?

Kid's Bible Dictionary



Servant: Someone who helps others by "serving" them.

Day Five

Jesus Loves the Little Children

Text: Matthew 19:14 - "But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

Also read Matthew 19:13-15

If you remember the song about Jesus loving the little children you can sing it. The words go like this, "Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight, Jesus loves the little children of the world." This is a good thing to remember about Jesus. He loves you very much.

In Matthew 19:13-15 Jesus shows us how much He loved the little children. He wanted to have the children around Him. He corrected the disciples for trying to keep the children away from Him. He said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Not only does Jesus want all the little children to come to Him, but also all the big children, and the adults and the old people too.

It is important to remember that Jesus wants everyone to come to Him. The command that Jesus makes is that we come as little children. How do we come as a little child? We need to be trusting in Him. A little child will trust their mom or dad, even jumping into their arms knowing that they will catch them. How we need to jump into Jesus' arms knowing that He will catch us! Jesus wants us to trust Him with our lives. He will open His arms and let us come to Him any time. Jesus loves the little children of the world.

- How do you think Jesus feels about children?
- How did some of the disciple feel about children?
- What did Jesus teach them?

Kid's Prayer Time



Jesus showed us the way to greatness. It is not by trying to work our way to the top. It is not by hurting others as we try to get there. We need to become a servant of others if we want to be great in God's kingdom. As we pray, let's ask God to help us to be servants in His kingdom. Help us to want to be great, but great in the way that Jesus says is great!

Memory Verse...

First and Second Grade

"You must become like little children to enter God's kingdom."

Third Grade and Above

"...Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 18:3