

Matthew 18 • Lessons in Greatness and Forgiveness

1. (v.1) Even what seems good in and of itself, such as service to God, can become corrupted by the original sin of pride.
2. (v.2-6) Spiritual greatness is embodied in not just our personal attitude but in supporting and fostering the same attitude in others.
3. (v.7-10) Just as personal faithfulness breeds faithfulness among others, so personal sinfulness gives rise to sin among others.
4. (v.11-14) It is the Good Shepherd's intention to protect and spiritually deliver literal children and believers in the character of children because...
 - a. They are examples of true greatness. (v.4)
 - b. They represent Christ. (v.5)
 - c. The angels represent them before the Father. (v.10)
 - d. Christ wants to save them. (v.11)
 - e. It is the will of the Father that they be saved. (v.14)
5. (v.15-20) Believers have a responsibility to hold each other accountable in order to engender faithfulness and mitigate the effects of faithlessness.
6. (v.21-35) Holding another spiritually accountable is always done with an eye on our own spiritual record of accountability.

Overall Application: Spiritual greatness from God's point of view is characterized by...

- Personal faithfulness that engenders the same in others.
- The desire to deal with adversity in the spirit of love.
- Dealing with others as Christ has dealt with us.