



Lutheran Church of the Master, 4800 Ramsey Road, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho  
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Childlike Simplicity

Childlike Simplicity – thoughtful, insightful, straightforward, uncomplicated

In the throes of the Russian revolution in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, roving bands of thieves laid prey in much of the country side. On a given evening prior to Christmas, such thieves awoke a Mennonite family, demanding money or harm to the father of the house. But, these thieves were too late. Earlier thieves had taken the family's money. Without a word, a young girl slipped away and returned moments later. "Here is my Christmas money" she said as she placed the small pouch in the lead thief's hand. He looked at the pouch and the innocent face of the girl before him. He leaned down, kissed her on the cheek and returned her Christmas money. With tears in his eyes, he led the bandits out of the house.<sup>1</sup>

Luke 18: 15 People were bringing even infants to Jesus that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. 16 But Jesus called for them and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. 17 Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."

Jesus invites us to a childlike faith, thoughtful, insightful, straightforward, uncomplicated, open. And what is a childlike faith? It is a pure trusting in Jesus – as friend, as example, as guide, and of God. We were taught as children to sing, "Jesus love me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong. They are weak but he is strong." A childlike faith is an uncomplicated coming to the manger on Christmas morn to see the infant Jesus. A childlike faith is talking to Jesus from our inner child, with our vulnerabilities, our hope, our trust, our confidence, and yes, our fears. A childlike faith is following the women to the tomb of Jesus on Easter morning, and being filled with wonder and amazement as they were told,<sup>(Luke 24:5c)</sup> "He is not here, but has risen." A childlike faith is taking the gift of faith in Jesus Christ with joy and thankfulness.

John 1: 12 But to all who received (Christ Jesus), who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God... 18 . . . It is . . .the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

EPH 1:13 In him you also . . . were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit;

The celebration of Baptism begins, "God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Peace Be with You. "The Christmas Money." P. 85.

hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word, God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.”<sup>2</sup>

The foundation is laid at the font, in the gift and promises of God. The Savior has come that we may have life and have it abundantly (John 10.10) . As the sign of the cross is made on the forehead of the baptized, these words are said, “child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.”

With that mark we are invited to lay our heads on the breast of the Savior. He knows the way and will lead, will gift the way – to living day to day, dying secure in the promises of God, rising to new life as God has prepared for you and for creation itself.

So we come to both life and to death with confidence in the promise of God in Christ Jesus. Jesus counseled his disciples and us: John 14: 1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. 4 And you know the way to the place where I am going." 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

It is with profound simplicity that children and adults gather at the death of a fellow believer. Here we commend the one who has died to God, trusting in the promises of their and our Baptism into Christ Jesus. We are, at that moment, once again children, vulnerable, confronted with the mystery of death and life after death, and the hope and promise of God in Jesus Christ. Here we are invited, as children, to the side of Jesus, to lay our head on the breast of Jesus, to lay the life of the one who has died in the arms of Jesus. And to give thanks and to wonder and to hope and to ask God to journey with us the remainder of our days, that we too may join that heavenly host surrounding the throne of God and the lamb with songs of praise.

From the vision of John in the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Revelation to the song of praise, “This is the Feast of victory of our God . . .” in the Sunday morning liturgy, we sing with all those gathered around the heavenly throne of God, “This is the feast of victory of our God...Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.”

God extends the invitation to each of us to become as little children; to come to Jesus, Savior and Lord, with confidence. He welcomes us in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

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<sup>2</sup> ELW, Holy Baptism, p. 227.