



# 3 | MARK 10:13-16

## LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME

*“Higher than every painter, higher than every sculptor and than all artists do I regard him who is skilled in the art of forming the soul of children.” — St. John Chrysostom (349-407)*

### Outline

1. **AVOID WRONG IDEAS ABOUT CHILDREN (10:13)**  
Kids Too Young to Know God  
Parents Too Busy  
Parents Too Distracted
2. **JESUS' DESIRE FOR CHILDREN (10:14)**  
A Jealous Desire  
A Tender Desire  
A Kingdom Desire
3. **COME TO JESUS AS CHILDREN (10:15)**  
Children are Humble  
Children are Helpless  
Children Want Acceptance
4. **JESUS' BLESSING FOR CHILDREN (10:16)**  
A Fervent Blessing  
A Prioritized Blessing

### Call to Worship

The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, <sup>18</sup> to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. <sup>19</sup> The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all... <sup>22</sup> Bless the Lord, O my soul! —Psalm 103:17-19, 22

### Songs

*Behold Our God*

*Great is Thy Faithfulness*

*Man of Sorrows*

*Amazing Grace My Chains are Gone*

## Dedications

We want to welcome those dedicating children today, and we would ask for the parents and the children being dedicated to come on up.

In Israel, children would be brought to the Temple and dedicated to the Lord. We don't have a sacrifice, but we do want to give **the sacrifice of praise** for these children.

These dear children are presented today for dedication to the Lord. Of course, this dedication comes as a result of parents that have already given their lives in dedication to the Lord. It is amazing to think that in reality, though we dedicate these children to the Lord today, it actually occurred before the foundation of the world.

**Jeremiah 1:5**, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

God has a definite plan and will for each child's life, and has given him or her the privilege that very few children in this world have. These children have been born into a Christian home. And yet there is hard work involved in raising a child for the Lord. Paul spoke of how Timothy was raised:

**2 Timothy 3:15**, "And that from a child you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

### **Larissa Christine Allen Fragoso**

Parents: Joaquim and Christine

May 28, 2019, 2:44am

Vitals: 8lbs 2oz, 21 in.

Larissa means "cheerful"

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed. <sup>2</sup> Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them." <sup>3</sup> The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. —Psalm 126:1-3

*Prayer:* Lord we pray for this "Cheerful" one, Larissa. Lord, please do great things through Larissa and fill all those who know her with songs of joy. May it be said, The Lord has done great things in and through and for Larissa. Use Larissa to fill many people with the joy of the Holy Spirit. We dedicate her to your Kingdom for Jesus' sake, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Luna Rose Mead**

Parents: David and Yadi

November 17, 2018 at 6:45pm

Vitals: 21 in., 9lbs., and 13ozs.

Meaning of your child's name(s): Luna means "Moon" in Spanish (as the moon reflects the light of the Sun, may she reflect the light of the Son!)

I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. —1 Samuel 1:27

*Prayer:* Lord, David and Yadi prayed for this precious child. And she truly is the Luna of our church. She reflects the Lord Jesus Christ in her countenance. We give you glory and honor for this precious little girl. We pray that she will do great things for you, and that in all that she does great and small, Jesus will be seen in everything. We dedicate her to you today. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.

### **Liam Emmanuel Mead**

Parents: David and Yadi

February 28, 2020 at 3:40pm

Vitals: 21 in., 10 lbs., and 1 ozs.

Meaning of your child's name(s): Liam means "Protector" and Emmanuel means "God is with us".

Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.  
4 Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth.  
—Psalm 127:3-4

*Prayer:* Father, you give children to us as an inheritance, a reward from you. We are unworthy. I pray that Liam would be a Protector for his generation. That he would guard the truth as a mighty man of God. That he would not compromise, but be strong, and that as his name says, he would walk with Emmanuel. God you are with us, and you are with Liam Emmanuel. We praise you as we dedicate this little boy to you. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

### **Joseph Alexander Polderman**

Parents: Nathan and Erin

January 10, 2019 at 12:06 AM

8 lbs 5 oz, 21 inches

Joseph means "God will increase"; Alexander means "Defender of man"

Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a spring; his branches run over the wall. <sup>23</sup>The archers bitterly attacked him, shot at him, and harassed him severely, <sup>24</sup>yet his bow remained unmoved; his arms were made agile by the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), <sup>25</sup>by the God of your father who will help you, by the Almighty who will bless you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that crouches beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb. <sup>26</sup>The blessings of your father are mighty beyond the blessings of my parents, up to the bounties of the everlasting hills. May they be on the head of Joseph, and on the brow of him who was set apart from his brothers. —Genesis 49: 22-26

*Prayer:* Lord, We pray in Joseph's life, that as his name says, "God will increase"! Oh that you would use him in mighty ways. And that Joseph Alexander may be fruitful in ways that are beyond our imagination. God make him a man among men, a defender of man in his generation. We dedicate him to your service all the days of his life. In the mighty Name of Jesus we pray, amen.

### **Adelina Luz Padilla**

Parents: Jose and Diana

Born: July 18, 2020 at 2:12pm

Vitals: 10 pounds, 4 ounces, 21.5 inches long

Meaning of your child's name(s):

Adelina means "noble" and Luz means "light" in Spanish. Luz was my grandmother's name, she passed away in October last year. She was a great influence in my life and her faith and dedication to The Lord is an inspiration to me.

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way of sinners nor sit in the company of scorners, <sup>2</sup>but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. <sup>3</sup>That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. —Psalm 1:1-3

*Prayer:* Lord, we dedicate Adelina Luz today. And may she be as her name says, "A noble light" to all for Jesus Christ. May she be a truly blessed woman that delights in your Word day and night. Lord may she be like a tree planted, bearing fruit, and whatever she does, may it prosper. We dedicate this precious little girl to serve you all the days of her life. In Jesus Name, Amen.

### **Thaddaeus Calvin Tiberi**

Parents: Michael and Emily

Born: 02/10/2020, 9:01 AM

Vitals: 20 1/2 in., 8 lbs 8.5 ozs.

Thaddaeus: Courageous Heart

Calvin: Bald Man (but of course his name sake is the reformer)

Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. —1 Corinthians 16:13-14

*Prayer:* May you bless Thaddaeus Calvin to be a true man of God with a courageous heart. May he point many to Christ. May he stand firm and be watchful for this generation. We dedicate him to you today, In Jesus Name, Amen.

### **Josiah Nehemiah Rowe**

Parents: Justin and Amber

Born March 4, 2020 at 7:02 pm

8lbs, 9 oz, 19.5 in long

His name means the Lord has Healed, God is Comforter. We are blessed and thankful for His healing and comfort!

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

—2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (Read by Justin Rowe)

*Prayer:* As we dedicate Josiah, we pray he would be a comfort and a blessing to all. That he would bring healing from God to so many. We thank you that he has already brought great comfort and joy to everyone who knows him. We dedicate him to you today, in Jesus mighty name, Amen!

### **Josiah Kristoff Chetty**

Parents: Avinash and Dyvia

Born: November 30, 2020, 4:13 pm

Josiah: "The Lord has Healed"

Kristoff: "Like Christ"

Josiah walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left. —2 Kings 22:2

*Prayer:* As Josiah was a righteous king who "walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left" (2 Kings 22:2), so may Josiah Kristoff walk in all your ways. May be one who heals many here and even in the land of India. May he show the way to be like Christ to the nations. We dedicate him to you, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

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Parents, I want to call your attention to the commands of Scripture found in Deuteronomy 6:4-7, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>5</sup>You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.<sup>6</sup> And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. <sup>7</sup>You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."

These commands were given to the Jewish people just after God made a covenant with them in Deuteronomy 5. God's people were given the 10 commandments—they were to reflect God, to love God, and to be holy as God was holy, and to evangelize their children for God—to keep them away from the world's idols.

When these dear children were born, you parents entered into that covenant. Raising a child is a stewardship from the Lord. Children are an heritage—or an inheritance from the Lord. They are not our children—they are the Lord's!!

Parents, you have entered into a covenant before the Lord to raise your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is the most solemn responsibility you have in this life. It is more important than obtaining material possessions, having a good job, or winning anyone's approval. Let us recognize that God has given you these precious children. They are his gift to us, but He wants us to lead them back to Him.

