



## Group Guide

# Jesus Pursues

*November 16, 2025*

**Main Passage: Matthew 18:1-14**

## Theological Theme

Jesus sees, loves, and seeks after us all, even the people society deems “unimportant.” As His disciples, we should do likewise.

## Introduction

- ❓ Why do you think being great is important to many of us?
- ❓ What do you know about how God defines greatness?

## 1. Like a Child (Matthew 18:1-5)

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “So who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” (Matthew 18:1). Everything that follows in our reading today was Jesus’s response to this question from His disciples. Jesus brought over a child to model His first teaching—a living, breathing demonstration of what He was about to teach. Jewish rabbis would often teach in this manner, using what they had on hand to teach a spiritual truth.

- ❓ What might have been the motivation behind the disciples’ question about the kingdom of heaven? What do you think they really wanted to know?
- ❓ What does it mean for Christians to “become like little children” (v. 3)?
- ❓ Application: Why is it right and necessary for Christians to live as humble people with God and others?

## 2. The Seriousness of Sin (Matthew 18:6-9)

Some scholars interpret “little ones” in verse 6 to mean spiritual children, Christians who are new to the faith and not yet mature in their walk with Jesus.<sup>5</sup> Like actual children, they still have so much to learn, and it doesn’t happen all at once! Like a runner preparing for a marathon, spiritual maturity isn’t something we just try, it’s something we train toward over time. It takes time and effort. We all learn slowly, over a lifetime. We should take our responsibility to disciple and care for new believers seriously.

- ❓ What is the warning of verse seven?
- ❓ What was Jesus's point about sin in verses 8 and 9? How does this connect to Jesus's broader teaching in this passage?
- ❓ Application: What does the drastic way Jesus addressed dealing with sin teach us about the seriousness of sin? Do you typically view sin this way? Why or why not?

### 3. Going After the One (Matthew 18:10-14)

Throughout this passage, Jesus reframed the idea of greatness and showed we should be less concerned about being “the greatest” and more concerned about others, even and especially those our society sees as “less than.” We shouldn’t use worldly standards to judge others. Thankfully, Jesus doesn’t do that for us.

- ❓ What does this parable teach about God’s heart for His people?
- ❓ What does this parable teach about how believers should pursue those who don’t yet know Christ?
- ❓ Application: Who is God calling you to pursue as His instrument of reconciliation now?

### Conclusion

- ❓ How can we humble ourselves in our faith, “like little children” (v. 3), today?
- ❓ How can our group live together in a way that shows we understand and desire Jesus’s version of greatness over that of the world?
- ❓ What are some ways we could better seek out the “lost sheep” among us?