

THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM.

1/5/2025 PM

INTRO.:

A. Read text: Matt. 18:1-9.

B. Regarding the text:

1. Who then is greatest in the kingdom of God?
2. Not necessarily the best known or most influential.
3. Not the most successful in business.
4. Not the wealthiest.

DISCUSSION: THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM...

I. ARE THE CONVERTED ONES (VS. 3).

A. Define converted: Thayer's Greek Lexicon - "to turn oneself about, (Acts 3:19).

B. Changes for the better?

1. Attitudes and beliefs (1 Tim. 1:13).
2. Relationships (Eph. 5:11).
3. Priorities and goals (Col. 3:1-2).

C. What changes take place in conversion.

1. The Thessalonian's change (1 Thess. 1:9).
2. Saul of Tarsus changed (1 Cor. 15:9).
3. The immoral (1 Cor. 6:9-11).
4. The Jews (Acts 2:37-41; 3:19).
5. Yet, all must be completely converted to the will of God.

II. ARE THE HUMBLE ONES (VS. 4).

A. The opposite of prideful. God resists the proud (Prov. 8:13; 1 Pet. 5:5).

B. Pride is the enemy of the saints.

1. Pride produces strife (Prov. 13:10; 28:25).
2. Pride precedes destruction (Prov. 16:18).

C. God gives grace to the humble.

1. The humble submits to the Lord (1 Pet. 5:6; Phil 2:3-11).
2. The humble will serve others (Matt. 20:27).

III. ARE NOT STUMBLING BLOCKS (VS. 6-9).

A. We must never cause others to stumble (Vss. 6-7).

1. Strong's Concordance: "Offend" to bend a sapling for a snare, hence to cause to stumble (Strong).
2. Thayer's Greek Lexicon: "any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall..." Translated stumbling block in 1 Cor. 1:23.

B. Remove stumbling blocks, our temptations (Vs. 8-9).

1. The words of Jesus here are not to be taken literally, for God does not permit us to injure and maim our bodies in order to avoid temptation, but shows us, by this impressive figure of speech, that we should deny our selfish and proud desires, and 'put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth.
2. Hebrews 12:1-2.

C. Remove the stumbling blocks (Vs. 8-9).

IV. CONCLUSION:

A. Be converted, humble and honorable - be great.

B. True greatness does not exalt self but submits to the Lord.