

180729-1 Luke Series, 18, 15-17, Suffer Little Children to Come unto Me – Craig Thurman

In the previous lesson the Lord taught the prayer parables. Jesus asked this question at the close of the first, Nevertheless when the *Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?* Clearly that time will be a very difficult day for those saints living when Jesus comes again to this earth. And the second was a warning against those disciples which trusted in themselves.

Just a remark here about the faith of most professing Baptists today. The grace of God is no longer sovereign and free from beginning to end. It has become conditioned at every turn on the will of the sinner. God can't do anything without first receiving the sinner's nod of approval. How foreign this self-confidence ought to be in the people of God. But mainstream Baptist doctrine is completely turned man-centered today. But the Bible teaches me that I am a sinner saved by the grace of God. My entire life from eternity past when God put me in Christ by His election of grace, to eternity future is enveloped in His wonderful grace. Perhaps we should look at the grace of God that was revealed to apostle Paul on the road to Damascus and have a reset on what grace really is. The experience differs, but the grace is the same in every instance.

Today, the topic concerns children coming to Christ and the character of everyone that shall receive the kingdom of God.

An harmony of the following texts: Mt.18.3, 4; 19.13-15; Mk.10.13-16; Lk.18.15-17

<p>Mt.19.13 ¶ Then were there brought unto him <u>little children</u> (παιδίον),</p> <p>that he should put his hands on them, and pray:</p> <p>and the disciples rebuked them.</p> <p>14 But Jesus said,</p> <p>Suffer little children (παιδίον), and forbid them not, to come unto me:</p> <p>for of such is the kingdom of heaven.</p> <p>Mt.18.3 And said,</p> <p>Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children (παιδίον),</p> <p>ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.</p> <p>4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.</p> <p>15 And he</p> <p>laid his hands on them,</p> <p>and departed thence.</p>	<p>Mr 10:13 And they brought <u>young children</u> (παιδίον) to him,</p> <p>that he should touch them:</p> <p>and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.</p> <p>14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them,</p> <p>Suffer the little children (παιδίον) to come unto me, and forbid them not:</p> <p>for of such is the kingdom of God.</p> <p>15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child (παιδίον),</p> <p>he shall not enter therein.</p> <p>16 And he</p> <p>took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.</p>	<p>Lu 18:15 And they brought unto him also <u>infants</u> (βρέφος),</p> <p>that he would touch them:</p> <p>but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.</p> <p>16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said,</p> <p>Suffer little children (παιδίον) to come unto me, and forbid them not:</p> <p>for of such is the kingdom of God.</p> <p>17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child (παιδίον)</p> <p>shall in no wise enter therein.</p>
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βρέφος

15 ¶ And they brought unto him also infants,

Matthew: *little children*, παιδίον

Mark: *young children*, παιδίον

they brought unto, προσέφερον, 3rdpl. imperf. of προσφέρω; the imperfect verb means that they brought their babies, and did not stop bringing their babies to Christ. 'It [the imperfect, added] implies that a certain thng was going on at a specified time, but excludes the assertion that the end of the action as attained.' *A Manual Grammar of the Gree New Testament*, Dana & Mantey, p.187; A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, p.234, 'they were bringing.'

infants, βρέφη, nom. and acc. pl. of βρέφος; KJV, *babe* (Lk.1.41, 44; 2.12, 16; 1Pe.2.2 [alluding to *babes* prior to *weaning*]); *infant* (Lk.18.15), *young children* (Acts 7.19, i.e. Moses was 3 mos. [Ex.2.3]); *child* (2Ti.3.15); **every instance can be said to refer to a child that has not reached the time of weaning.**

Matthew and Mark's use of the Greek, παιδίον, would refer to children that are of the age which requires strict governance by others (usually parents). This limited and strict interpretation does not apply to other instances where παιδίον is found. Sometimes παιδίον is used of men who are certainly subject to those over them (i.e., our Lord Jesus is the παιδίον of the Father).

that he would touch them:

he would touch, ἄπτηται, 3rdps. pres. subj. mid. of ἄπτω, and always tss. with the English word *touch* (36). The middle voice verb says, how they hoped that Christ *would touch them himself*.

