

With Jesus pt 3

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With Jesus / Mark 10:13–16; Matthew 18:1–6

What do you think about kids? Do you think about them? We live in a world where kids are increasingly devalued. They are being rushed to grow up. They are exposed to so many things that many of us would never have thought of in our own childhoods.

Some stats:

11 million kids live in poverty

9 million kids in the US are food insecure

4 million have no health insurance

1 in 10 kids have been diagnosed with anxiety

1 in 20 kids have been diagnosed with depression

Childhood in America becomes harder each year.

Add to those stats the messages and images kids are bombarded with and the prevalence of smart phones, social media, and streaming and you have a recipe for disaster for generations.

And the solution to these issues are not conspiracy theories or legislation or some righteous crusade. It is a return to one truth that Jesus made known to His disciples during His ministry.

Kids are important and they are to be protected.

Turn with me to [Mark 10:13-16](#).

In the middle of His ministry there is an interlude recorded in a couple of places in the Gospels, most completely, ironically, in the Gospel of Mark. Jesus has been teaching and has actually just gotten done being quizzed by the Pharisees, and he retires to a house. While He is there, people find Him, and begin bringing their kids to Him. They just want their children to be touched by Him.

Mark (2) The Blessing of the Children (10:13–16)

the story cannot be appreciated without a realization of **the lowly place children occupied in ancient society**, more so in pagan than Jewish.

Regardless of when in Jesus' ministry the event occurred, Mark appropriately placed this account immediately after the preceding section because children and marriage naturally are associated

Folks, let me be honest, that's my prayer for my kids every day. **That God would speak to them, touch them, be real to them.** The greatest hope of a parent who knows Jesus, is to have their kids experience the same joy and peace and security that the parent has experienced.

Mark (2) The Blessing of the Children (10:13–16)

Although touching is used elsewhere in Mark in connection with healing, **the intent of those who brought the children to Jesus was for a "holy man" to bless them**

Our kids face so many challenges and questions and questions that we did not face, and I am sure that our parents felt the same way.

Humanity, culture, the world as a whole are not becoming better- they may be becoming faster or more knowledgable or more connected, but that does not mean better. And against this rising tide, we have a few weapons to deploy.

- 1. We can pray**
- 2. We can help our kids to discover the Word**
- 3. We can live out and talk about our faith in front of them**
- 4. We can answer their questions about Jesus**

Now the disciples reaction is really curious. They actually tell the kids to go away. What?!? We have no idea of their motivation. Maybe they thought Jesus was tired or that He was secretly annoyed or that He needed to focus elsewhere.

Mark (2) The Blessing of the Children (10:13–16)

Why the disciples rebuked those who brought the children is not stated, but they probably thought Jesus was too busy or too important to be bothered by such insignificant persons. In any event Mark set forth another example of the lack of perception of the disciples

That is more and more a lot of people's reaction to kids today. **Give them something to keep them quiet and out of the way.** Here's an iPad or a TV show or a place to go where you are out of the way.

Look, I get it parents, so many of us are overwhelmed. And we are looking for some peace and our kids are bouncing off the walls. But I am telling you, as a dad who has raised one, is mostly done raising 2, and still has one in the house. **Don't push your kids off to a digital babysitter.** (check with Amanda can I talk about the mistakes we made with media?)

If no one else will say it, Christians should say it. Our kids are too valuable to be primarily raised by a stranger on the internet. (contrast with public schools etc)

So how does Jesus react to the disciples "protecting" Him. Not well. lol

He becomes "**indignant.**" That is Greek for mad. He jumps all over them. (v14-15)

Mark (2) The Blessing of the Children (10:13–16)

Both Matt 19:14 and Luke 18:16 omit the statement that Jesus was indignant, no doubt to avoid any thought of Jesus being guilty of a sinful passion. **This is sometimes said to be the only example in the Gospels of Jesus being angry**

First, He tells them to let them come- we should introduce our kids to Jesus and help them to know about Him

Second, we should clear any roadblocks to them knowing about Jesus- they should be able to make a decision about Him with clear knowledge

In fact, Jesus uses this as a teachable moment for the adults- they should be more like kids when it comes to their faith. This does not mean immature or ignorant- **it means trusting and being fully confident in His goodness and kindness.**

Mark (2) The Blessing of the Children (10:13–16)

Without going into the question of the extent to which children can be part of the kingdom of God, the expressions certainly include older people who in their relationship to God possess childlike characteristics. What are these characteristics? Such things as innocence, humility, lack of self-consciousness, receptivity, and trustfulness have been suggested. Not all children share these characteristics, however. **The main point of comparison probably is the insignificance, weakness, helplessness, and dependency shared by children in ancient society and those who enter the kingdom at any time.** The ultimate focus of the passage is not only on the attitude with which one comes to Jesus but on coming to Jesus, the object of one's faith

In fact, go with me over to [Matthew 18:1-6](#).

Look at what Jesus tells the disciples when they are arguing about being the greatest in the Kingdom. He literally uses a little kid to pop their bubbles

He tells us not only are we to be like kids and be trusting and confident. We should be humble. **Kids are by nature and place in society lower. They cannot do everything for themselves. They have to be provided for. They are DEPENDENT! We should be the same way.**

Matthew 2. Implications for the Church: Humility and Forgiveness (18:1–35)

This humility cannot be a subjective attitude (children rarely act humbly) but an objective state (children do depend almost entirely on the adult world for their protection and provision). In first-century thought children were often very little esteemed. Jesus ascribes to them great value, but here **his more immediate point is that would-be disciples must share their condition of utter dependence, in this case, on God. Without a recognition of one's fundamental inability to save oneself and without a subsequent complete reliance on God's mercy, no one can enter the kingdom of heaven**

And as a result, in the same breath Jesus issues a warning- look at verse 6.

Matthew 2. Implications for the Church: Humility and Forgiveness (18:1–35)

He does not imply that one evil act leads to damnation, but *a life-style characterized by causing others to sin is incompatible with true discipleship.*

As adults, we have a charge not to lead our kids, or any kids to embrace sin ahead of their Savior. And folks that is why, in our day, as parents, we have to be wise about what we allow into our homes and around our kids. And **when we see them veering away from Jesus, we need to ask why.** Is it something I am doing? Something I have allowed into their world? **And not be afraid to PARENT and endure our kids displeasure for a season.** (You cannot be a good parent and be your kids friend. You can be their friend later. For now, you have to call the shots, and failing to do so is violating this verse, because you have been called to steward your homes)

There are a lot of ways that confusion can be sown in our kids in this time. **Limits can be lifted, but once they are lifted they are hard to put back into place.** And if we fear the wrath of our kids, more than the wrath of God, we tend to err on the side of fewer limits. And that is what is leading so many kids into this confusion- I will say it again. Parent your kids. They will be better for it in the long run. And **be aware of what is actually happening in their lives and around their lives.** You can't guide what you don't know.

So what does Jesus do for the kids brought to Him. He blesses them. Folks, **Jesus wants to bless your kids-** with His goodness, His love, and yes, His salvation. We should be sharing the Gospel with our kids. And in ways and moments they can understand. And to do that where do our kids need to be? With us and with Jesus.

Mark (2) The Blessing of the Children (10:13–16)

Here Jesus is pictured as supporting his teaching with his actions, visually demonstrating that the blessings of the kingdom are available to those who will come to Jesus. By taking the children in his arms, he did more than he was asked to do

Where are you with Jesus on your kids today?