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Sunday School Lesson

TOPIC:

“Jesus Blesses the Children”

Mark 10:13-16

VERSE DISCOVERY: Mark 10:13-16 (KJV, Public Domain)

Prepare

- If you tried to put a picture to the word faith, what would that picture look like? What would it show? (As you present the questions in the following paragraph to open the lesson, have pictures ready that depict the scenes being spoken of.)

Would we see one authoritatively speaking with power to the multitudes (show picture)? Would we see miracles and signs being performed (show picture)? Or would you see the face of an innocent child (show picture)?

When Jesus taught about what those who enter the kingdom of God and what they would be compared to, in this lesson, He likened them to the picture of an innocent child.

While all the others are very real signs of things being done by those who profess and walk in the faith – what it all boils down to is if one wants to enter His heavenly kingdom, they must, in faith, receive it as a child.

- Do an online search for **Kingdom of God** object lessons to use as a lead-in to the lesson.

Explore – Full Lesson Available on pages 6-11

Verse 13

There is a game that children like to play which is really rather annoying and hilarious at the same time. They put their finger extremely close to someone (usually in their face for added affect) and start repeating the phrase “I’m not touching you. I’m not touching you.” (Demonstrate this game to your class. I’m sure they’ll appreciate it 😊)

Just one touch. It is a phrase we see often with those who desire to get close to Jesus. For most, that seeking touch is out of desperation for an illness or some other malady that one may be facing or dealing with. It may be personal, or on behalf of another, but many come near to Jesus that, in faith, they may touch Him, and receive some sort of blessing.

The parents in today’s lesson were not playing a game. They were serious about having their children being blessed by the Lord Jesus Christ through a simple touch. So, imagine their feeling

of coming so close to Jesus to only then be turned away by His disciples in what may have seemed like a harsh manner. (Do you know what it is like to want something so badly only to be turned away and told, “No”? Discuss.)

Verses 14-15

While the disciples said, “NO WAY!” (Hold your hands out in a STOP fashion.) Jesus said, “YES!” (Use your hands to signify an action that says COME.) Jesus wanted as many people as possible to come near to where He was. He wanted people of all ages and backgrounds to be exposed to and hear teachings on what the kingdom of God is all about, what is in store for those who desire to go there, what is in store for those who reject it, and all the beautiful of beautifuls it has to offer. To Jesus, there was no person *too great* and no person *too small* to be blessed by Him (For emphasis on too great and too small, one can make themselves appear bigger by reaching high for the sky, and then hunch/squat down as low as possible).

Jesus said, “**Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein**” (vs.15). In the lesson, I wrote, “*God’s kingdom is made of those who trust Him with total abandon and are dependent without inhibitions; that have faith and just believe as through the eyes of an innocent child.*” Those who reject it are, in essence, saying they are too grown for God and have no need for His kingdom and are therefore prohibited from entering in. These are usually filled with pride and self-sufficiency and believe they can get along fine by themselves. (Who do you think made the wisest choice, those who are trusting in Christ with faith as an innocent child or those who reject Him and His kingdom? Why?)

Did you know, every day we have choices to make? Some of the choices we make are good, and some not so much. While we are not saved because of our works, the things we do should show to the world what we believe. If we were to put it all on a scale, through the course of our day, which side of the scale of our lives would be heavier, the things we choose to do and how we choose to live for the kingdom of God, or the things of the world that reject Him and His kingdom? (Use an actual scale to demonstrate or you could make one on a chalkboard or whiteboard/dry erase board or on plain paper and add “weights” to each side. These “weights” could be just words taped to coins to add to the scale or as simple as words on paper coins to tape or attach to the drawn scale.)

To Jesus, the most important choices one could make in their life would be the choice that leads to God’s kingdom and not away from it.

Verse 16

After all the commotion, Jesus “**took them in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.**” Jesus took time out of His busy schedule of teaching, and healing, and performing miracles to show these children how valued each one of them were in the eyes of



God. (How do you think this impacted the lives of those little ones for someone as important as Jesus to spend extra time on them, and to hold them, and to bless them? Discuss.)