### **PARENT'S VOW**

At this time we want to invite all the parents, Grandparents, and Great grandparents to enter into a vow to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

**1. Parent's Vow.** As part of God's covenant do you promise today to teach this child you are dedicating today the Word of God, to evangelize and urge him or her to repent of their sins and believe on Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and do you dedicate your child here and now to accomplish God's will for their life, whatever that may be? Parents, do you vow to raise the child you are dedicating today in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? If so say "we do." We do.

**2. Elders and Pastors' Vow.** Elders I would ask you to stand as we give our vows. Now, parents, you do not enter into this commitment alone. We as your pastors and elders, make a covenant before the Lord

today to give you all that you need to raise your precious child for Christ. Elders, do you vow to help raise these children in the Lord? If so say “we do.” We do. Thank you. You may be seated.

**3. Church's Vow.** This church also enters into this commitment with you. We will do all we can do to be a godly example for your children, and to join in the efforts to evangelize them, to see them saved, and to see them serve the Lord all of his days. Saints of God, do vow before the Lord to assist these parents as they raise their children for the Lord? If so say “we do.” We do.

### **Prayer of dedication**

So now let us bow our heads and dedicate these children to the Lord. Prayer of dedication— “Lord we enter into covenant with you. I pray for these parents, myself, this church that you would use us to point these children to Jesus. Save them, dear Father, at an early age. May each know Christ as Savior and Lord. May each be filled with your Holy Spirit in fullness of joy. Help us as parents and believers in Christ, not to be a hindrance, but a help, that these dear children might know the Scriptures which are able to make them wise unto salvation. We pray that you would use each of these children to expand your Kingdom and bring honor and glory to your Son Jesus Christ all the days of their lives. In Jesus Name, Amen!”

And amen. Thank you, parents. You may return to your seats.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**WELCOME:** We are glad you are here! Be sure to grab a Welcome Packet from the Welcome Center if you are visiting with us.

**GIVING:** You can still give over Zelle through your bank with no fees.

Use [secretary@livinghopechurch.net](mailto:secretary@livinghopechurch.net).

We also have a collection box on the Welcome Center

**This is a promise from the Lord.** “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. **Test me in this,**” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.” –Malachi 3:10

**Farewell Fellowship:** for Pastor Garcia, May 16 after the service. We are asking you to bring a Spanish dish and a side or dessert.

**New Member Candidates:** Hannah Clendening, Jonas Rowe, Sally Clendening.

**Prayer Meeting / Youth / Legacy Kids:** This Wednesday, 7pm

**Testimonies and Baptisms:** We will be having testimonies and baptisms again in June.

**Pastoral Candidate for Spanish Ministry:** Bro. Jose Salgado is our pastoral candidate for our Spanish ministry. Please pray for him as he goes through the candidate process. He will be preaching for a joint service on Sunday, June 6. He will be taking over the preaching duties from Pastor Garcia. We will also be having a Q and A with him as a congregation, date and time TBD.

**Written Comprehensives:** Pray for me as I have my written comprehensive exams this week for my master’s degree. All my counseling meetings and discipleship will be on hold this week only.

## **Introduction**

The title of our message this morning is: “Let the Little Children Come to Jesus”. What a joy and what a great responsibility it is to have children. For some this is a difficult day, because you would love to have children but are not able to have any. Regardless, we are all

stewards of the children of this church. We all said vows today regarding the children of our church.

John Chrysostom, called the “golden mouthed” and “silver tongued” preacher, Bishop of Constantinople in the early church, said this about children:

Higher than every painter, higher than every sculptor and higher than all artists do I regard the one who is skilled in the art of forming the soul of children. —St. John Chrysostom (349-407)

Let me just say **the greatest missionaries in the world today are missionary mom and missionary dad**. You don't have to be a parent to be a father or mother to children. When I came to know Christ, my parents were lost, but in the church, I had 50 fathers and 50 mothers to guide me in the faith.

