**GROUP 1**

“I propose that Matthew 18:1-5, by using the paradigm of childlikeness to illustrate the ‘entrance requirement’ for the kingdom, challenges the validity of certain methods used for ‘child evangelism’ today. It also encourages us to recognize children who are being nurtured in the faith as growing participants in the life of the church and appropriate recipients of the communion celebration shared in the church.”

“Conversion is appropriate for adults; that is, if they have lost the dependency, humility and vulnerability which were theirs as children. If children are not nurtured and reach the age of independence, or have been nurtured but revel and reject their status in the kingdom, they would then need to be led towards a conversion experience. When adults exercise self-sufficiency and pride (as the disciples in fact were doing [18:1]) they must convert and become like children again.”

**GROUP 2**

 “Children who are nurtured in the understanding that they are kingdom citizens and who learn to carry their childlikeness into their adult lives do not need to experience conversion. They remain “kids of the kingdom” even as adults. They are neither sinless nor innocent…neither are adults who have been converted. But they are not condemned, and they are citizens of the kingdom.”

**GROUP 3**

 “…child evangelism is vital, but not as an effort to convert children (how paradoxical!). Child evangelism is precisely the sharing of the ‘good news’ with children. The good news is that Jesus accepts them and they are model citizens of the kingdom. It is vital that children learn about their status in Christ and his kingdom before they renounce it or walk away from it.”

From: Kids of the Kingdom: A Study of Matthew 18:1-5 and its context, pages 1, 5. By Paulette Taylor-Winegender in www.directionjournal.org