I bet it made them feel pretty important. But here's the thing, they are really important, and so are you. Each one of us and each one of you are valued in the eyes of our Savior. Jesus once taught, *"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows"* (Matthew 10:29-31). (Can you count all the hairs on your head? Neither can I. But God knows them because that is how important you are to Him.)

God wants each of us to live in heaven with Him forever, but one cannot get there without true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus showed how even the youngest of us are important to God's kingdom. Make the decision for yourself to show Him how important He and His kingdom are to you by accepting His free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ. Receive Him for yourself and you will be truly blessed.

Activities

- In today's lesson, Jesus used the word suffer, but it is not in the form we are used to using it in our everyday language. His version acts like an invitation. He is giving permission for those who desire to be near Him to come. He, in His love, is showing that even the littlest and least of us matter to Him. What does His invitation mean to you personally? Record your personal response on the appropriate **Adult** or **Kids Journal Page**.
- Younger students can draw a picture of Jesus blessing the children as they came to Him using the **Draw the Scene** page found on site.
- Younger students can also put together a paper bag puppet depicting themselves and, on the back, attach the phrase from the printable available on site which states, "Jesus Thinks I'm Special, Too!"
- Alternate activity sheets such as **Wordsearch**, **Crossword**, and **Memory Verse** are available on site for those who just want to work with printed materials.

Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: ***"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."* Mark 10:14**
- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 12)
- Find a **Memory Verse** review game online to help students retain the message of the lesson.



Life

Throughout this week get simple with faith. As I wrote in the lesson, adults tend to overcomplicate things in their life, including faith. Take time this week to build up your own faith with simple reminders of who you are and Whose you are. Find at least three Bible verses that either speak of your value in the eyes of the Father, speak of His desire to have you personally in heaven with Him forever, or a combination of the two. Write them down, rehearse them to yourself over and over again, and believe with simple faith.



TOPIC:

“Jesus Blesses the Children”

Mark 10:13-16

VERSE DISCOVERY: Mark 10:13-16 (KJV, Public Domain)

There is a familiar scene that plays out in many families between dad, mom, and the little ones. It is the one where the father, playing with his children, tosses them into the air and catches them on a band of giggles coming from the child while the mother stands on the sidelines holding her breath.

The father with a sure grip and a steady hand has no qualms playing this innocent game. The child, often young, just thinks it is absolutely hilarious to go for this free ride. The child never worries about being caught. The child never worries about being hurt. The child only sees daddy. Daddy loves me, daddy cares for me, I trust daddy and daddy will never let me fall. Therefore, I will enjoy playing with daddy.

From the time that children are born, they have an innate capacity to trust. They are literally at the whim of their caretakers and can do nothing for themselves. Their dependency is constantly on others to feed, care for, and love them in their most vulnerable state. In their innocence, they do not judge by anything outwardly but, only by the love they receive inwardly.

Children are a gift from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). Children are our future. These little ones will be the next carriers of God’s Word. They will be the conduits through which generations after them will find their way to the Lord and His salvation. At the same time, children can teach us so many things and one of the things they teach us is how to have faith.

Faith gets over-complicated in the adult way of thinking while children just simply receive, remain dependent, trust, and believe. And that is all God asks from all His children, no matter what their age is.

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PARENTS DESIRE

Mark 10:13 “And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.”

Teachings on the kingdom of God and examples of what true faith looks like were never far from Jesus’ vocabulary. He took many times and opportunities to open the understanding of all who would listen and heed what God looks for in a true follower of His.

In this lesson, He gives us an undeniable example of both as parents in the crowd **“brought young children to him.”** The desires of the parents in question are to have Jesus **“touch”** their children thereby blessing them. This was not an uncommon practice in this ancient culture.

The truth is parents always want what is best for their children. If they find a good thing, naturally they would want their children exposed to it as much as possible. Many modern-day parents spend an enormous amount of money each year to give their children the best clothes, education, housing... the best start in life, if and as they are each able to do.

