

Having a childlike summer

By Elise L. Moore, C.S.

Summer is a time for children to enjoy being children. Playing with friends, being outdoors, no responsibilities, freedom. As parents, let's encourage childlikeness. Christ Jesus told his closest followers, "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:4)

Instead of resenting childhood's freedom from care and lack of responsibility, can't we adopt a more childlike attitude toward our own life? We are all children of God. God is the Father-Mother providing for our human needs. Are we trusting His care or caught in a web of worry?

Perhaps this summer is an opportunity to approach our days with less stress, enjoying the moment. Let's take moments to reflect on God's beauty. To rest in His arms and be refreshed. We deserve a change of pace too. Perhaps we need to worry less and appreciate more the good that we have. Be a little less rigid about schedules and activities and trust moments of peace and spontaneous good.

Some years ago I was learning a foreign language by using a self-paced program with cassette tapes. For months I worked diligently and made much progress. The time came to advance to the next level. What a shock! I couldn't understand anything on the tapes. The speakers were talking faster and the vocabulary was unfamiliar. Doggedly I tried to solve the problem by working harder. Unsuccessful.

As I turned to Father-Mother God in prayer, the thought came to take a break, let it go for awhile. At first I resisted. Wasn't this giving up, ignoring the problem? But the message remained the same. So I put the tapes away for a summer. Didn't do a thing with them nor practice at all. Had a great summer enjoying more free time with family.

In the fall the thought came to try again. Amazingly, I heard every word and understood the meaning the first time through. What had been a blur of sound was now totally intelligible! It was hard to believe. I hadn't practiced

or worked or struggled. I hadn't put any effort into it at all. Yet my ability to hear and understand the language had dramatically increased.

Progress isn't necessarily in proportion to determination. There's an element of grace and trust in good that makes life productive. When discipline becomes rigid and work becomes human will, progress slows.

Embracing the childlike qualities will often restore joy and balance to our lives. In fact it is essential to true progress and spiritual growth. For as Jesus said, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." And then he blessed the children. (Mark 10:15,16)

Let's encourage our children to be childlike. Let's encourage the sweetness, patience and joy that is natural to God's child. And perhaps we can rest in His love a little more...and enjoy our summer.

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