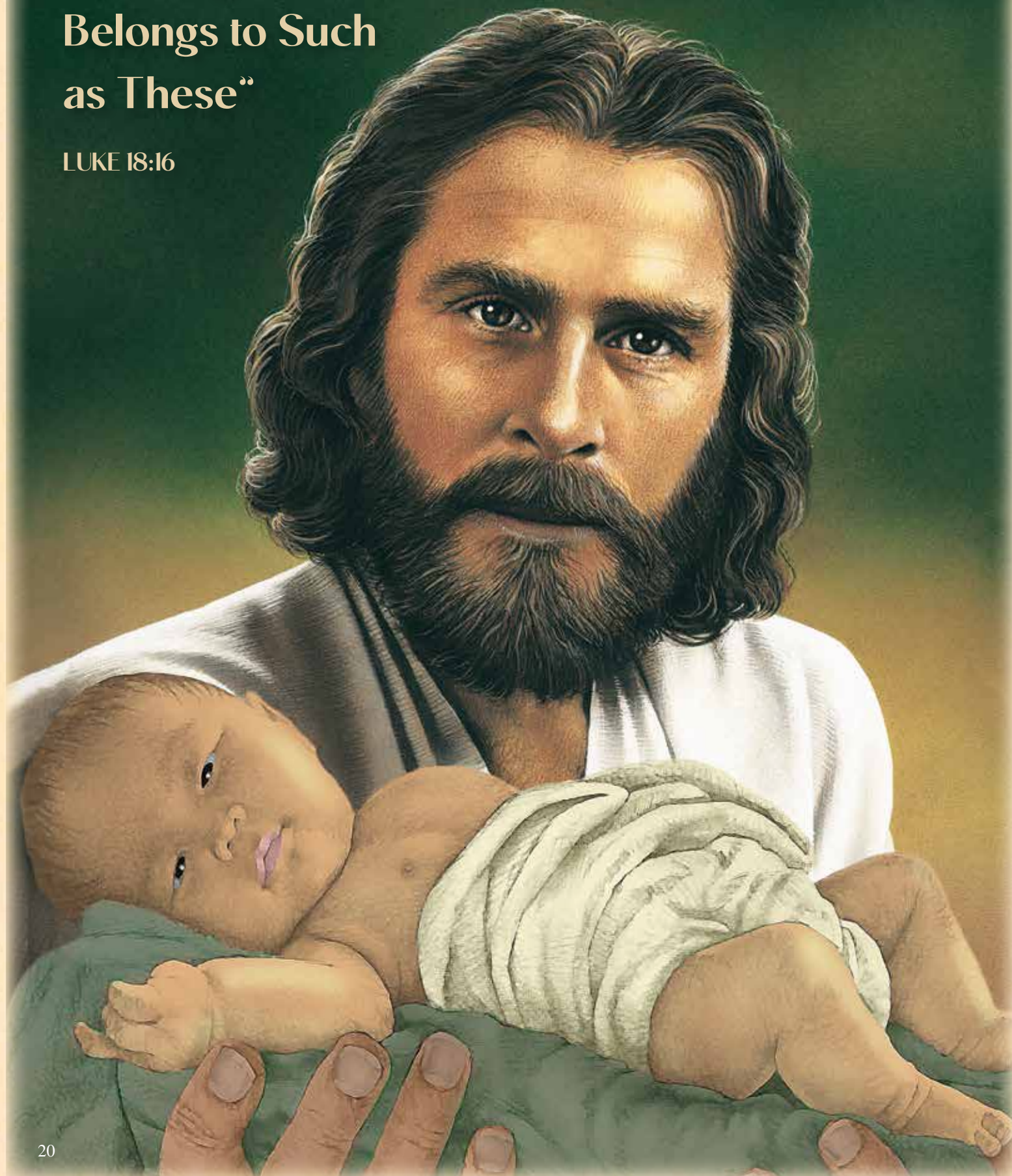


Front Cover Explained:

“The Kingdom of God Belongs to Such as These”

LUKE 18:16



Christ shocked people. As shown on the left, Christ held up a newborn baby and said: “The Kingdom of God **BELONGS** to such as these” (Luke 18:16). Christ continues to shock people today as He continues to say, “The Kingdom of God **belongs** to such as these”—including newborn babies!

NEWBORN BABIES RECEIVE CHRIST’S GREATEST ATTENTION!

