

- “If a man has a hundred sheep...”

The shepherd is so intimately aware of each of his sheep that he immediately perceives the absence of just one.

- There are some who would point to the “if” in verse 13 and say it implies we can’t be assured of our salvation.

The overwhelming testimony throughout Scripture is that God doesn’t merely try to save his people, he actually accomplishes it.

Ezekiel 34:11-12 -- *For thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.”*

October 1, 2017

Living as Children of the Kingdom

Matthew 18:1-14

The Characteristics of Kingdom Children (v. 1-4)

- “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

“Blessed are the poor in spirit...” (5:3)

“Blessed are the meek...” (5:5)

“...whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” (10:39)

- The question indicates a focus on self-promotion.

We need to recognize that in the kingdom of heaven, there’s only one self-promoter.

- “...unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus completely inverts the concept of status in our world.

Phil. 2:3 -- *Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves....*

- It is a lowly road that leads to heaven.

The Treatment of Kingdom Children (v. 5-7)

- Jesus moves from making a point in reference to the physical child in his lap, to talking about spiritual children.
- “...whoever receives one such child in my name receives me.”

Our attitudes and actions and posture toward other believers is in equal measure toward Jesus.

- “...but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.”

If we don't want the discipline Jesus equates to drowning, we should be extremely guarded against leading a believer to sin.

- Direct temptation vs. indirect temptation

1 Cor. 10:23 -- *“All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful.*

Romans 14:13; 21 -- *“[Let us]... decide to never put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother”... “It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble”*

The Radicalness of Kingdom Children (v. 8-9)

- “Jesus is just using hyperbole.”

- Jesus is calling us to be radical in fighting sin!
- Do you have strategies in place, real-world, practical strategies to fight sin in your life?
- The issue is not the particular sin, it's whether or not we take sin seriously.

The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and only the violent will win it! A heart-searching contention against sin—and revenge against iniquity in our own souls must be carried out—for men will not go to heaven sleeping! These are not times in which you will be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. He that would win the heavenly race must run for it. He that would get to heaven must fight for it! – Charles Spurgeon

The Security of Kingdom Children (v. 10-14)

- “See that you do not despise one of these little ones.”

If you put yourself on a pedestal, the only option you have is to look down on those around you.

- “...their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.”

Hebrews 1:14 -- *Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?*