

# “Closer Walk” Bible Study

## Mining Matthew Chapter 18

Purpose: To share lives around the Scripture and through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit make happy and unexpected discoveries that change our lives and bring us closer in our walk with Jesus.

Getting us started

1. Which would best describe you as a child? “Little angel” or “Holy terror”? Why?
2. Which “woe” would be the worst way to go: (a) Canoe ride over a 250-foot waterfall? (b) Parachute failing to open? (c) Running out of fuel in outer space? (d) Being a late-night snack for a pride of lions?
3. How many credit cards do you have? When does your credit card tempt you the most?

Getting us into Scripture

4. Why would the disciples want to be “the greatest”?
5. What childlike qualities is Jesus emphasizing? Why do you think this is important for Jesus’ kingdom?
6. Why is causing a child to sin such a serious offense?
7. Although evil is inevitable (vv. 7-9), how are we still responsible for others’ spiritual welfare?
8. Who are the “little ones” in verses 12-14?
9. How does this passage reconcile with 7:3-5?
10. This reconciliation process involves what four stages? Why not go public right away? What authority is given to Jesus’ followers?
11. Offenders in Jesus’ day were forgiven up to three times; a fourth offense need not be forgiven. What does Jesus’ answer say about forgiveness in the kingdom?
12. How does the parable of the unmerciful servant extend Jesus’ teaching on forgiveness (vv. 23-35)? In refusing to be merciful to others, what do we deny ourselves (vv. 31-34)?
13. Do we forgive others so God will forgive us, or does God forgive us so that we will have a forgiving attitude? Explain?
14. Based on this parable, is God’s forgiveness of us limited or unlimited? Conditional or unconditional? Likewise, our forgiveness of others?

Getting Scripture into us

15. What childlike quality do you need to recapture? Why?
16. When were you a sheep that wandered off? How did God get you back?
17. What needs to change in your attitude toward those who “wander”? Toward the weak? The powerless? What could be an area in your life that causes problems for others? What will you do about it?
18. What does this passage say about the importance of counsel through others? Of accountability to a trusted few?
19. How can we forgive, yet not encourage, irresponsibility?
20. How can you forgive someone from the distant past who hurt you deeply? What is the connection between forgiveness, health and wholeness?