The plural pronoun *they* refers to those among the great multitudes which had children. (Lk.14.25) These parents desired Jesus Christ to touch their children with His hands, to pray for them, and so to be blessed. How good it would be for parents to desire that their children *come to Christ* to be blessed! Since Jesus is not corporeally with us today that translates today

into parents being committed to Christ themselves. That commitment is visible. And the most visible means for parents to show their commitment is by their hunger to fellowship with the saints around the word of God. Such a commitment will result in godly homes. On the other hand, if this is lacking it is a certain indication of a worldly home. Children in such are not being brought near to Christ. These parent in Christ's day brought them to Christ. That doesn't mean that the parents *saved* them. But they did what they should do as proper parents in the Lord to their children. Saving is God's business, obedience to God is ours. Christian parents are commanded of the Lord to *train* up their children in the way that they should go. They trust the results of that to the Lord.

Pr 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Parents set up their children for habits that will last a lifetime. It is imperative that we do our best to teach them of Christ. And fathers bear the responsibility for the tenor of their home.

Eph.6. 4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Of all of the things that children learn the most important is the word of God and the warnings that are in it. Whether or not your children ever come to Christ isn't the issue. The issue is, will you obey the Lord? Do not be an hindrance to the work of grace. Grace will work nonetheless. But were we participants or hindrances in the work of God?

'We should pray for them before born and when in their cradles, as well as later.' *An Interpretation of the English Bible*, B. H. Carroll, vol. 4. p.198

'How can we bring our children to Jesus Christ to be blessed? We cannot do it in a corporeal sense, for Jesus is not here, "he is risen;" but we can bring our children in a true, real, and spiritual sense. We take them up in the arms of our *prayer*. I hope many of us, so soon as our children saw the light, if not before, presented them to God with

this anxious prayer, that they might sooner die than live to disgrace their father's God. We only desired children that we might in them live over again another life of service to God; and when we looked into their young faces, we never asked wealth for them, nor fame, nor anything else, but that they might be dear unto God, and that their names might be written in the Lamb's Book of Life. We did then bring our children to Christ as far as we could do it, by presenting them before God, by earnest prayer on their behalf.' *The Tetropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Charles Spurgeon, vol. 3 (yr. 1864), p.417

Spurgeon went on to tell of his mother's prayer, 'Now, Lord, if my children go on in their sins, it will not be from ignorance that they perish, and my soul must bear a swift witness against them at the day of judgment if they lay not hold of Christ.' *ibid.*, p.418

How seriously we should take this matter of bringing our children to Christ. Who knows of those children that Christ took up into His arms what impressions they carried with them for the rest of their lives, that Jesus took the time to take them up in their arms, to pray for and to bless them? Who knows what impressions will remain on the minds of our children when we bring them before Christ in prayer and expressing the hope that He might save them? (More to this in just a moment.)

Otherwise there is no way to apply this portion of Scripture. There is not any other example or instance in the word of God that records children coming to any other. There is not an instance where children come to the apostles or to other disciples. The text concerns children coming only to Christ.

but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

they rebuked, ἐπετίμησαν, 3rdpl. aor. of ἐπιτιμάω, ἐπί upon, on, at + τιμάω to honor, value; ἐπιτιμάω, to rebuke, charge, straitly charge.

At least two reasons could be given, and these are only opinions, why the disciples rebuked these which brought their children to Christ.

- No precedent was set by either the disciples of John or of Christ's for doing this. Certainly, had there a precedent established there would have been no objection.
- The disciples may have thought that this was too trivial a matter with which to trouble the Lord Jesus.