Children are precious, amen?! Jesus loves children. **Jesus says you either have to be a child or be like a child to enter the kingdom**. I want us to see the attitude of Jesus toward children. Jesus wants children to come to him. That's the message for today. Jesus loves little children. Let's read about it.

## Scripture Reading

**Mark 10:13-16** | People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. <sup>14</sup>When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. <sup>15</sup>Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” <sup>16</sup>And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.”

Jesus had a very busy day. He had healed many. He was teaching thousands. The disciples thought Jesus was far too important to deal with children.

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## 1. AVOID WRONG IDEAS ABOUT CHILDREN (10:13)

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**Mark 10:13** | People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them.

The parents were bringing their dear children to Jesus. But his disciples were trying to keep the children away, since in their minds, **Jesus was way too important that he should have to deal with children**. How sad is that, but we often think other things are more important than children.

As best we can gather, fathers and mothers were bringing their young children, many of whom were babies (for that is how Luke describes them in his parallel account, 18:15), to Jesus for his blessing.<sup>1</sup> It was a very ancient tradition in Israel to have rabbis bless the children, even little infants. But there was a problem. The disciples were missing the greatest evangelistic opportunity in Israel. They were sadly blind the spiritual needs of the children.

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<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior, Volume 2* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989), 56.

## KIDS TOO YOUNG TO KNOW GOD

I don't know why the disciples rebuked the parents and told them to stop bothering Jesus with the children. But I do know that all of us have been guilty at times of having a selfish heart and missing the greatest opportunity in the world. Children need the Lord! We should expect children to grasp spiritual things. Often, they grasp the transcendent God in a far greater way than the most intelligent of adults.

Do not discount the children because they are young. **It's more crucial that we reach them now because they are young.** If you do not point them to Christ, you may lose them to the world. How many of you wish you would have heard the Gospel as a child, but you didn't, and you ended up wasting precious years of your life?

The disciples rebuke came because of ignorance regarding the children's need. If they had been sick or deranged or demon possessed, the apostles would not only have allowed them to come, they would have brought them to the Lord Jesus and helped them along the way. What they did not see, was that they were in far greater need of the Savior because they were coming to the Son of God simply as children who were in sin—they looked fine on the inside, but these children were in need of the Savior's grace. That my friend is the condition of every boy and girl in this church today who has not been converted through the regenerating grace of God the Holy Spirit. They are sinners, lost, under the wrath of God. If they have not been brought to a knowledge of Jesus Christ.

## PARENTS TOO BUSY

We as parents can sometimes be so busy providing for our family, we have the tendency to neglect what is most important for our family, specifically, bringing our children to Jesus Christ. It is important to work, it is important to serve the local church, but we must never sacrifice our family's spiritual need to come to Jesus on the altar of 21<sup>st</sup> century busyness.

Today we have a thousand ways of **technology** to supposedly save time, but if we are not careful, we will waste our time, and our family, specifically our children will get the leftovers, which isn't much.

What is it that excites you? **Don't be too busy to spend regular time with your children evangelizing them and then disciplining them.** Some men are more excited about their golf game or a new account at work than spending time with their own children. It is good to have zeal and ambition. But put your zeal and ambition in the right place. **Do you weep for your children's souls?** They are daily coming closer to their appointment with God.

This day with your children will **never be repeated.** Cherish the moment. There will be a time very soon when you will not have this great influence over them. Your children will soon be gone. Reach them while you still have influence with them. You may say, I will wait until they understand more to teach them. You are making a mistake! Don't turn your children away from Jesus!

You may be faithful in the work of the church, but that does **not** mean your children will come to Christ. You must personally invest in them with the Gospel. Years ago, the attitude was, if you **take care of God's church, God will take care of your family.** This was especially the case among preachers of the Gospel, and many families were lost. But this was also the case in many families at the time, and it is still the case today.



## PARENTS TOO DISTRACTED WITH WRONG PRIORITIES

We as parents we are often distracted the wrong priorities. It is good to have a solid work ethic for our children, but we can be busy about the wrong things. We can be so blinded to our children's spiritual needs that we neglect our children. Jesus' disciples were shockingly **rebuking** the parents from bringing their children to Jesus.

