

## Jesus Loves the Children

Mark 10: 13-16

Immediately following His teaching on divorce and the expectations of marriage Jesus is met by parents who brought their children unto Him, desiring that He touch them. They were literally seeking a blessing from the Lord for their children. This was a common practice in that day. Parents would often bring their young children to the synagogue in order for the rabbis to lay hands on them in prayer and bless them. As the rabbis ministered to the children, they would pray for them and the lives they would lead.

This is not uncommon in modern church culture. Often parents will bring new-born babies before the church, seeking prayer for their lives, as they dedicate them unto the Lord. Those are special services within the church. It is always a blessing to see parents commit to raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord while desiring the church to join them in prayer as they strive to provide a godly environment for their children. We are obligated to pray for one another, and we must not neglect praying for our children!

This is a simple passage, but it reveals profound truth that needs to be applied in our everyday lives. As we consider the [factors](#) involved in this encounter, I trust we will be challenged and encouraged to pray for our children as we seek to point them to the Lord. I want to preach on the thought: [Jesus Loves the Children](#).

**I. The Appeal regarding the Children** (13) – [And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them](#). Mark reveals two separate and very distinct appeals regarding the children. Consider:

**A. The Request** (13a) – [And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them](#). As Jesus ministered among the people, He was approached by parents who brought their children unto Him. They desired Jesus to touch their children, seeking His blessing upon their lives. It is apparent these parents had recognized Jesus and knew He was able to provide for their children. Likely many of them believed Jesus was the Christ, and desired the Son of God to bless their children.

- The word translated children literally speaks of the young, including infants. Most agree this gathering would have included children of all ages. As Jesus was in the midst, these parents didn't want to miss an opportunity for Jesus to bless their children, regardless of their age.

- This presents a much needed challenge in our modern society. Most parents want the best for their children, doing everything they can to provide for them and ensure their well-being and success. We try to ensure they are eating properly, getting the education they need, and participating in particular activities to become well-rounded individuals. There is nothing wrong with any of those things, but many fail to emphasize the most important need in a child's life – getting them to Jesus! We need to do as these parents did and get our children in the presence of the Lord. Nothing else in life is more important than their relationship with Christ!

**B. The Rebuke** (13b) – *and his disciples rebuked those that brought them*. While the parents appealed to Jesus regarding their children, the disciples felt it necessary to rebuke them for seemingly bothering the Lord. Apparently they felt as if Jesus had more important issues at hand than blessing children. The word rebuke speaks of “*actively hindering or reproofing*.” The disciples were adamant that Jesus had no time for such activity and strongly chided the parents for taking His time with what they assumed were trivial matters.

- Often we tend to focus on the aspects of ministry that we deem important and have little time for other pursuits or needs. Many churches make a mistake by putting little, if any thought into children's ministry. We must ensure that we are doing all we can to evangelize and equip everyone we can, regardless of their age or ability. In fact, we cannot afford to neglect reaching our children for the Lord. The vast majority of believers are saved in their childhood years. As we instill the Word of God in them at an early age, we are preparing them to respond to the leading of the Spirit to salvation.

**II. The Advocacy for the Children** (14-15) – The disciples may not have wanted to bother with the children, but they would soon learn that Jesus was an advocate for the children. Notice:

**A. The Admonition** (14a) – *But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not*. Jesus immediately recognized the rebuke of the disciples toward the children and expressed His displeasure. This reveals that Jesus was indignant regarding their hindrance of the children. He was grieved by their actions. He commanded that the children be permitted to come to Him without any hindrance. The disciples may not have wanted to be bothered with them, but Jesus was willing to make time for them.

- This reveals an aspect of our Lord's character that we need to recognize. He is much displeased with any attempt to prevent anyone from coming to Him. We tend to develop a characterization that is necessary for one to be pointed to the Lord. Church ministries are often

developed to reach a specific audience. We should never be guilty of overlooking or hindering anyone in their pursuit of the Lord. In fact, we should do all we can to point them to Christ!

