

DEALING WITH THE UNWANTED, UNWELCOME, UNINVITED, UBIQUITIOUS “LIFE-GUEST!” MT. 18:1-14

So, how does Jesus tell us to answer = deal with this “life-guest?”

1. Be converted and become like a little child!

Matthew 18:1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, **Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?** **Matthew 18:2** And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, **Matthew 18:3** And said, Verily (Ἀμήν) I say unto you, **Except ye be converted (ἐὰν μὴ στραφῆτε), and become as little children, ye shall not (οὐ μὴ) enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: **John 3:2** The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. **John 3:3** Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born again (ἄνωθεν), he cannot see the kingdom of God.**

John 3:4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of (ἐξ) water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.** **John 3:6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **John 3:7** Marvel not that I said unto **thee, Ye must be born again (ἄνωθεν).**

Excursus on ἄνωθεν

Words do **not** have meaning, only potential meaning. Context gives them meaning!

Words are **like** people, they are known by the company they keep.

John 3:31 He that cometh from above (Ὁ ἄνωθεν) is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

Matthew 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top (εἰς δύο ἀπὸ ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω) to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

Mark 15:38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top (εἰς δύο ἀπὸ ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω) to the bottom.

Luke 1:3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first (ἄνωθεν), to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

John 19:11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above (ἄνωθεν): therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

John 19:23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top (ἄνωθεν) throughout.

Acts 26:5 Which knew me from the beginning (ἄνωθεν), if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

Galatians 4:9 But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again (πάλιν) to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again (πάλιν ἄνωθεν) to be in bondage?

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above (ἄνωθεν), and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

James 3:15 This wisdom descendeth not from above (ἄνωθεν), but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above (ἢ σοφία ἄνωθεν) is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: **John 3:15** That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. **John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

2. Humble yourself like a little child!

Matthew 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God...

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, **submit** yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you **be subject one to another**, and **be clothed with humility**: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. **1 Peter 5:6 Humble yourselves** therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

Matthew 23:11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. **Matthew 23:12** And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Humility has several difficulties:

- What is it? How does one define it? What does it look like?
- Why would I want it?
- How is a child humble? In what way?

Total, complete, absolute, dependence on parents / God!

2 Corinthians 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

For me, humility is a combination of:

C. S. Lewis⁺

Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less!

Plus thinking **most about God**

And **much more about others = little people**

Plus submission

Proverbs 18:12 Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, And before honour is humility.

Proverbs 22:4 By humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches, and honour, and life.

Proverbs 29:23 A man's pride shall bring him low: But honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

Isaiah 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One That inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Micah 6:8 He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; And what doth the LORD require of thee, But to do justly, and to love mercy, And to walk humbly with thy God?

3. Welcoming little children...&/ little ones!

Little ones = insignificant people

Matthew 18:5 And whoso **shall receive** (δέξεται παιδίον τούτου) one such little child in my name **receiveth** (ἐμὲ δέχεται) me.

What might this look like?	
Love them	See them
Encourage them	Guide them
Talk with them	Listen to them

4. Never, ever harm little ones!

Little ones =

Matthew 18:6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones (ἓνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων) which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Matthew 18:7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

Matthew 18:10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones (ἐνός τῶν μικρῶν τούτων); for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. **Matthew 18:11** For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

Matthew 18:14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones (τῶν μικρῶν τούτων) should perish.