- What good is a **good education** if they lose their soul?
- What good is a **great job** without Christ forever?
- What good is a **ton of money** if they live in hell for eternity?
- We must realize that by training our children now for Christ, we are training future men and women!

Children are the greatest mission field in the world.

O how we need to bring our children to Jesus! How we need to see them come to know the Lord! **The greatest mission field in all the world is right here before us!** Children—they must be taught what it is to come the Lord at a young age! This is the theme of our message this Lord's Day! Let the children come to Jesus!

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## 2. CONSIDER JESUS' DESIRE FOR CHILDREN (10:14)

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### A JEALOUS DESIRE

What is it that makes Jesus angry?

**Mark 10:14** | When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

Jesus is furious. It is interesting to see the cause. We might have thought that other matters were more important, like evangelizing the key leaders. But no, **nothing is more important to Jesus than the spiritual welfare of children.** Jesus died so that children, and those who become like children, could be saved.<sup>2</sup>

### *A Terrible Neglect*

Christ is zealous to save little ones that **his anger flashes** when we neglect the spiritual well-being of little ones. Shall not the Lamb that was slain receive the full reward for his suffering?! Christ would today bring your little ones in to the Kingdom. Will you neglect them and think that He will not save them? How do we neglect them?

- We expose them to **worldly things** that will enslave them and think it's cute.
- We allow our **children's friends to raise them** and teach them how to live.
- We neglect them when **we fail to pray** for and with our children
- When we **fail to lovingly and earnestly teach** them the Gospel.
- When we get **exasperated** with them
- When we do **not spend time** with them and show other things to be more important than them.

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<sup>2</sup> Carson, D. A., France, R. T., Motyer, J. A., & Wenham, G. J. (Eds.). (1994). *New Bible commentary: 21st century edition* (4th ed., p. 966). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

## A Damnable Indifference

One way we hinder children, is that we as parents do not really expect the conversion of our children. Imagine coming to the gates of heaven and having to say goodbye to your children. How many mothers and fathers really expect their children to be converted at an early age? How will they come without you evangelizing them?

*Your indifference will show in their lives.* The fact that you do not pray for them, that you do not evangelize them, and that you do not admonish them in the way of the Lord may be the reason why you may lose your child to the world in just a few short years. Are you teaching your children?

### A TENDER DESIRE

**Mark 10:14b** | When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them...”

Jesus has a tender love for children. What was his desire? He said he wanted them “to come to me”. They must never be hindered because they belong to the Lord.

What is it that makes one who is so gentle and loving to be furious? It is when we neglect to bring Jesus our children. You see our children are really not our children anyway. They are the Lord’s!

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. <sup>4</sup> Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. <sup>5</sup> Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate. —*Psalm 127:3-5*

We must not treat our children as if they are exclusively our own. Our children are on loan from the Lord. When we neglect our children, **we enflame the indignation of God** and his Son Jesus Christ.

### A KINGDOM DESIRE

G. Campbell Morgan called this verse “The Magna Carta for Children.” It means the “Great Charter,” or “the most important contract” for children. What should parents and elders and church members be thinking of when they think of children? This command from Jesus!

**Mark 10:14** | When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

It is a double imperative – as strong as he can make it. “Allow them to come – do not forbid them.” Interestingly, Jesus chose the word for “children” (*paidon*) that signifies a very little or young child, even an infant.

The idea is you cannot start too early telling your children of Jesus. When the child is in the womb, sing to that child about Jesus Christ. Pray for that child to know Jesus. Speak of them of His love. Instruct them about His infinite power and love for them. He can save them. He died for their sins! You cannot start too young to evangelize your children.

## *What is the Kingdom of Heaven?*

What exactly is the Kingdom of heaven? John MacArthur gives an excellent definition. He says,

**The kingdom of heaven** is the sphere of God's rule in Christ through gracious salvation. —John MacArthur, Jr.

For those who have reached the age when personal saving faith can be exercised, the kingdom is entered by a divinely illuminated understanding of what it means to trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.<sup>3</sup>

The implication is that children have the capacity to enter the Kingdom. We don't know what age a child understands, but I believe it is much sooner than any of us might realize. Sometimes little children have a greater faith, and a greater understanding than any of us knowledgeable adults!

