

## *Children and Discipleship*

### *Mark 10:13-16*

#### *Series: Christ our Focus*

#### 1. Introduction:

- a. Today, in our culture, children are supposed to be treated with tenderness and compassion.
  - i. We have passed laws in regards to child labor and the ethical treatment of Children.
  - ii. As a society, the western hemisphere, has a very high view of children.
- b. In the ancient Jewish culture, this type of view was not so.
  - i. Children, like women, derived their position in society primarily from their relationship to adult males.
  - ii. Sons, were regarded as a blessing—they continued the line.
  - iii. Children were a work force.
  - iv. Childhood was an avoidable period in between birth and adulthood.
- c. In a very literal sense, children were the least of these.
  - i. They were not taken of.
- d. It is against this backdrop that the following narrative takes place.
- e. The disciples are viewing things according to their societal customs and understanding.

#### 2. Verse 13 – Believing Parents

- a. The first point that must be observed was that children were being brought to Jesus by those that believed that Jesus was worthy and capable of blessing their children.
  - i. These believing parents brought their children in order to receive from Jesus a blessing.
  - ii. Not all children were brought to Jesus, just the ones mentioned here.
    1. **1 Corinthians 7:14** For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.
- b. Notice that they wanted Jesus to touch their children as they consecrated these children to God.

- c. The disciples rebuked them –
    - i. The exclusivism and elitism of the disciples is still very much present. Just like they rebuked the Jewish exorcist before for not being part of their group, here they show that they cannot be bothered by the least of these.
    - ii. Their views are shaped by society and not by Jesus.
      - 1. As Christians, we must be sure that our worldview is shaped from a biblical perspective and not a cultural one.
    - iii. The word rebuke is a severe word used of casting out demons
      - 1. **Mark 1:25** But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"
3. Verse 14 – Jesus is indignant
- a. Jesus sharply opposes their behavior
  - b. Indignant—Greek *aganktein*—means to arouse to anger, to vent oneself in expressed displeasure
    - i. Jesus does not hold his peace
    - ii. Jesus’ anger reveals his compassion and defense of the helpless, vulnerable, and powerless.
      - 1. **John 2:14-16** In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. (15) And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. (16) And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade."
  - c. These children, which were brought in hope and faith, are the true heirs of the kingdom of God.
4. Verse 15 – receiving the kingdom as a child
- a. Truly – this statement must be believed and adhered to
  - b. I say to you – based on his authority as the Son of God and God the Son.
  - c. Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a child –
    - i. Child—Greek word is diminutive (*paida*) meaning “very young,” or “infants” or “babies”
    - ii. People assume that it is their virtue that Christ is commending but it is not their virtue that allows them to be heirs to the kingdom of God.

- iii. We are not innocent and eager, but slow, disbelieving, and cowardly.
    - 1. **Psalms 58:3** The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray from birth, speaking lies.
    - 2. **Romans 3:10** as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one;
    - 3. **Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—
    - 4. **Ephesians 2:1** And you were dead in the trespasses and sins
  - iv. The children are blessed because of their lack. They come only as they are—small, powerless, without sophistication, as the overlooked and disposed of society.
  - v. To receive the kingdom of God as a child is to receive it as one who has no credits, no clout, and no claims.
  - vi. An infant has nothing to bring, and whatever he receives he or she receives by grace on the basis of sheer neediness rather than by any merit inherent in him.
    - 1. It is the empty hand that is filled by our Lord.
  - vii. We must come to the Lord in the same manner.
    - 1. We must completely admit our lack and neediness in the sufficiency of Christ.
  - d. Shall not enter it – will be lost forever
    - i. The kingdom is by grace or there is no kingdom at all.
    - ii. **Romans 3:23-24** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (24) and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
    - iii. **Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,
5. Verse 16 – in His arms
- a. Jesus does more than the original request.
  - b. He takes the children into his arms, blesses them, and lays hands on them.
  - c. Any that are brought to the Lord will by no means be cast out.
  - d. The Disciples are again reminded and instructed that the Kingdom of God is not for the best, richest, and most powerful but for those that are the weakest and most despised.

- i. **1 Corinthians 1:26-31** For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. (27) But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; (28) God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, (29) so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. (30) And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, (31) so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

6. Conclusion –

- a. Come to our Lord as a child
- b. Admit your need and helplessness
- c. Trust in his grace and mercy
- d. Never prevent the bringing of others to the Lord.
- e. Reach out to all.

7. Benediction –

- a. **Romans 10:13** For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."