**B. The Recognition** (14b) – *for of such is the kingdom of God*. While the disciples failed to see much benefit or value in the children, Jesus knew their value. He declared that the kingdom of God was made up of such as these. What did Jesus seek to convey in that statement? Simply, He revealed that those who come to Him by faith unto salvation must come as a little child.

- Let's consider that for a moment. We all know that children are totally dependent upon their parents for survival. They are unable to provide for themselves. Children by nature are trusting, living life without worry. They don't know where the food comes from; they trust it will be there when it's time to eat. They are unaware of the money it takes to live, or what is involved in making a living; they just expect that their needs will be provided. The same is true regarding salvation. We are totally dependent upon the Lord to provide for us. We are unable to secure our salvation, and even have a difficult time comprehending the enormity of it all; we just believe in Christ by faith for salvation and rest in His gracious provision!

**C. The Expectation** (15) – *Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein*. Jesus used the frustration of the disciples regarding the children to teach an eternal truth. Faith in Him was not optional; it was essential. If one was to receive salvation, they had to come as these children had – totally by faith. They had nothing to offer in return for His blessing, and no status in society that would have warranted His time. The blessing they received had come solely from the Lord as a free gift of His grace.

- While I would never seek to minimize salvation or the great price that was paid to provide for our redemption, many make the process of salvation and acceptance to God more difficult than it has to be. We must come as a little child, realizing our inability and trusting in the finished work of Christ. We must acknowledge that He alone has provided for our salvation, and we can receive it by faith as a free gift! We could never work enough to earn it or reach the place in life that would deserve such provision. Salvation is by grace through faith!

**III. The Affection shown the Children** (16) – *And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them*. Following the conversation providing clarity regarding the children, Jesus shows them gracious affection. This involved:

**A. His Presence** (16) – Even though the disciples wanted to prevent the children from coming to Jesus, we find that He took them up into His arms, laying His hands upon them. The children were blessed with the presence of the Lord, literally being embraced by Him. He was willing to take time for them and receive them unto Himself.

- I am thankful for the times that I have felt the warm, tender embrace of the Lord. Those times are only available when we come before Him as a little child. When we have come to the end of ourselves, realizing our inabilities, and desiring that which He alone can provide, we then have an opportunity to feel His embrace. I remember times a child when I was hurt or scared, needing the embrace of a loved one. Mother would take me in her lap, pulling me close, while providing the comfort I desperately needed. Such opportunities are available in Christ as well. He will pull us close to Himself and allow us to feel the warmth and comfort of His embrace.

[Matt.11:28](#) – Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

**B. His Provision** (16) – [And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.](#) Jesus didn't just acknowledge the children, or simply give them a hug – He blessed them. He offered His divine provision in their lives. He genuinely met the needs of those who came to Him. By faith they came to Him and by faith they received a blessing.

- It is impossible to be thankful for the Lord's provision as we should. As I pondered the blessing these children received, I was reminded of the blessings I have been given. As I came to Christ many years ago by faith, I had no idea what I had been given. Like these children, I was touched by the Lord, but the reality of that blessing was unfathomable. Honestly I still can't fully comprehend all I have received in Christ, but I am thankful for His gracious provision in my life. He took my guilt and my shame, replacing it with His righteousness. I was granted acceptance by the Father and promised eternal life. I now have the Spirit abiding within to guide and guard my life. I received all of that through child-like faith! To say that I am blessed beyond measure doesn't begin to describe what I have received in Christ!

**Conclusion:** This passage actually presents a two-fold challenge. First, are we genuinely concerned about the needs of others, those who desperately need to get to Jesus? Are we willing to be inconvenienced for the needs of another? Second, have we felt the warm embrace of Christ in salvation? If so, how long has it been since you have enjoyed unhindered fellowship with Him? I pray that we as a church will do all we can to reach those who need Christ. If you need to experience His presence, whether it be for salvation or renewed fellowship, seek Him today!