

3 How should we respond to children and childlikeness?

a) By cherishing children as gifts from God

Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate. Psalm 127:3-5

b) By expressing that in instructing children for maturity

According to the following passages what should children be instructed in and by whom?

- Deuteronomy 4:9-10
- Deuteronomy 6:6-9
- Deuteronomy 29:29
- Joshua 4:6-7
- Ephesians 6:4

c) By seeking childlikeness where God commends it



Real Family I: Why we need to be like children

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1 What does the Bible mean by a child?

The words child and children appear about 500 times in the Bible.¹ About half of these uses are metaphorical and mostly describe someone's relationship to God. The other half are literal.

Look at the following passages and discuss how the word "child" is used in each one:

- Job 3:16
- Psalm 131:2
- 1 Tim 5:4
- Gen 8:21 (not ESV!)

2 What does God think of children?

"The child is a person, not an object of concern."²

a) God says children are people

b) God says children are "little"

Look at the following passages and try to summarise what it is about children/childlikeness that is being commended:

- Luke 9:46-48
- Luke 10:1-3; 17-21
- Luke 18:15-17 (18:9-14 will help!)

c) God says children are immature

Look at the following passages and summarise what the bad consequence of childish immaturity is in each one:

- Jeremiah 4:22
- Isaiah 28:9
- Proverbs 22:15
- 1 Corinthians 13:11

¹ *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, Ryken et al (Ed), IVP (Leicester), 1998, p141

² Lord Justice Butler-Sloss