

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ Little Children

Last time...Jesus gave the Pharisees, His disciples, and us a very serious teaching about marriage and divorce

Nearly all, if not all, of us have violated the Creator's pure and very good design for marriage, guilty of once shameful behaviors that are now commonplace in the society in which we have been raised.

Those violations produced confusion and destruction in our lives, which the Lord used to

- a. bring us to the end of ourselves, where He stood with His arms open wide, eager and willing to forgive us and to make us new creatures in Christ
- b. convict us of our sin and, in His goodness, lead us to repentance

Either way, our position before God is not that of a Law-breaker but "in Christ"!!!

Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

Rom 5:20-21 the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord

Rom 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit

Rom 8:28 we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose

Rom 8:39 (nothing) shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord

1 John 3:3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure

This time...we continue our walk with the loving, gracious, and merciful Lord with a very precious scene...and a very important teaching

We will be in Matt 19, Luke 18, and Mark 10

Matt 19:13-15

v13 brought to Him little children...disciples rebuked them:

After hearing Jesus' teaching about God's pure and perfect design for the family,
the parents in the multitude (v2) brought their children to Jesus so that He
would touch and pray for them

However, the disciples took exception to the parents doing that and rebuked them
accordingly

Perhaps they thought this was a presumptuous imposition upon their
Master by the parents

Not sure what they were thinking, but Jesus intervenes

v14 Suffer...forbid not...of such:

Suffer...Allow, "Leave them alone"

forbid them not...do not prevent or hinder the little children from coming to Me

When are little children to be allowed to come to Jesus?

Always, whenever they so desire

of such...of this character, of the character of little children

kingdom of heaven...as recorded in the Gospel written to the Jews

v15 laid hand on:

What does this mean?

Let's look at the other accounts

Luke 18:15-17

v15 brought unto Him also infants:

In Matthew's account, the parents who heard Jesus' teaching on God's design for
the family brought little children to Jesus

Here, "also infants"...they brought babies too

v16 kingdom of God:

As recorded in a Gospel written to Gentiles

v17 Verily I say unto you:
Truly, thus says the Lord

as a little child:
Linked to “of such” in v16
The character of a little child is required to enter into the kingdom of God

We have an expanded version of the teaching here vs in Matthew
But not recorded by Luke: Jesus touching the little children

Now let’s look at the third account

Mark 10:13-16

v13-14 brought young children...much displeased:
The Holy Spirit uses the same Greek word in Matthew and Mark to describe the children
The KJV translators used “little” in Matthew and “young” in Mark
But in Mark’s account (v14 and v16), the Holy Spirit gives us details not recorded in the other two

v14 much displeased – “indignant”

Jesus is indignant that His disciples would dare to prevent the little children from coming to Him
Jesus rebukes this heart of the disciples;
they need the rebuke, not the parents

The disciples over-stepped their authority, over-played their hand

- they do not have any authority over parents and their children
- they are taking command of a situation when it has not been given to them
- they are acting as mediators between Jesus and the children (1 Tim 2:4-5)

The disciples are self-important, thinking more highly of themselves than they should

Self-exalted, they need to be humbled
They do not yet have His heart or His mind

They are not “of such”, have not the character of little children

After His transfiguration (a year ago in His ministry), Jesus taught His disciples Matt 18:1-6

Now, a year later, the disciples are indignantly rebuked by Jesus

- they are not as little children
- they are not humble
- they did not receive the little children in Jesus' name...
so they are not receiving Jesus
- they are offending/stumbling the little ones (Woe!)

We are at a major teaching point

v15 Whosoever shall not receive:

Given His indignation, Jesus' teaching rings "louder" here in Mark...
a repetition of Matt 18:3-4

Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God...will not humbly accept God's gift (Luke 12:32) as it is offered
i.e. not adding conditions or works or terms to God's offer

as a little child...with the same character as a little child...child-like
(not like a spoiled brat!!!)