The parents in today’s lesson saw Jesus teaching and healing and showing compassion to many people, many times over. He was (and still is) the best thing they could give to their children. Why would they not want their child exposed to Him? Why would they not seek a **“touch”** from Jesus for their little ones if they could?

A child’s faith often starts with their parents (or guardian), and in the home. It’s where God gave the command of responsibility to Moses for the parents to “teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house...” (Deuteronomy 6:7; see also Deut. 11:19). There are many variables that go into raising a child. Parents really must take into consideration and calculate what their children are exposed to on a daily basis and whether or not it is beneficial to their physical and spiritual wellbeing. The guidelines given to Moses to pass down through the generations was to ensure that the most impressionable of society receive the proper exposure to the things of God; to what would benefit their children the most. This would also ensure the longevity of the faith amongst the community as a whole.

Those in today’s lesson wanted to expose their children to Jesus. They wanted Him to touch their little ones with a blessing. They brought their children near to where Jesus was, giving

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them the opportunity to hear of His teaching and wisdom on life and the kingdom of God. The Bible encourages us to, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it," (Proverbs 22:6). This stands as a strong lesson that if we want our children to be exposed to Jesus, then we, as parents, must take that responsibility and not depend on others to do it for us. When it comes to our children's faith there can be no complacent parenting.

"And his disciples rebuked those that brought them." The disciples didn't have the same vision for the children as the parents did. The Bible does not exactly state why their rebuke was so strong (although many speculate). But they did prohibit the parents from bringing the children nearer to where Jesus was and made no attempts to hide their displeasure at the intrusion.

Did they think the children were unworthy of the Master's time and consideration? Maybe they believed Jesus was just too busy and important to deal with the likes of these. Who knows? Perhaps it would have been prudent for them to ask Jesus first instead of thinking to act on His behalf. The fact of the matter is they stood in between Jesus and the children. Something Jesus highly disapproved of.

EVERYONE MATTERS TO JESUS

Mark 10:14 "But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

Jesus intervened. Jesus has never turned away a desiring soul. He has never told a mom or dad no who sought physical or spiritual healing for their child. And He was not going to turn down or turn away those who desired a special spiritual blessing or touch for their children now.

One of the most precious things I love about our Lord is His ability to see value in everybody. Those whom society thinks are the lesser, non-important, are magnificent in the eyes of our God. The Bible teaches us, "But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows," (Luke 12:7).

To Him, it does not matter where you live, what your social status in life is, or anything else like that. It does not matter if you are aged with wisdom or new and in the innocence of your

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years. He that knows the days then, the days now, and the days to come and sees beyond all of that, straight down to the very soul He loves. With that, He invites or allows (“**suffer**” as this lesson puts it) them to come unto Him.

Previously I wrote in another lesson, *“The feet of faith walk forward believing God is, “and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,” (Hebrews 11:6). Faith in its highest form removes all worldly shackles and just rests in the truth that if it is His will, there is nothing that can hinder God from performing a miracle in one’s life. Ethnicity, background, and prestige all fall away in the eyes of our Savior whose only view is that of an opened heart filled with belief,” (Word for Life Says/The Centurion’s Great Faith).* All are welcomed before Him: man, woman, and child. Many are quick to write off young people, but our youths’ matter to Jesus, too! Everyone matters to Him!

“Forbid them not,” Jesus commanded. Do not prevent people, no matter who they are, from drawing nearer to Christ. The constraints that society then and now may put on some people are not recognized by God.

Youths especially come packed with potential. For example, Samuel was dedicated to God as an incredibly young child (1 Sam. 1:21-28) and became a righteous judge of God’s people. Josiah, became king at the tender age of 8 (2 Chr. 34:1), and “in the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet young, he began to seek after the God of David his father: and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images,” (2 Chr. 34:3) and eventually went on to make great reformations for God’s people in turning them back to true worship (2 Chr. 34-35) which all started while he was still young. Timothy learned from his grandmother and mother about true faith and helped the apostle Paul during his missionary journeys and in the establishing of new churches (2 Tim. 1:5). And, let us not forget our Lord Jesus Christ who was found at the age of 12 in the temple with the “doctors”, amazing all who saw Him and heard “his understanding and answers,” (Luke 2:41-52). It is far better that potential is tapped in young people for the glory of God than for the things of this world.

