

# From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

QUALIFYING for the KINGDOM

Text: "Truly, I Say to You, Unless You Turn and Become Like Children, You Will Never Enter the Kingdom of Heaven." Matt. 18:3

What did Jesus mean when he spoke of becoming "like children"?

I think he meant, for one thing, a constant compulsion to grow. One who lives around children must be impressed by the constancy and consistency of their growth. We leave a child who has just learned to crawl with proficiency and we return after a week to discover that same child walking laboriously around his play pen. Or we leave a child who has just learned to speak disconnected words and we return after a week's absence to discover that he is putting an occasional sentence together. And so irresistibly he pushes away at the walls of ignorance and helplessness, ever continuing that process of growth that has been at work since he was first conceived in his mother's womb.

How desperately we need to transfer that same process over into the Christian life. Somehow the idea has gone abroad that one either is or is not a Christian and that the matter stops there. If he is a Christian there is something left to be done.

The Christian stands under a divine compulsion to grow in his Christian life equally as much as the child is called upon to grow in his physical life. Encountering Christ and saying, "Thou art my Lord," is only the barest beginning of the Christian life. That confession is the essential first step. The Christian must grow in an understanding of what the Lordship of Christ means to him.

I think that Jesus must have been referring to the expectant eagerness of children. Nothing is more charming in children than the expectant eagerness with which they feel that something quite wonderful and delightful may happen any minute. The little boy fishing in the pond wants to make sure that his pole is strong enough to land a fifteen-pound fish. For him nothing is too big to be true. The little girl seeing a candle on the table cries, "Happy birthday." This must be a party and not "just another dinner."

This element of childlike expectation marked the early Christians. Paul writes as a man under a spell of enthusiasm at the thought that Jesus was coming again, soon. Luke mentions a "Man named Joseph who lived in expectation of the Kingdom of God." One who has studied the Apostolic church has remarked that those early Christians lived in "tip-toe expectancy."

How many of us live in a similar expectancy? How many of us live as though the Kingdom of God were really at hand? As though all things are really possible with God?

I am afraid we have become far too smug in our own enlightenment. We have studied conversion in terms of psychology so long that we don't really expect a man can be turned about-face, can be translated from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, can be transformed from a creature of this world to a citizen of the spiritual world—all by the mysterious working of God. We have translated the Kingdom of God into social and economic terms so long that we really don't expect a new heaven and a new earth or the discovery of another kingdom which we can enter at any moment. In the index of a certain book, "Kingdom of God" is listed with this reference, "See under democracy." There can be little expectation in that mood.

James Russell Lowell once passed a place where there was a sign reading, "Home for Incurable Children." "They'll have me in there yet," said Lowell. Among the most charming and powerful people on earth are those who,



REV. D. M. CLARK

# GO to the CHURCH of YOUR CHOICE



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1117 N. "F" St., Las Vegas

POWERHOUSE C. of G. in C.  
Supt. J. W. Logan, 382-6187  
1216 Adams Ave., Las Vegas

MOST HIGH C. of G. in C.  
Eld. J. Washington, 642-5675  
Henderson

PROGRESSIVE C. of G. in C.  
Eld. Jos. Prudhomme, 642-5556  
1155 Lawry Ave., Vegas Hts.

LIGHTHOUSE C. of G. in C.  
Eld. Willie Rawls, 384-5539  
E. Sahara Ave., Fourmyle

PRAYER HOUSE C. of G. in C.  
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Blankenship St., Vegas Hts.

(All Churches of God in Christ)

- Tuesday 8 pm - - - - - Bible Band
- Wednesday 8 pm - - - - - \*Young People
- Friday 8 pm - - - - - Consecration
- Sunday 10 am - - - - - Sunday School
- Sunday 12 m - - - - - Morning Service
- Sunday 6:30 pm - - - - - YPW
- Sunday 8 pm - - - - - Evening Worship
- \*Progressive - - - - - Inspirational

like Lowell, by their childish belief in the impossible help keep the impossible happening.

