

Christian Perspectives: What kind of person are you?

I think all of us know someone who can lift our spirits. They are the kind of people who seem to have the ability, which not everyone has, to help us when we are feeling down. More often than not they are the people who live life with a childlike joy, who haven't lost the joie de vivre and we feel that when we are in their presence. Conversely, there are people who bring out the worst in us? you may be thinking of those people now. What kind of person are you?

We hear in Mark 10:14-15 Jesus saying, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' I want to point out that we are not to act, think or be like children, because we are told in that well known reading from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 13:11), 'When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.' There are things that children do that we want to put an end to in our adult lives, and we reminded by that reading about not being childish ? being irresponsible or immature in our speaking, thinking and reasoning. I am also not talking about the 'life of the party' sort of person, or the person who makes us laugh or who can say the right thing at the right time, although the people I'm talking about may have one or more of these qualities. What I am talking about is something about them that can't be described, or pointed to, we just know it is there. And the result of that gift that they have is what is most important: they bring out the best in us. God works through us as we read in Philippians (2:13), 'For it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.' The very next verse states, 'Do all things without murmuring and arguing, so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God?'

All of us could probably think up one or two people that bring out the best in us. There are parishioners and clergy who do that; maybe the same person comes up on everyone's list, maybe different people. When we are around them they bring out the best in us, our good side and that is kingdom living as we are inspired by them and go on ourselves to inspire. Conversely, there are people who bring out the worst in us and it's natural that we probably try and avoid them.

Children accept faith on trust. All of us are called by our heavenly parent to accept his grace, peace and love with that same sort of trust. May all of us accept God in Christ who brings out the best in us and helps us to live out the joy of our faith and be inspiration to all. Amen.

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