



## **Faith Like a Child**

(Mark 10:13-16)

**Bottom Line:** Entrance into the Kingdom of God requires childlike faith.

**What is one thing God has taught you about Himself from observing a child?**

**What was your level of involvement in spiritual activities as a child? What is the earliest memory you have as a child of thinking about God?**

Walk into any Christian bookstore or do an online search and you will find books, articles and sermons about the nature of God's kingdom. These resources look at everything from the historical evidence for Christianity to modern arguments for its truth. While these things have their place, we shouldn't miss that Jesus talked about receiving the kingdom of God in very simple terms. Jesus told us that when we come to Him humbly and trusting, we will find Him ready to welcome us into His kingdom in His grace.

**Read Mark 10:13-16.**

Jesus blessed children brought to Him to exemplify the childlike faith required of all who trust Him. Childlike faith should permeate every aspect of our relationship with God.

**How did the disciples feel about all the parents bringing their children to Jesus? Why would they try to stop them?**

**What does this reveal about their understanding of Jesus' ministry and teachings?**

In a time and environment plagued by childhood illness and death, parents brought infants and children for Jesus to bless and heal. The disciples made themselves the gateway to Jesus. Too many adults needed His attention. There were already more than enough children. So the disciples sent the parents and children away to give Jesus time to do more important things. In their minds, the children didn't measure up in the eyes of the disciples. Jesus, though, had a different opinion.

**What is the primary difference between the way Jesus and the disciples saw the children?**

**What kinds of things does this teach us about the nature of God's kingdom? What kinds of things does it teach us about the nature of God's grace?**

**Read Matthew 5:3. What does it mean to be "poor in spirit" (v. 3)? What would the opposite of this quality be? In your opinion, what does our society treasure instead of being poor in spirit?**

**How is being poor in spirit similar to receiving God's kingdom like a child? In other words, how are children poor in spirit?**



**What childlike qualities are necessary to enter the kingdom of heaven?**

Poor in spirit is the opposite of being spiritually self-sufficient. It means we recognize we have nothing to offer God that merits His favor. Only the humble may enter Christ's kingdom. Further, we depend on His mercy every day. No one can experience the fullness of God's grace who is arrogant or haughty. But when we are aware of our need, we will actually begin to see God's grace in a more full way.

God builds His kingdom on childlike characteristics: trust, love, lack of power, lack of pretension, lack of credentials. Faith is the awareness of our spiritual helplessness that leads to humility before God, trust in Him, and obedience to Him.

**APPLICATION**

**What are some ways you might be complicating following Jesus more than is necessary?**

**Are there any patterns of thought or behavior that are not consistent with being childlike in your approach to God? What are some practical ways you can counter those?**

**How does knowing that God extends grace to us as He would children change the way you extend grace to others?**