Jesus was probably aware of the humble trust of children. Little else stirs a father's heart more than the awareness of the trust his children place in him. A child who would not jump from the porch to the ground for fear of falling will unhesitatingly jump from the same porch if the father's uplifted arms are there to catch him. There never seems to be any fear that the father will capriciously drop his hands at the moment the child jumps or any suspicion that the father may not be able to catch the child. The child just jumps in the sublime assurance that the father's arms will be there and that they will be strong enough to hold him.

One who would enter the Kingdom of God must come with a similar faith in God: "The eternal God is thy dwelling place and underneath are the everlasting arms." In God he will now live and move and have his being. He is a sure God above all other gods. He will neither slumber nor sleep, but he will keep his children.

There is a fine passage from John Bunyan in which he describes his experience in Bedford jail. He was not sure that his imprisonment would end on the gallows but he did not fear being hanged so much as he did the possibility that in a moment of fear he might deny his Lord. He made up his mind that whatever happened he would still be true to his faith.

These are his words: "Wherefore, thought I, I am for going on and venturing my eternal state with Christ whether I have comfort here or no. If God doth not come in, thought I, I will leap off the ladder even blindfolded into eternity--sink or swim, come heaven, come hell. Lord Jesus, if thou wilt catch me, do; if not, I will venture all for thy name."

Citizenship in the Kingdom in its highest form always calls for that kind of commitment. Not until we are ready to bet our lives upon God have we shown ourselves worthy of our Christian heritage.

### BAPTIST

GRACE EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. C. L. Alexander, 384-7413  
815 Bartlett, Vegas Hts.

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. I. W. Wilson, 382-2632  
400 Adams Ave., Las Vegas

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. M. Carroll  
712 W. Owens Ave., Las Vegas

ST. JAMES BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. J. L. Simmons, 382-2748  
311 Madison Ave., Las Vegas

SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. V. C. L. Coleman, 384-3131  
1209 N. "E" St., Las Vegas

EVERGREEN BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. A. B. Carr, 382-5682  
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NEW JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. F. N. Addison  
"D" & Jefferson Sts., Las Vegas

GREATER FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. P. S. Walker, 384-1248  
Balzar St., Vegas Hts.

PLEASANT GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. J. L. Kemp, 642-5708  
1189 Hassell St., Vegas Hts.

PILGRIM REST BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. E. C. Kline, 382-7263  
101 N. "A" St., Las Vegas

VICTORY BAPTIST CHURCH  
Rev. A. J. Thompson, 642-4001  
1305 N. "E" St., Las Vegas

### CATHOLIC

ST. JAMES CATHOLIC CHURCH  
Mgr. W. J. Devlin, 382-9953  
"H" & Morgan Sts., Las Vegas

Sunday Mass--11 a.m. and 5 p.m.  
Week Day Mass--7:30 p.m. each evening  
Confession--Saturday 4 and 7:30 p.m.

### METHODIST

ZION METHODIST CHURCH  
Rev. M. D. Bennett, 382-9900  
911 N. "G" St., Las Vegas

## NAACP Lawyers Battle Anti-Marriage Statutes

WASHINGTON--Attorneys for the National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) have asked the Supreme Court of the United States to hold that a state of the union has no right, under the constitution, to forbid interracial marriage.

The plea was made during argument in a case from Florida, one of 19 states with anti-miscegenation laws still on the books.

Florida declares that a marriage contracted within its borders of a Negro and a white is automatically void. The children are considered illegitimate and legally incapable of inheriting an estate from their parents.

Louis H. Pollak, a Yale law professor, arguing for the NAACP legal defense fund, told the court that laws of this kind should be eradicated "root and branch."

He and his co-counsel, William T. Coleman Jr., of Philadelphia, said that solely because of race, Florida makes illegal an act that would otherwise be legal.

They argued that this discrimination violates the constitutional guarantee of equal protection of the laws.