

# Kingdom Infancy

Matthew 18:1-5

“To put the thoughts of the apostles into a few words: they thought that the children should not come to Christ because they were not like themselves—they were not men and women. They were not big enough, tall enough, grown enough, great enough to be blessed by Jesus! Or so they thought. The child must not come to the Master because he is not like the man. Jesus turns it around and says, "*You* cannot come till you are like the child. Instead of the child needing to wait until he grows up and becomes a man, it is the man who must grow down and become like a child. "Whoever cannot receive the kingdom of God like a little child, will not enter."

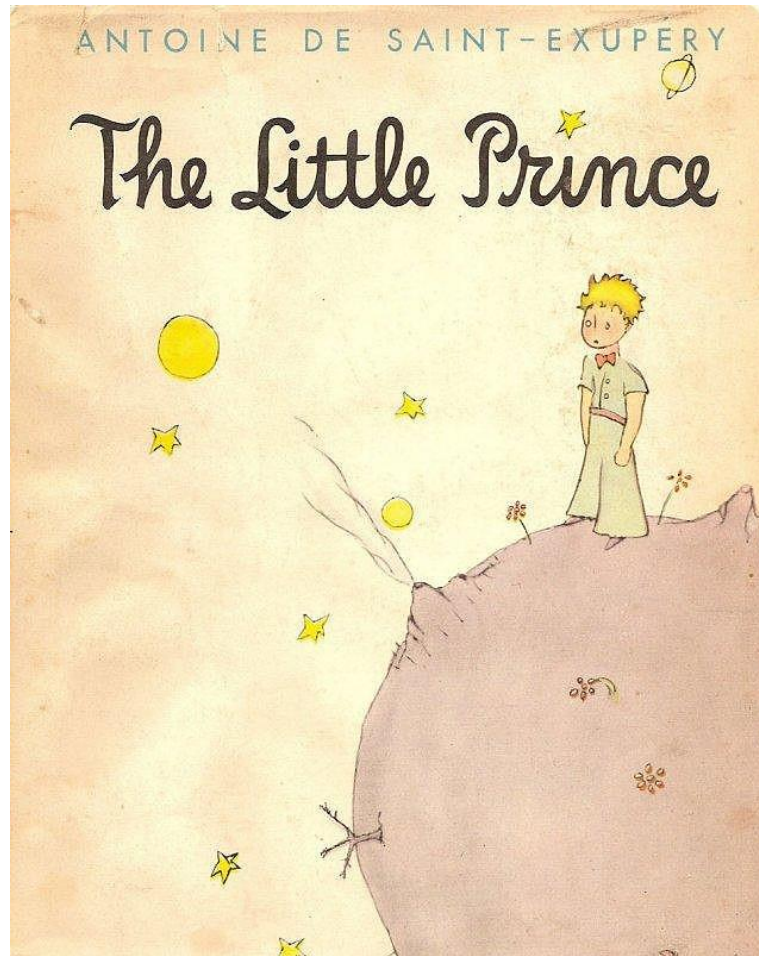
Jesus' words are a complete and sufficient answer to the thoughts of His disciples, and we should learn from them. Don't say, "I wish my child were grown up like me, so that he might come to Christ!"—but instead wish that we were little children again, could forget much that now we know, could be washed clean from habit and prejudice, and could begin again with a child's freshness, simplicity, and eagerness. For scripture says "Unless a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God"; and again, "Unless you become as little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."