Up to this time, you may have believed that Christ seems to somewhat ignore babies. Or, at minimum, Christ gives these little ones sort of second-level attention. Just the opposite is true! Open your Bible! See that Christ uses the expression “little ones” no less than six times in Matthew 18:1–14. In this case, the Greek word Christ uses is *mikros*, or in English, *micron*. Christ specifically uses *mikros* to stress His reference to very small children. Furthermore, Christ also uses another key expression, *brephos*, to designate newborn babies, and even unborn babies (Luke 18:15). Christ has a specific purpose to use a variety of designations to cover **all ages** of children—from unborn up to teenagers. Christ wants no one excluded. Now, look carefully at Matthew 18:6. Here Christ speaks specifically about “little ones who **believe** in Me.” Christ speaks clearly and powerfully that **LITTLE CHILDREN CAN HAVE FAITH**. Consequently, all who have other opinions—especially those who maintain that little children cannot believe or have faith—of these the Holy Spirit commands that their “mouths must be silenced” (Titus 1:11).

JEWISH FATHERS AND MOTHERS WERE INTENSELY FOCUSED

In Christ’s day, Jewish parents of children—including newborn babies—were so convinced of what Christ could do for their loved ones that they were “bringing **even their little babies** [in Greek, *brephos*] to Christ” (Luke 18:15). In Greek, this word *brephos* includes newborn and even the unborn! Why? So that Christ would touch these children and newborn babies (Luke 18:15). What is the significance of Jewish parents wanting Christ to touch their newborn babies? **ANSWER:** The Gospels are filled with documentation by the Holy Spirit of those whom Christ touched He also healed—physically and spiritually (Matthew 4:23–24; 8:2–3; 8:14–15; 9:18, 25–26; 9:28–30a; 20:33–34; Mark 1:30–31; 1:40–42; 6:5; 7:32–35; 8:22–25; 9:25–27; Luke 4:40; 5:13; 7:14–15; 8:52–55a; 13:12–13; 14:3–4; 22:51; John 9:6–7).

CHRIST IS INSISTENT: YOUR NEWBORN BABIES DESPERATELY NEED TO RECEIVE THE KINGDOM OF GOD

From birth, you and all your loved ones have been incurably infected by the satanic disease of SIN (Romans 5:12). Demonic powers are constantly at work within your mind, heart, and soul (Ephesians 6:10). These demonic powers desire to destroy your faith. God’s will is this: The faith He has created within you will not be destroyed (Genesis 3:15).

To combat demonic powers which seek to destroy the faith of you and your loved ones, God gives you His Kingdom. God’s **living** Word is God’s divine Medication to safeguard your faith.

Every newborn baby is born **infected** by the deadly, demonic, powers of SIN. Therefore, God wants you and your loved ones, and your newborn babies—at the moment of their birth—to be spiritually “immunized” against the power of SIN. God creates this initial immunization within the minds, hearts, and souls of newborn babies. How? Through the **gift** of His miracle of Baptism. This is your heavenly Father’s first step of saving your soul! This first step is when God establishes the Kingdom of God within you (Luke 17:21).

ARE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ACTUALLY INVOLVED IN THIS COMMAND OF CHRIST?

The above information from the Bible may interest you but you may think it does not apply to you. But it **DOES** apply to you!

When Christ declares that the Kingdom of God belongs to little children—even newborn children—He speaks to every Christian. In what way? Every newborn child is actually God’s new creation. “Every good thing given and every perfect **gift** is from above” (James 1:17). When Christian parents speak of children in their home, including newborn children, they say: “These are God’s children.” Then they add: “As parents, we are raising God’s children.”

In much the same way, when you go to church and see children of any age group, your heavenly Father wants you to think in the same way. These are all God’s children. They are all part of His family. Therefore, God wants you to feel responsible, in a positive and loving way, to help these little children—especially spiritually.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN AND LITTLE CHILDREN

When you see other children in your church family—and simply pass over them as someone else’s responsibility—then you **need to read and study Christ’s story of the Good Samaritan**. The priest and the Levite did not sin because of their wrong actions. The priest and the Levite sinned grievously in another way. How? When they saw a man in need, **they simply remained indifferent**. They “passed by on the other side” (Luke 10:32). In other words, all children you see around you in your congregation, or even your community, are God’s little ones who need you to help them. Be the Good Samaritan for all children around you. Never merely “pass by” these little ones.

Do what you are able to make sure that the Kingdom of God is being planted into the hearts of these little children—the planting of His **living** Seed/Word into their hearts and souls. Thank God you have this precious privilege!

Blessed heavenly Father, as we see little children around us, including newborn babies, open our spiritual eyes. Enable us to see these little ones—including all newborn babies—as Your creation and Your children. Remind us that we have the exciting blessed privilege to be used by You to raise Your little children in the faith You have given them in their Baptism. In Christ’s Name, we praise You. Amen. †

For further study, turn to the Bible Study, page 41, questions 34–39.