

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

Introduction:

1. In our lesson we are studying passages that teach us what we need to know about "the spiritual condition of children."
2. Before we search the Scriptures, let us consider . . .

Discussion:

- I. A STATEMENT FROM THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH
  - A. Reformed Doctrine of Predestination (p. 61)
  - B. This doctrine (total depravity) has led many people to believe that children inherit sin from Adam and are born in a depraved or sinful state.
  - C. This belief that babies are born in sin has led to the practice of baptizing or christening infants.
  - D. The New Testament nowhere teaches that babies are to be baptized.
- II. LET US 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. You can see the position that must be taken by those who believe that children are born in sin.
  - G. The truth is that children are born in a state of innocence.
  - H. We must become innocent like little children to enter the kingdom.
  - I. This occurs when we obey the Gospel of Christ (Acts 2:38; 47).
- III. 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."*
- IV. 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. There is no need to baptize babies -- they have no sin.
3. Baptism is for those who are able to believe (Mark 16:16), repent (Acts 2:38), and confess Christ (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:36-38).