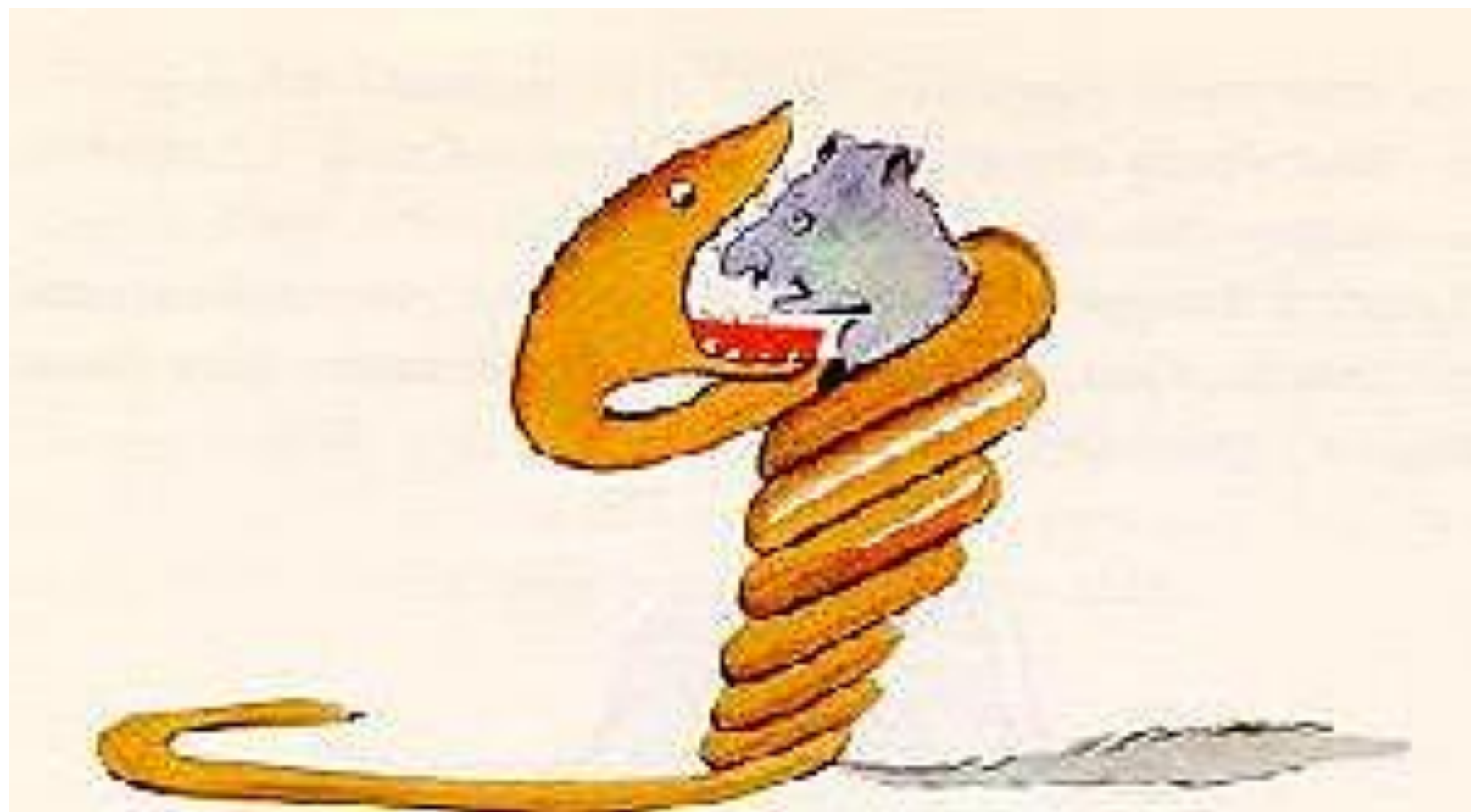
# Divide into Groups

My simple suggestion would be to divide into small groups and spend time in prayer for one another. Whether it is divided by gender, language, marital status or none of the above (and it's all just a messy mix!), it is all up to the Holy Spirit as He guides you this week.

