



# Links Players

## A CHILD'S GIFT

*Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 18:3-4 ESV*

Exhausted after finishing my third round at the USGA Senior Women's Open, I sat at the corner table in the dining area in a daze. My internal rumination churned over my putting disaster. Feeling defeated, I willed myself to engage in the conversation around me. I was there but not there.

Out of the corner of my eye, two people were approaching our table. Glancing to my right I saw a young boy in a blue polo shirt and wide eyes barely visible under his golf hat. He had something white in his hand and with his dad guiding him from behind, he headed straight for me.

"Miss Hanson, can I have your autograph? You played with my teacher today," he sheepishly asked.

His innocence and sincerity snapped me out of my pity party.

"Of course, what's your name?" "Charley," he smiled. I signed a little white napkin for him, and his gratitude boosted my spirit.

Charley didn't care about my score from the day. He wanted to meet me, the golfer he watched and who played with his teacher. Charley gave me a dose of his child-like spirit and humility in that moment.

One day the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven? (Matthew 18:1)," While they were stuck in the center of their egos, Jesus calls over a child. Can you imagine what the disciples were thinking? Maybe it was something like, "Why is he wasting time on a child?"

Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. The Greek word translated for turn is strepho and means "inward turning (CWSB Dictionary)." This isn't about conversion to a religion. Jesus is telling his disciples to turn away from their sin of self-seeking ambition to be the greatest. It is not what we do, how we perform, or who we impress that opens the gates of heaven.

What are we to learn? To humble oneself like a child does not mean we are less than another person. All people have equal value. Rather, it means lift others up, have a modest opinion of oneself, behave in an unassuming manner, and let go of self-importance.

Charley's humility reminded me that my value is not in my score (I'm still a work in progress on that one). He came to me for an autograph and his joy was a gift to me in return. And I dare say little Charley turned my focus back to Jesus and the faces surrounding me. Now that is kingdom living!

**Prayer: Lord, help us to turn our hearts and minds back to you today. Teach us to live from a heart of humility.**

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Tracy Hanson

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