### *Prime Candidates for the Kingdom*

The prime candidate for the Kingdom of God is either a child, or someone who has the attitude of a humble child. This is the most important realization a parent can have. There is nothing greater or more valuable you can give your child besides the Kingdom of God.

For what does it profit a man [*child*] to gain the whole world and forfeit his [*or her*] own soul? —Mark 8:36

Telling your children of Jesus is far more important than what school they attend. It is far more important than what spouse they choose. It is far more important than the job they are called to or the money they make.

**My Testimony:** Jesus desires your children to come to Him. Isn't it sad that I had to come to know Christ because an evangelistic group came to my public school and invited me to a religious service? My mother and father never taught me about Jesus Christ.

Sadly, my parents introduced me to cable television instead of introducing me to Jesus. When I came to know Christ my parents never brought me to a place of worship. I had to navigate that by myself. But Jesus would have your children come to Him. He would have you bring your children to Jesus.

### *Children Should Come into the Kingdom*

In saying, "for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these," he affirms the value of a child's soul. They *are* the first candidates he takes to himself! Here Christ affirms and proclaims the spiritual capacity of children. If there ever was a text relevant to child evangelism, this is it. Children can authentically come to Christ early on!<sup>4</sup> Charles Haddon Spurgeon once rightly said,

A child of five, if properly instructed, can as truly believe and be regenerated as an adult. A child who knowingly sins can savingly believe. —Charles Haddon Spurgeon

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<sup>3</sup> MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1985). *Matthew* (Mt 19:13). Chicago: Moody Press.

<sup>4</sup> Hughes, 57.

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### 3. COME TO JESUS AS CHILDREN (10:15)

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We all need to come to Jesus like a **child**, “*receive the kingdom...like a little child*” vs. 15.

**Mark 10:15** | Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.

The word translated “never” is very strong. Without total humility you will *never, never, never, never* enter into God’s Kingdom.

#### CHILDREN ARE HUMBLE

Children are humble.

You will be lost forever unless you become so humble that you are willing to lose your reputation. Children are sinners. They have a deep need, but they are so humble, they are willing to admit that need. They cry out when they have a need.<sup>5</sup>

“Mama, I need food. I need a bath. I need a hug.”

Children can be so humble, they will express their needs boldly, without consideration of their reputation, because, for the most part, they are not aware of their reputation.

Once I was in an important meeting. I think we had a couple visiting at our home. We were at our kitchen table deep in discussion of things of the Lord, and I hear from the bathroom, “Daddy, wipe me.” I can’t remember which child, but the point is, when a child has a need they are bold to come to their father in time of need! That’s the bold humility of a child.

#### CHILDREN ARE HELPLESS

Children are .

What Jesus also has in mind here is an *objective* state which every child who has ever lived, regardless of race, culture, or background, has experienced—*helpless dependence*.

Every single child in the world is absolutely, completely, totally, objectively, subjectively, existentially helpless! And so it is with every child who is born into the Kingdom of God. Children of the Kingdom enter it helpless, ones for whom everything must be done. As Augustus Toplady composed:

Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling;  
Naked, come to Thee for dress:  
Helpless, look to Thee for grace.<sup>6</sup>

The truth is, we are all helpless to save ourselves. Have you come to Christ like this? Is it his grace plus your nothingness? The realization that one is as helpless as a child naturally fosters humility. Jesus gave reference to this connection when, in a similar but separate statement, he said,

I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles

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<sup>5</sup> Hughes, 59.

<sup>6</sup> Augustus M. Toplady, 1740-1778. Rock of Ages Cleft for Me.

himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. —Matthew 18:3-4, NIV

### CHILDREN WANT ACCEPTANCE

Children expect to be accepted.

