

Said a distinguished philosopher: "I love God and every little child."

He who is most like Christ will be most fond of the spirit and fellowship of children.

"Lovest thou me?" "Feed my lambs."

It is not impossible, nor improbable, that the little one thus honored by our Lord's caresses was the child of one of his apostles.—*Dr. Alexander.*

This love will seek the promotion of others. It is the opposite of jealousy, envy, and every such thing.

3. THE LOYAL MIND. ver. 37. (1) Loyal to Jesus, who thus identifies himself with the child; (2) Loyal to the Father, who gave Jesus himself to the world: NOT ME, BUT HIM THAT SENT ME. The care of children and delight in them must be more than a natural interest in their artless, charming ways. It must be based on the idea, (1) That they are in need of Christ; (2) That they are beloved of Christ; (3) That they are models in the spirit of lowliness and teachableness for the followers of Christ.

"The child and the apostles: 1. The child their master: 2. The child their scholar: 3. The child their fellow.

4. THE LIBERAL MIND, vers. 38-41. If we are to receive children in the name of Christ, surely we are not to reject those who do work for Christ, even though they "follow not us."

True Christianity is liberal and catholic, and devoted to the work of Christ.

5. Learn: (1) What is the true aim of God's ministers? not to rise to eminence among men, but to work for souls in the name of Christ; (2) A good motto for life—"I live for use;" (3) The Lord Jesus identifies himself with the lowly, the simple-minded, and the weak; (4) The Church should care for childhood; (5) The test of the Christian character is the theme of conversation which is most readily fallen into; (6) The lowly way is the way to glory.

English Teacher's Notes.

No passage in the Gospels shows us more clearly "the Mind of Christ" than the one now before us. We see it, in striking contrast with the natural mind of man, illustrating God's words by the prophet, (Isa. lv. 8, 9:): "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Look at this contrast in two respects:

First, See the mind of the disciples—and the mind of Christ about the way to become great.

The disciples, like the rest of the Jews, were looking for an earthly Messianic kingdom. They did think that Jesus was to be the King, but they expected him to reign in Jerusalem in triumph and splendor. And it is clear that, genuine as their faith was, it was mixed with ambitious hopes of the destiny in store for them. The request of James and John in the next chapter, (vers. 35-37) is an instance of this; and the dispute in our passage as to who should be greatest doubtless had reference to their probable respective offices and precedence in the coming kingdom.

How do a Jesus rebuke the spirit? He not only tells them the fate of ambition in ver. 35, but he gives them a living picture of the spirit which alone can make a man really great. They must be like that little child in the midst, docile and trustful, thinking little of itself, content to be little thought of, with no lofty ideas of great honor, but quietly doing as it was bid. Not that, if they became so, they will, as a reward for it, be raised up high, and so made great; no, they must remain lowly, for *being lowly is being great in Christ's kingdom.* See the parallel passage, Matt. xviii. 3, 4; also, Psalm cxxxviii. 6; Prov. iii. 34; Isa. lvii. 15. And the lowly will not envy one another. See Phil. ii. 2, 3; Eph. iv. 2; Rom. xii. 10.

But there was another picture of true greatness for them—and for us. This was Jesus himself. When James and John came to him, he pointed to himself as the Example, (x. 43-45.) "Whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister . . . for even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And in the passage before us it is significant that the dispute as to who should be the greatest comes immediately after Christ's announcement of his own humiliation, and evidently took place on the same journey. He was even then "humbling himself to the death of the cross"—to that very death which was to be followed by the highest exaltation. See the verses that follow the Golden Text, Phil. ii. 5-11.

Secondly, See the mind of the disciples and the mind of Christ about the way of showing we are great.

They had seen a man "casting out devils in the name of Jesus," but refusing to join their company. Here, they thought, was an opportunity to display their authority: whichever