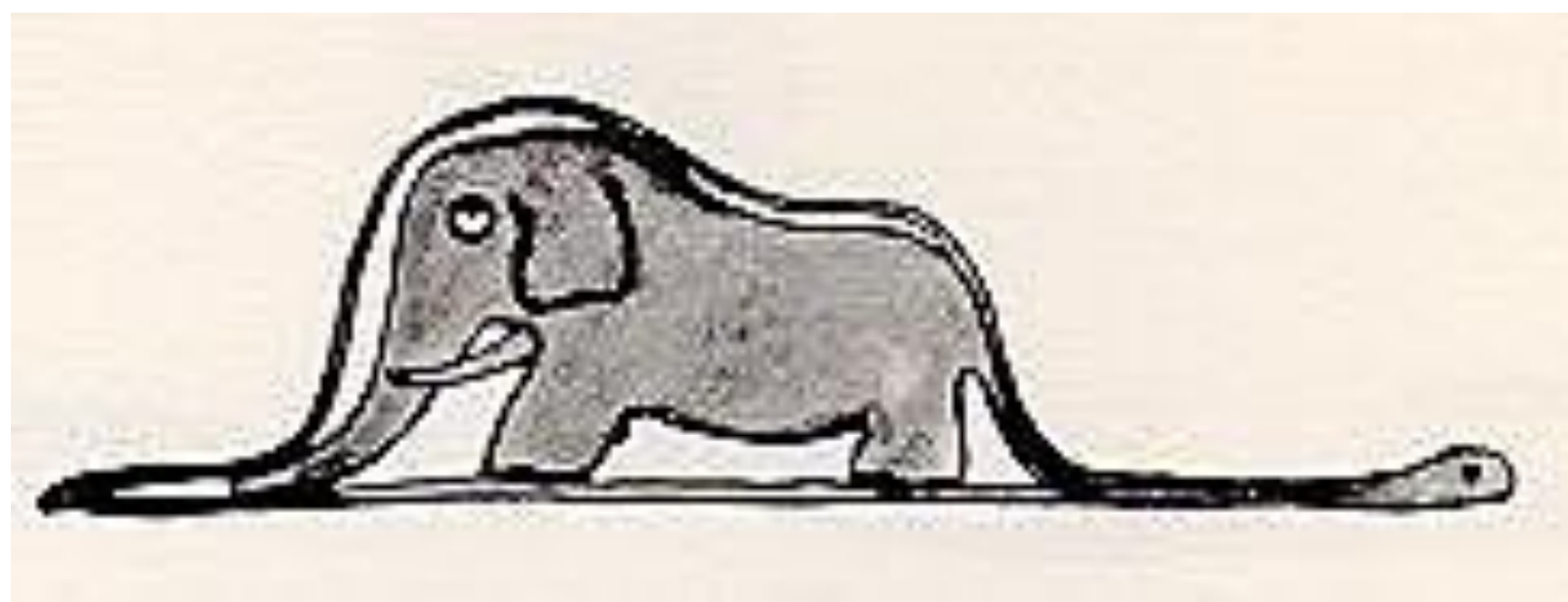
ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

# The Little Prince











# Discussion

What are some of the advantages that children have on adults?

*Please be prepared to share.*

# Three Periods of the Bible

1. The original, perfect creation
2. Genesis 3: Old Testament and the law
3. The New Testament and Jesus

# Made in God's Image

- Genesis 1:27
- The “Mom-fant”
- Separated from God

# Philippians 2:1-2

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

*Perfect Union with God*

# Shameless

- Genesis 2:25
- Vulnerability
- Shame, self-consciousness

# Philippians 2:3-4

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others.

*Shameless Love*

# Companionship

- Genesis 2:19-20
- Community
- Hiding

# Philippians 2:5

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus

*Renewed Relationship*



# Discussion

- Made in God's Image
- Companionship
- Shameless

# No Pride or Comparisons

- Defined by relationship
- Compared himself to God, found himself wanting

# Philippians 2:6

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage

*Humility*

# No Personal Possessions

- Mother, then everything else
- Greed, idolatry, worry, discontent

# Philippians 2:7

Rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness

*Trust and “priorities”*

# Perfect Love

- Genesis 2:18-24
- Worthiness
- Guilt

# Philippians 2:8

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

*Forgiveness and reconciliation*

When we begin to think that maybe we are too far gone, or can't be forgiven, look at it this way. If our miserable, wretched, sinful, hateful, selfish, born-condemned-to-hell parents still love us after everything we have done, how much more can the infinite God love us? And at the end of the day, we are finite creatures with finite sin. Our sin is wretched in comparison to how great God's holiness is, but that holiness is also His love and power. We will be silenced, brought to our knees when we see His glory. That glory is equal parts his mercy as it is his justice. Our finite life of sin cannot put a dent in his infinite grace.

Really, you are the one who God couldn't save? Centuries of people, murderers, rapists, pedophiles, and you are the sinner that was too far? How arrogant is that? Just try saying that out loud. "God could save Paul, David and Solomon, but he couldn't forgive me." These thoughts sound much more ridiculous when we say them out loud.



# Discussion

Pray for and with each other