They expect to be loved. A 4-year-old walks in and is sure everybody is interested in what she or he wants to say. They're positive everyone will find them completely interesting. They're totally sure of acceptance.<sup>7</sup>

On my way back from Brazil several years ago, I met a little boy named Arturo on our cramped airplane. I'm sure it was a 747, but it was a full flight. Little 4-year-old Arturo's head was on his father's lap, but Arturo's feet were sprawled out right below my chin. I had to be careful – sometimes I got a little kick in the chin. I didn't mind at all! I told the dad, I'm not bothered, and I wasn't! And Arturo was just fine. He felt totally fine and welcomed. John Calvin hit the nail on the head. He said,

The passage broadens to give kingdom citizenship to both children and those who are like them. —John Calvin<sup>8</sup>

Parents, the best gift you can give to your children is to come to Jesus Christ yourself. Don't trust in your religion. You may be Protestant or Catholic or Methodist. Religion never saved anyone. The devils believe in God and tremble. You cannot come through a church or through your mother or father. You must come through Jesus Christ. Jesus said,

I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes unto the Father except through me. —John 14:6

Listen again to the words of Jesus.

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. —Matthew 11:28-29

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## 4. JESUS' BLESSING FOR CHILDREN (10:16)

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Jesus'  **blessing**  for children, "*he took the children...and blessed them*" vs. 16.

Mark 10:16 | And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them."

### A FERVENT BLESSING

Children were always comfortable with Jesus. They could tell he loved them. They lay their heads against his chest, and he "blessed them." The word translated "blessed" means "**fervently blessed.**" Christ was enthusiastic! He was filled with deep joy! Christ did this joyfully, with a fervent heart, for they refreshed his spirit. Jesus must have smiled with infinite kindness as He looked into the faces of those tiny children. We do not know the specific nature

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<sup>7</sup> Keller, T. J. (2013). *The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive*. New York City: Redeemer Presbyterian Church.

<sup>8</sup> John Calvin, *Commentary on the Harmony of the Gospels*.

of His blessing, but we can surmise that He prayed for them to enter the Kingdom by faith, and some of them who could understand were blessed at that moment with eternal salvation.<sup>9</sup>

### A PRIORITIZED BLESSING

Look at the love of Christ for your children. How do you get your priorities rightly aligned? We must look at Christ's *heart*. We must see that the only hope for our children is to bring them to Jesus.

#### *Don't Prioritize this World*

Be careful not to lead your children to what is good, only to miss the best.

- A nice home and car, and
- A good education and
- Good grades will do your children *no good* in hell.
- We must bring them to Christ.

Christ literally took these children in his arms one by one from the mothers and fathers. He took care personally to deal with each one. **Verse 16**, "And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them." It is the parent's responsibility to teach and evangelize their children—we seek His blessing, specifically the blessing of the *new birth*. Without that radical transformation of the heart, no one will enter into the kingdom of God (**John 3:3**). We need Christ to take our children in His arms and transform them!

#### *Make Sure You Prioritize Jesus*

We as parents, especially fathers, are **responsible** to bring our children to Jesus. **We assist Jesus in spiritual heart surgery.** We must constantly feel the weight and burden that our children may one day enter hell if we neglect their soul! We are responsible for what goes into our child's heart 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Do not allow yourself to wiggle out of that responsibility. You will be held accountable for raising your children.

Do you desire to be held in Christ's arms, to hear him pronounce blessings over you? Do you have the blessing of eternal salvation?

#### *Conclusion*

For some of you this has been a difficult message. You may be here today, and you may be someone who has lost a child. The pain never goes away. Or perhaps you have longed for children and though you've never had children, you feel a sense of loss.

Let me tell you, that God knows your loss. The reason we can have eternal life is because Our heavenly Father gave up His perfect, spotless, wonderful Son. Our children sin, but God's Son never did anything wrong.

There is coming a day when we will all stand before God. What will happen at that day? We will all stand alone. Bring your children to Jesus. Bring yourself to Jesus in childlike faith. "Of such is the Kingdom of heaven!" The most awful thought if you are a parent is to get to the gates of heaven and have to say goodbye forever. I don't want to go through the gates of heaven without my children with me.

Let us be committed to praying for our lost children, and praying that these young ones might come to Christ at an early age.

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<sup>9</sup> MacArthur, *Matthew* (Mt 19:13).

Message: Let the Little Children Come to Jesus

Series: Child Dedication

**New Member Candidates:** Hannah Clendening, Jonas Rowe, Salley Clendening