What is revealed in Mk. 10.14, is that Jesus was much displeased with them for doing this thing. (Mk.10.14, *he was much displeased*)

was much displeased, ἠγανάκτησε, 3ps. aor. of ἀγανακτέω; KJV, Mt.20.24, moved with indignation; 21.15, were sore displeased; Mk.10.14, was much displeased; the noun is once found in the N.T. at 1Co. 7.11, yea, what indignation ...

It can be counted on one hand how many times in Scripture that the Lord became angry or displeased. (Mk.3.5, *And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts; 16.14 upbraided the eleven because of their unbelief; Mt.21.13, the cleansing of the temple, which probably happened more than once*). Therefore it is important for them and us to understand why.

15 Προσέφερον δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ τὰ βρέφη ἵνα αὐτῶν ἄπτηται ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ μαθηταὶ ἐπετίμησαν αὐτοῖς

16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said,

called ... unto, προσκαλεσάμενος, nom, song. masc. part. aor. of προσκαλέομαι, to call to or for.

But Jesus called them ... seems to refer to the disciples. He called them near to instruct them. They needed to know why He was displeased.

Our Lord is unprejudiced in His judgment. Christ publically contradicted His own disciples for what they did. Wrong is wrong no matter who does it.

Suffer little children to come unto me,

Let

suffer, ἄφετε, 2ppl. aor. imper. of ἀφήμι, ἀπό from, forth + ἵημι to pass by or send; ἄφετε, is found 9 times in the N.T. and is tss., remembering it is an imperative, *let*, *let alone*, and *suffer*.

little children, παιδιά, nom. of παιδίον, see παῖς; παῖς is a term always used of those who are subordinated to another: a child to parents, children to elders, a maid to a master, a son to a father or the Son to the Father, and a young man to an old man.

to come, ἔρχεσθαι, pres. infin. of ἔρχομαι, to come.

This speaks of more than just the parents bringing their children to Christ so that He might touch them, pray for them and bless them. Now Christ speaks of the desire that the children had to draw near to Him. And this marks the reason He became indignant. There were some children among these which were brought that had the understanding of faith about who Jesus really was. I'll prove this in a moment.

and forbid them not:

forbid, κωλύετε, 2ppl. pres. imper. of κωλύω, *to forbid*, *hinder*, *withstand*, *keep*, *not to suffer*.

Christ is saying, do not be those who would prevent any child from coming to Christ and expressing faith in Me. While the gospel of Luke has in our English the word *infants* (βρέφος), which refers to children still nursing, Jesus' uses the term, παιδίον, translated *little* or *young children*. This term includes these that are called *infants*, as well as children that are more matured. Christ gives commandment to the disciples to allow children to come to Him. Contrary to what some may say, our Lord says that children can and do come to faith in Him. Notice that in just a few days the Lord

Jesus shall come into Jerusalem and to the temple. There it is probably some of these very same children that we read of here in this text that shall say of Him what many adults and religiously trained, couldn't say because of their unbelief.

Mt 21:15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children (παῖδιον) crying [out] in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,

Same word, ἀγανακτέω, for the displeasure Jesus had with His disciples for forbidding the children access to Christ.

These children cried out, *Hosanna to the Son of David*, a praise which attributed to Jesus Christ both the power to save and the right to the throne of David. That is what children believed of Christ. This came from children still being nursed, and of those older.

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

babes, νήπιος, tss. babes, child (1Co.13.11), children (Gal.4.1)

sucklings, sucklings, and always refers to those children still nursing.

for of such is the kingdom of God.

of such, τοιούτων, gen. pl. of τοιοῦτος; meaning in singular: of this kind, and plural, of these kinds; the gen. pl. is used 7 times in the N.T.:

Mt.19.14; Mk.9.37; 10.14; Lk. 18.16, tss. of such [gen. pl., meaning, of such ones];

Gal.5.23, such [gen. pl., meaning, of such things];

Eph. 5.27, such thing [as a spot or wrinkle];

1Ti.6.5, *such* [understood, *men*]

Grammatically, 'for the kingdom of God is of these kinds of babes and little children.' (*of such* refers to a particular quality that is found in little children. That quality is *humility*.)

