Part 1  - Matthew 18:1 -4
Disciples & Dumb Questions

- Discussion question to get us thinking:
  - When we think of “worldly greatness” who comes to mind and why?
    - The richest.
    - The strongest.
    - The most powerful and influential.

- When we think of “The Church” who do we think of as the greatest?
  - The person who gives the most in time and treasure.
  - The person who has attended the church the longest.
  - Those who hold lead positions and offices in the church.
  - The person who wields the most power and influence in the church.

- What is our perception of children? What is their role in our world today?
  - Cute and cuddly.
  - Playful and joyful.
  - They are our future.
  - We support them, watch over them, and nurture them.

- How does the role of children in our world today differ from the role of children in a farming family a few generations ago?
  - Expectation of farm children was to tend to chores and help work the farm
  - The more children, the more hands, the more could get done on the farm.
  - Most work was performed by physical labor; multiple children were a plus.

- What characteristics do we attribute to children?
  1. Dependent - Can't care for themselves.
  2. No real voice in decision making.
  3. Easily duped or tempted.
  4. Immature in thought and reason.

- How does the role of a healthy child differ from the role of a severely handicapped child in the world we live in?
  - A severely handicapped child is a burden to those who assist him.

- In the “world” in which we live when we think of caretaking for the poor and needy where does the responsibility fall?
  - The state itself or assistance from the state.

- Read Matthew 18:1 -4
Follow up questions

What was the perception of children in the time of Christ?
• They were a burden in cost and care until they could care for themselves.
• They were something you had to support and watch over.

How do we miss the words of Christ in this chapter?
• Matthew 18 is not about church discipline it is about Christian compassion for those in need.
• Turning the world on its head - Seeing things through the eyes of Christ not the ways of the world.

What does it mean to get into the reign of God?
• Not by being the most powerful and influential.
• Not by being holy and pure.
• How we treat each other following the words of our Lord.
• Being humble.

Who gets the center of attention in the “world”?
• Celebrities.
• Politicians and world leaders.
• People on whom the media focuses.
• The rich and famous.

Who gets the center of attention in the “Kingdom of God”? 
• The truly humblest.
• The weakest.
• The most vulnerable.

Read Matthew 5:1 -12
5:3 - Nothing to offer God.
5:4 - Leads to mourning.
5:5 - Powerlessness.
5:6 - Look to God.
5:7 - Through God's mercy towards us we are merciful.
5:8 - By Christ's grace our hearts are made pure.
5:9 - We share the Gospel.
5:10 -12 - Christ's love gives our life focus.

Who is the greatest in Christ's Church today?
• Those who need to hear God's word and feel Christ's forgiving grace the most.