- loving Dad and Mom (unconditionally)
- wanting to cuddle, secure and peaceful in the closeness and protection of the Father's care
- humble
- submissive and obedient (because they love the Father)
- unreservedly trusting/believing (do not have to see to believe, do not question to veracity of the Father's words)
- dependent (know they often need help)
- weak and vulnerable (know they are not strong)
- innocent (not corrupted by the world)
- sincere and honest (kids say the darnedest things!)
- simple (life is not complicated)
- unassuming (no agenda)
- teachable (sponges, even!)

shall not enter...a very different kind of kingdom of God than the one taught by the Pharisees and scribes
John 1:12

Let's re-visit Jesus' first word: Whosoever

The context:

- preventing/hindering anyone from coming to Jesus
- entrance into the kingdom of God

Whosoever...

- no matter who
- absolutely anyone, without exception or exclusion

Therefore, in context:

No one is prevented/hindered by God from coming to Him;

Every person has the personal responsibility to make an individual choice to come to Him or not

Then, another detail not recorded in the other accounts

v16 He took them up in His arms...blessed them:

Jesus "laid hands on" the little children by

- picking them up
- embracing/hugging them
- loving them
- each of them, every one of them, equally

Put John 1:12 in this context!

And Is 40:11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom

Jesus "prayed" for the little children...blessed them

Why did the parents bring their children, including babies, to Jesus?

So He could love them!!!

Why did the parents want Jesus to pray for their children (Matt 19:13)?

So He would bless them!!!

What parent does not want their children touched and blessed by God?!

Why did the little children come to Jesus?

To love Jesus and to be loved by Jesus

Can we find a more precious scene in the ministry of Jesus than this one?

Application

What are we to take away from this tender and terse passage of Scripture?

1. The kingdom of God, according to the King of the kingdom, is a kingdom of...
little children
The citizens of the kingdom have the characteristics of a little child, are childlike

The relationship Jesus wants with us – loving vs legalistic, close to His heart

Satan kills children
The world steals child-likeness
Jesus loves children

2. We are not to act childish, but to be child-like

John 13:33-35 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another

1 John 2:1, 12, 18, 28
1 John 3:7, 18
1 John 4:4
1 John 5:21

When you read “Little children”, think of this scene, especially as recorded in Mark 10

3. The Lord is indignant when anyone prevents/hinders anyone else from coming to Him

Matt 18:5-6

God prevents/hinders no person from coming to Him

Therefore, we are to hinder no person from coming to Jesus

Do not place any restriction of access to Jesus before anyone, ever

What does religion do? Adds “works” to God’s offer

What does RCC do? Adds “mediators” that lord over people

What does marketplace Calvinism with its 5 Point-ed TULIP do?

Marketplace Calvinism is not 100 % correct;
therefore it is...incorrect

There are no shades of gray when it comes to the Truth
(Jesus Christ)

The doctrines of man are not to be trusted, are to be rebuked
The Word of God is to be trusted

4. Parents and children

Bring your children to Jesus...to be loved and blessed by Him

Their coming to and walking with Jesus starts with...

your coming to and walking with Jesus

Prov 4:1-4

Prov 20:7

- unconditional, adoring love for the Father
- undoubting and unwavering trust in the Father
- eager to please the Father, eager to do the Father's will
- humble dependence and complete submission

If a child wants to come to Jesus, no one should prevent/hinder him/her from doing so...not even a parent

Else...woe! (Matt 18:6)

Why we have a Children's Ministry – little children coming to Jesus and being loved and blessed by Jesus

5. Pastors and Leaders

2 Cor 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand

1 Peter 5:1-3 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock

6. Remember...do not forget...who you are in God's eyes

A little child He loves to the point of death and beyond!

Regardless of whatever "big boy" circumstance you are facing,

run to Jesus

hold up your arms so He can pick you up

melt into His arms and be comforted and at peace

7. If you want love like this, to be loved like this...

Come to Jesus Christ...right now

Humble yourself

Enter His kingdom