

t h e c h i l d r e n
- *Craig Rees*

i m p o v e r i s h e d

Matthew 18:1-5

pg. 984

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

Matthew 18:1

In Jesus' day, in the Roman and Grecian world, children were considered a disposable commodity.

“But as for us, we have been taught that to expose newly-born children is the part of wicked men; and this we have been taught lest we should do any one an injury, and lest we should sin against God, first, because we see that almost all so exposed (not only the girls, but also the males) are brought up to prostitution.”

Justin Martyr, *The First Apology*

Children were exposed due to:

- 1. Economic conditions**
- 2. Physical conditions of the child**
- 3. Unconventional relationships**
- 4. Inconvenience**
- 5. Religious superstition**
- 6. Labor needs**

And whoever welcomes one such child in
my name welcomes me.

Matthew 18:5

And whoever welcomes one such child in
my name welcomes me.

Matthew 18:5

δέχομαι (*dechomai*)

to accept, receive, take, and welcome

Dechomai asks one to accept an offer
deliberately and readily

“Welcome” is used:

- **Literally of things (Luke 2:28; 16:6-7; 22:17)**
- **Metaphorically of the Kingdom (Mark 10:15)**
- **Literally of persons (Luke 16:4; 9:11)**

Christians received, admitted, accepted and welcomed people into their homes.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

James 1:27

“Do not kill a child by abortion or kill a newborn infant.”

The Teaching of the Apostles / The Didache

“They rescue the orphan from him who
does violence”

The Apology of Aristides

“Christians worked against infanticide by prohibiting its members from practicing it, voicing their moral view on infanticide to the pagan world, by providing relief for the poor, and actually taking in and supporting babies which had been left to die by exposure by their pagan parents. Later, hospitals specifically for orphans and poor children were built by Christians.”

- Joanie Gruber

Every healthy parent has a God-given primal urge to care for their children. The problem is that we have a far lesser urge to care about children that are not our own.

There are millions of children whose primary caretaker, for a variety of reasons, isn't doing the job. As a result, millions of children are living in crisis.

Why?

1. Cheap labor

2. The sex industry

Most of us believe that something should be done but that something isn't necessarily clear and sometimes we think that the someone isn't us.

How do I care for a child that isn't mine?

1. Choose personal responsibility

How do I care for a child that isn't mine?

1. Choose personal responsibility

2. Match responsibility with opportunity



For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

Ephesians 1:4-5