I am sure the disciples thought they were doing their best in providing protection and care for their Master. Yet, Jesus has always had an open-door policy when it comes to people. People matter to our Savior, even the littlest people - the kiddos. Jesus always had a

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heart that burned for drawing people near and exposing to them the kingdom of God. He loves people. He loves children. And He loves you, too!

“For of such is the kingdom of God.” God’s kingdom is made of those who trust Him with total abandon and are dependent without inhibitions; that have faith and just believe as through the eyes of an innocent child. Too many adults are hindered in their faith due to life experiences. But children just accept and believe and love and trust. They are prime examples of how His sheep come to the Shepherd and humbly follow His lead.

FAITH AS A CHILD

Mark 10:15 “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”

Continuing His line of teaching on the kingdom of God, Jesus reiterates the one who wishes to enter in must **“receive”** it **“as a little child.”** Those who choose not, forfeit their right to **“enter therein.”**

Why? Because the same characteristics that made that celebrated faith like a child acceptable in heaven are not found in those who refuse to receive it. In fact, the exact opposite is usually what is present. Instead of trusting, one may see self-sufficiency, and instead of a heart surrendered in faith, one may see it being lifted in pride. Of course, one does not have to go far in realizing these are things God opposes. They are not found in His children, the accessors of that heavenly kingdom, therefore to them who refuse to receive it as a child, access is denied.

The promise of heaven awaits any and all who will humble themselves as these children do and put on those same traits. Walking in a lifestyle that opposes the fruit of the Spirit which is often found in these little ones is to oppose the working of the Spirit in that life. Flesh wins and carnality overtakes that individual prohibiting them an opened door into the heavenly realm.

Do not be like the children of Israel. God led them through the wilderness, and they fell short of the promise that lay ahead of them. Losing out on the spiritual blessings of entering heaven would be far worse with more significant eternal consequences than that of an earthly

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Promised Land. Therefore, it is prudent that one takes on this faith, which He describes as being like a child in their trust and willingness to receive, that they may enter in.

BLESSED BY JESUS

Mark 10:16 “And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.”

After His lesson on the benefits of having the same faith as these little ones that were brought before Him, Jesus granted the parent’s request and “**blessed them.**”

Look at Jesus’ actions closely. He did not just speak a word over them as He could have. He did not send one of the disciples to relay the blessings. No. He got personally involved with each child there in showing them the compassion of the Savior. He lifted “**them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.**” I get the impression that He possibly took the time to lay hands on each child individually as any good father or spiritual leader would and speak a word of encouragement over each one of them (just my thoughts).

Remember our introduction: “*The child never worries about being caught. The child never worries about being hurt. The child only sees daddy. Daddy loves me, daddy cares for me, I trust daddy and daddy will never let me fall. Therefore, I will enjoy playing with daddy.*” Jesus is calling for all of us to turn to Him with that same kind of innocent and trusting faith found in children. Your heavenly Daddy loves you! Turn to Him.

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Please Answer the Review Questions Below

1. **T or F.** Jesus has a heart to welcome everyone regardless of age.
2. What word describes the disciple’s response when some brought young children to be touched by Jesus? They _____ them.
A. Rebuked B. Helped C. Angered D. Blessed
3. Why do you think Jesus was displeased with the actions of the disciples?

4. Name four people noted in our lesson, who had a relationship with God while they were young and went on to do great things for the Lord.

5. “Whosoever shall not _____ the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”
A. Believe B. See C. Want D. Receive

6. **T or F.** It is best to introduce children to Jesus at a young age.
7. Why do you think having faith like a child is important in one’s ability to gain access to the kingdom of God?

