



## “I’m turning in my resignation!”

When you become a child it means you relate to a father, and it also means you don’t have to be the father.

I have a friend who has a way of saying things many of us think, but don’t say. Recently, he sent me a letter in which he resigned from adulthood.

Let me share some of it with you:

- *I am hereby officially tendering my resignation as an adult. I’ve decided I would like to once again be an eight-year-old.*
- *I want to think M&Ms are better than money because you can eat them.*
- *I want to run a lemonade stand with my friends on a hot summer day.*
- *I want to return to a time when life was simple, when all you knew were colors, multiplication tables and nursery rhymes, but it didn’t bother you because you didn’t know what you didn’t know, and you didn’t care.*
- *I want to think the world is fair and everybody is honest and good. I want to believe that anything is possible.*

You ever feel that way?

Of course, you say, it’s a very nice thought. It’s a nice place where most of us would like to return, but we must be practical. We are, after all, adults, and we’re supposed to be more realistic than that. *Life is hard, and then you die.*

It’d be nice to be a child again, but I can’t just turn from all of that and do something childish. I’m an adult and adults have to be well...adult.

But that’s not what Jesus said: “...unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3). That’s a pretty radical statement, and I’m not so sure I like it. But then, Jesus doesn’t run his teaching by me!

What strikes me about what Jesus said is that he used “change” and “become.” If you change—or “are converted” as the KJV says—that should mean you become *more* mature and *more* adult.

Paul said: “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a

man, I put childish ways behind me” (1 Corinthians 13:11). When you change and are “converted,” you ought to become *more* adult, not less so.

When Jesus started using words like “born again” it was quite surprising, and you will remember that Nicodemus said, “How can a man be born when he is old? ...Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!” (John 3:4).

In other words, you grow *up*, not *down*. You don’t become a *child*—you become an *adult*. You don’t grow into childhood, you grow into adulthood.

Frankly, I tend to take what Jesus said and analyze it to death. I want to make all kinds of exegetical points about the text, point out the Greek meaning of the words, create principles and teach it so that it can become a reference to God’s sovereignty—Jesus is not talking about being “childish” but “childlike.” There is a requirement of obedience wherein we recognize his sovereignty in our lives and...

*You know, that’s your problem—trying to take everything I’ve put in Scripture and make it say something I didn’t say.*

Okay, what did you say?

*I said, ‘You’ve got to change and become a child.’ (By the way, in the Greek I said, ‘You’ve got to change and become a child.’) You don’t like what I said, so you force a simple statement into a theological and doctrinal mold thereby violating the very teaching I gave. When you become a child it means you relate to a father, and it also means you don’t have to be the father.*

You’re the Father, right?

*Right. That means you can lighten up and let me be the Father. I’m in control, and I’m the One who will teach you all you need to know. And just one other thing—I really do love you, you know?*

He asked me to remind you. □

—Steve Brown