

Jesus And The Children

Mark 10:13-16

MEMORY VERSE

MARK 10:14b

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A small bean bag.

A nicely wrapped box containing as many small prizes (stickers, erasers, pencils, etc.) as the number of children in your class.

As many pieces of paper and crayons as the number of children in your class.

A washable red marker or a potato stamp and stamp pad.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Beanbag Keep Away

Bring a beanbag to class and play a game of "Keep Away." Pick a child to be it. Throw the beanbag from child to child, trying to keep it away from the child that is "it." If the child that is "it" catches the beanbag, the child or adult who threw it must become it.

After playing for a little while, explain to your class that the disciples played a game of "keep away" in the Bible, and Jesus was "it."

LESSON TIME!

In today's lesson we are going to see Jesus' heart towards children. Did you know that children hold a very special place in Jesus' heart? That means that each one of you here in our class today is very much loved by Jesus. The disciples thought that the little children were getting in Jesus' way, but Jesus said that was not true at all. In fact, He said that He wants all children to come to Him. Let's find out what happens in our story as we learn that **Jesus loves you and me!**

MARK 10:13

Then they brought young children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them, to hold them and show compassion to them. These parents simply brought their children to Jesus for them to be blessed by Him. What an important lesson it is for parents to bring their children to Jesus. We should thank our parents today for bringing us to church to hear about Jesus.

Always know in your heart that **Jesus loves you and me!** He loves us because He is love. He wants us to know that He desires to meet our needs. He wants you to know that He cares for you above all things. He desires to hold you in His arms and comfort you.

The Bible says that He loves us with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3). If Jesus loves us and promises to never leave us or forsake us, what do we have to be afraid of? If God is for us, who can be against us? If you only remember one thing today, remember that no matter who we **Jesus loves you and me!**

We read in verse 13 that Jesus' disciples rebuked and got upset with the people who brought the children. I wonder if they realized how much Jesus truly loved the children. Maybe they misunderstood Jesus' ministry. Maybe they thought Jesus did not like children, or maybe they just thought Jesus was too tired to play with the children. After all, Jesus was a busy man. He traveled around from place to place. The disciples knew that Jesus was becoming popular; surely they must have considered His weariness.

Do you know what it is like to play all day long and have to come in after a hard day of school and clean up your room or take the garbage out for mom or dad? That is what it means to be weary, exhausted or without energy. As we will see, this was not the case with Jesus. He is never too tired to minister to His children. He desired to bless the children and show them affection.

Have you ever felt like you may have gotten in the way of adults? Maybe the disciples felt that the little children would get in Jesus' way. But Jesus quickly shows them that the children are not in His way. You are never in Jesus' way. You are loved by Jesus and can always come to Him.

MARK 10:14

But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

When Jesus saw the disciples sending the children away, how did he feel? He was GREATLY displeased, and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God." This is such a neat verse, because Jesus let His disciples know that He never rejects the children. As a matter

of fact, He proclaims to them that He wants the children to come to Him for He loves them more than anything.

You even get the idea in this verse that it made Jesus very sad to think that the children could not come to Him. He desires to bless children.

Can you believe that Jesus loves you more than your parents love you? It is true. Jesus loves you more than anyone. Can anyone tell me why He does? He is Love. When mom or dad comes up and gives us a hug, we can respond by hugging back or running away. Jesus loves us and gave His life for us on the cross. We can either respond by accepting His sacrifice or running away from Him and the sacrifice that He made for us on the cross. How have you responded to Jesus' love?

Let's pretend it is your birthday, and your parents bring out a huge cake with candles and frosting with big letters, "Happy Birthday!" They sing happy birthday to you, but you begin to cry. You would be responding in a wrong way. Let's say they give you a present (like new roller blades), but you tell them, "Forget it, I don't want them." They would think something was wrong because you would be responding in a very odd way.

It is the same way if we do not respond to Jesus and His wonderful gift of salvation. He gives us great and precious promises, and we should respond with joy and excitement. We need to respond to Jesus' love for us with joy and acceptance.

The Gift

Take a box and fill it with as many small prizes as the number of children in your class. Wrap the box in gift wrap paper, making it look extra special.

Pick a child from your class to receive the gift. As you hand it to the child, point out to the class that this student is willingly receiving the gift you are handing him. Have him open the gift before the entire class.

Have this child help you pass out the contents of the package to the class, pointing out once again that receiving a gift is simply taking what is offered.

Jesus compared the kingdom of God, God's present spiritual rule in people's lives, to children. Jesus was talking about the trustful attitude of a child with a faith that freely receives the grace of God.

Draw a Kingdom

Have each child in your class draw what they think the kingdom of heaven looks like. Many of them will draw what they imagine heaven to be. Let them draw for a while and survey their pictures. When they are done, tell them they have done a really good job, but now you are going to draw the real picture of the kingdom of God on the chalkboard.

Draw for them a large heart. Write the name "Jesus" inside the heart and explain to the class that the kingdom of God is in each and every heart that has given itself completely to Jesus. Have your class turn their papers over and copy what you have drawn on the chalkboard on their pieces of paper.

Read to the class: LUKE 17:20-22: Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' Indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see it."

MARK 10:15

"Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Jesus always tells the truth; anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it. God's kingdom is not obtained by our works, good things that we do or achieve. God's kingdom is received through Jesus Christ. We must receive God's free gift of salvation by faith. In other words, we trust that Jesus is God and that He will save us from our sin, knowing that we cannot save ourselves. We are all children of God if we believe in Him.

If we respond to Jesus' love by running away from Him, we will by no means enter in. Jesus initiated the love relationship by the shedding of His blood. We simply respond, much like receiving a birthday gift. **Jesus loves you and me!**

MARK 10:16

And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them.

He blessed the children with the very hands that would be nailed to the cross, demonstrating His love for them. Jesus said that if you really love someone you would lay your life down for them. That seems really tough to do for one person, let alone the whole wide world.

The prophet Isaiah spoke several hundred years before Jesus was here on earth. He said, "Can a mother forget the baby of her womb and have no compassion on the child she has born? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hand!" (Is. 49:15-16).

This tells us how Jesus feels about each one of us. He will never leave us or forsake us because His love for us is eternal! Finally, Jesus goes even further to say that He engraved you on the palms of His hands! When did Jesus engrave you on the palms of His hands? At the cross. This word “engrave” means to cut into, which implies chiseling into stone or metal.

Jesus engraved you in the palms of His hands because He knew what He was doing to save you eternally. He did not even make one mistake. They were the same palms that healed the sick people, blessed the children, and hold and bless us today. Respond with joy and thanksgiving to the Lord. Receive His Love today! **Jesus loves you and me!**

Stamp of Love

With WASHABLE red marker, write on each child’s palm:

I love you!
Jesus Christ

You can do this in the shape of a heart also. If you want to get real creative, you can create a stamp cut out of a potato half. If you would rather not stamp on their hands, just have them stamp or draw on a blank sheet of paper.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for the great love that Jesus has shown each of us in His sacrifice on the cross. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.