Mt.18.3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

*4 Whosoever therefore shall **humble** himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

The kingdom of God is occupied with those who are of the character and number of these children. This text tells us of some of those who are in the kingdom, which does involve children, and the character of all them that are in it. What is the notable character of those who are in the kingdom?

16 ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτὰ εἶπεν, Ἄφετε τὰ παιδιά ἔρχεσθαι πρὸς με καὶ μὴ κωλύετε αὐτὰ τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ

17 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

(receives something) by no means into it
never (shortened form of not ever)

shall receive, δέξεται, 3ps. aor. subj. of δέχομαι; KJV, to receive, take, accept; properly δέχομαι, dechomai, means to receive what is presented, as opposed to taking what is not. (Jn.3.27 is the rule for defining receive)

in no wise, οὐ μή, is a double negative which emphasizes against something. It is found some 93 times in the N.T. and is tss. in the KJV, in no wise (Mt.5.18), in no case (Mt.5.20), by no means (Mt.5.26), not (Mt.10.23), nor ever (Mt.24.21), neither (Mk.13.19), never (Jn.6.35), in any wise (Mk.14.31), by any means (Lk.10.19), no (Re.18.7), no ... at all (Re.18.21).

Let's consider the statement: *Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little children shall in no wise enter therein.*

The subject is: *whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child.*

The verb is: *shall enter*

The verb is modified with two adverbial phrases: *in no wise* (never) & *therein* (so answering how and where)

Without childlike humility, subjection, dependence, surrender, and trust one shall never enter into the kingdom.

Mt 7:21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Mk.10.23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

hardly, δυσκολως, adv. of δύσκολος, and always translated with the English, hard, hardly (difficult).

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

Whosoever (that is, whether a man, woman, boy, or girl) is changed so that they are turned in childlike faith to receive the kingdom, which beyond

question means that they have receive the King of that kingdom, shall enter into it.

Mt 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus said to Nicodemus that without the new birth no man can see (perceive) or enter into the kingdom.

Jn.3.3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

...

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Ye must be born again. Ye must be born of the Spirit of God *before* there is any perception of or entrance into the kingdom. The natural man, the one who has not been born of the Spirit, which birth always succeeds his natural birth, has no perception of spiritual things. (Ro.15.27; 1Co.9.11)

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things (between things that are spiritual & eternal and things that are carnal & temporal), yet he himself is judged of no man.

Those who have never been born again cannot understand or appreciate the things that we are talking about today. Sure, there can be head knowledge of biblical facts, but a spiritual perception is impossible. Being born again assures that one shall come to Christ in faith, believe that He is the Son of God come in human flesh. He will receive the truth concerning Jesus Christ that He is the impeccable Savior, died for sin, buried and risen again bodily from the tomb. Coming to understand these truths concerning

Jesus Christ is evidence of the new birth. Like a child we grow to understand our complete dependence upon Christ for everything.

Joh 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Php 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

We hunger and thirst after righteousness. We trust Him & believe His word, knowing that through it we have the wisdom of Christ, the knowledge Christ, and the understanding of Christ. Our spirit is humbled and learns to subject to whatever the will of God might be for us.

Are you a Christian? Have you come to faith in Christ? If so, this is your experience. Is this Have you come to Christ? If this is strange doctrine to you, if you have fear that you haven't really known Christ to the saving of the soul, *come to Christ*. Children come to Christ, and adults come to Christ. See Him as the sinner's Savior. See Him as your Savior. Humble yourself in the privacy of your heart today and call upon the name of the Lord. And as He received every child which came to Him, He will receive you. Our text plainly tells us that children do come to Christ. Come!

Re.22.16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

If this speaks to the thirst you have in your soul for Christ, it's time to come to Christ.

17 ἄμην λέγω ὑμῖν ὃς ἐὰν μὴ δέξηται τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς παιδίον οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς αὐτήν