

Jesus and the Little Children

Welcome/Series Introduction

- Veterans Day
- Through the life of Jesus
- Last week - a miracle begins with a need, requires an act of faith, displays the power of God, glorifies God and blesses people.
- BHH Update next week

Sermon Introduction

Personal Connection:

Mark 10

As we grow up, things change - we carry more weight and responsibility, we live with wounds... Life is hard. But the Gospel is this beautiful invitation to a different type of life and sometimes we miss the invitation or the invitation gets muddled with cultural expectations. In our story today, Jesus is going to make the invitation crystal clear.

Pray.

Passage Introduction:

Mark 10:13-16

13 One day some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But the disciples scolded the parents for bothering him.

14 When Jesus saw what was happening, he was angry with his disciples. He said to them, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. 15 I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." 16 Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them.

Point 1: To build the kingdom of God, we must build the next generation.

Define:

- It's easy to think their faith is not real, that they are not as important as we are - not as important as our stuff/work is.
- Disciples hindered. Not just by not letting the kids come, but by communicating the work was more important than being with Jesus.
 - Mary/Martha
 - Thomas
- Over time our experiences shape us

Illustrate:

Spanish soccer

Argue:

Matthew 18:1-6

1 About that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" **2** Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. **3** Then he said, "I tell you the truth, unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven. **4** So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. **5** "And anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf^[a] is welcoming me. **6** But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Apply:

- Disciples:
 - Whether you have kids or not... Do you place the same value on the next generation Jesus did?
 - Ways to value:
 - Serve/Lead
 - Give
 - Encourage
 - Laugh/Enjoy/Join

- Parents:
 - Are you bringing your kids to get a touch of Jesus
 - Don't assume they can't understand. Don't assume they'll get it later. Don't assume they'll get it from someone else. Don't judge where they are today.
 - Private life - it starts w/ you - what do you love? What do you value? Do you believe a touch from Jesus would change everything and is worth waiting in this line and fighting through opposition?
 - Who do you want to become? Are the things you are doing as a family moving you towards that?
 - Are you desperate for Jesus to bless them?
 - So many options - sports, academics, extracurriculars, friends, trips
 - Look 20 years down the road and ask - are we consistently giving them a touch of Jesus? Your character is the sum of your past decisions.

So, to build the kingdom, we must build the next generation.

Point 2: To receive the kingdom, we must become like the next generation.

Define

Jesus says to receive - we have to become like them.

- They were infants - not kids - and yet Jesus said be like them - helpless dependence - a touch from Jesus would change everything.

Grow up verses.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

3 Dear brothers and sisters,^[a] when I was with you I couldn't talk to you as I would to spiritual people.^[b] I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in Christ. **2** I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren't ready for anything stronger. And you still aren't ready, **3** for you are still controlled by your sinful nature. You are jealous of one another and quarrel with each other. Doesn't that prove you are controlled by your sinful nature? Aren't you living like people of the world?

Difference between childish and childlike

- He's describing Childish
 - Selfish & Demanding
 - Disobedient
 - Controlled by emotion/sinful nature - divided
 - All of these are actually symptoms of independence or self reliance - scarcity mindset
- Not about a level of education and understanding
- About a level of obedience and dependence
 - Childlike
 - Desire Jesus.
 - Dependence on Jesus.
 - Joy/Wonder in Jesus.
 - Relationship w/ Jesus.

Childlike faith verses.

Matthew 11:25

25 At that time Jesus prayed this prayer: "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank you for hiding these things from those who think themselves wise and clever, and for revealing them to the childlike."

What we see is that childlikeness and spiritual maturity are actually the same thing - they are not opposed to each other. Both are about complete dependence. The more independent you are, the more spiritually immature you are.

Illustrate

- My kid's most common phrases
 - Give me (What are your desires?)
 - Help me (What are your needs?)
 - Watch me/Look at this (What are you learning/discovering?)
 - Play w/ me (What do you enjoy? Who are you connected to?)
 - First time we see sinful nature is not in the tantrum - it's in the statement, I can do it myself

Argue

Blessed are the poor in Spirit. - Matthew 5:3

Ruth - “Emptiness is the prerequisite for receiving.”

Apply

Practices of childlikeness

- Sabbath
- Celebration/Worship (kids dancing)
- Generosity (noah's legos)

So, to build the kingdom, we must build the next generation.

- Value the next generation - as disciples of Jesus and as parents. Be intentional.

And to receive the kingdom, we must become like the next generation.

- Grow into maturity by staying childlike.

Closing

It all starts w/ humble dependence - Salvation.

Psalm 131:2

1 LORD, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. **2** Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself, like a weaned child who no longer cries for its mother's milk. Yes, like a weaned child is my soul within me. **3** O Israel, put your hope in the LORD—now and always.