

The Spiritual Condition of Children
(Matthew 19:13-15)

Introduction:

1. This evening we are studying a number of passages that relate to "the spiritual condition of children."
2. This is an important subject because there is a widespread belief that children inherit sin from Adam and are born in a depraved or sinful state.

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST EXAMINE SOME STATEMENTS MADE BY JESUS
 - A. (Matthew 19:13-15) Jesus took time from His busy schedule to bless some little children.
 - B. Concerning these little children, Jesus said, *"of such is the kingdom of heaven."*
 - C. Earlier (Matthew 18:3), Jesus said that we must *"be converted, and become as little children"* in order to enter the kingdom.
 - D. This point is made even more emphatically in Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17.
 - E. Was Jesus teaching that we must become sinners to enter the kingdom?
 - F. The truth is that children are born in a state of innocence.
 - G. We must become innocent like little children to enter the kingdom.
 - H. This occurs when we obey the Gospel of Christ (Acts 2:38; 47).
- II. LET US EXAMINE SOME PASSAGES WHICH TEACH THAT SIN IS NOT INHERITED
 - A. (Ezekiel 18:20) Under the law, Jews were responsible for their own sins.
 - B. (Romans 9:11) When they were in their mother's womb, Jacob and Esau had not done any good or evil.
 - C. (2 Corinthians 5:10) At the judgment, each person will be accountable for *"the things done in his body."*
 - D. Let us exercise caution.
 1. We must not confuse the guilt of sin with the consequences of sin.
 2. Children often suffer the effects of their parents' sin, but not the guilt.
- III. IF WE ARE NOT BORN IN SIN, HOW DO WE BECOME SINNERS?
 - A. We become sinners the same way that Adam and Eve became sinners.
 - B. Adam and Eve were created in a state of innocence.
 - C. (Genesis 3:1-6) They sinned when they transgressed God's law (1 John 3:4).
 - D. Their punishment was death.
 - E. There is something that we suffer today because of Adam's sin -- "death" (Romans 5:12).
 - F. We become sinners when we give in to temptation and transgress God's law (James 1:13-15).
 - G. The punishment for sin is "spiritual death" (Romans 6:23a - *"For the wages of sin is death"*).
 - H. Thankfully, *"the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (vs.23b).

Conclusion:

1. Children are not born in sin -- they do not inherit sin from Adam.
2. When we become accountable for our sins, we can be born again and become innocent like little children (1 Peter 1:22-23).
3. As newborn babes, we have responsibilities to fulfill (1 Peter 2:1-3).