

18:3 Conversion has various levels. The disciples had been converted, but there was a higher level of conversion- to become like children. Baptism isn't the end of our conversion- it's part of the process.

18:5 Jesus invites us to see Him as represented by the child. In the 1st Century world, children and women were considered as non-persons. But Jesus paid great attention to them and showed how He valued them as persons.

18:6 Such drowning in the sea as a millstone is Babylon's judgment (Rev. 18:21). Those who make others sin or stumble will share in Babylon's punishment at the last day- they will be "condemned with the world" (1 Cor. 11:32). Those rejected by Jesus will be sent back into the world they so loved- and share its judgment.

18:8 Everlasting fire is symbolic of total destruction. Jerusalem was punished with this (Jer. 17:27)- but there is no eternal fire there today. Don't read 'eternal fire' literally.

18:17 *Unto you*- you singular [Gk.]. This passage speaks about personal disagreements. If you follow this process, the end result is that you personally will treat the other person as a Gentile and tax collector- both of which groups Jesus especially sought to minister to and win for Him. It doesn't speak about a church disfellowshipping an individual.

18:20 Jesus is with us all the time individually, but He is especially with us when we gather together. Hence the importance of believers meeting together rather than believing in isolation.

18:21 *Sin against*- Peter refers back to v. 15. Jesus seems to be saying that we can go through the process He outlines in :15-17. But the higher level is to forgive unconditionally. If somebody sins against us 490 times / day and claims each time to have repented, it's clear their repentance is insincere. Jesus is saying we should forgive people without trying to assess nor believe the sincerity of their repentance. For the nature of the forgiveness we show others is what we will be shown.

18:24 There's an element of unreality in this story. How could a person amass such a huge debt? Only because the King kept on and on lending to him, knowing the man could never repay. This speaks of God's forgiveness of us and the enormity of our debt to Him. Realizing our sinfulness will motivate us to forgive others.

18:31 When we see unreasonable behaviour from our brethren, the response is to tell it to the Lord. He knows about it already, but it's good for us psychologically to tell the story to Him in prayer.