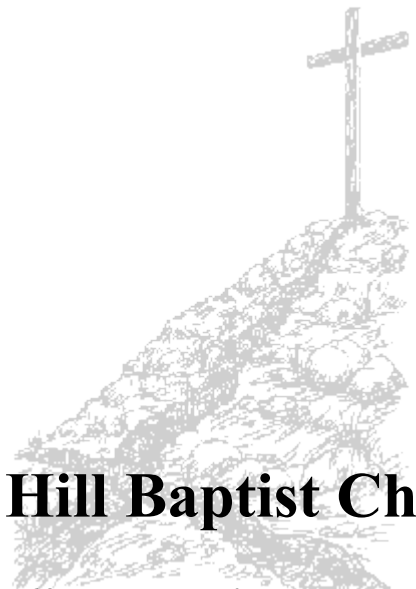


# Allow The Children To Come Unto Me

Mark 10:13-16



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**FOCAL** (Mark 10:13-16 KJV) "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch<sup>1</sup> them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. {14} But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeas<sup>2</sup>, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. {15} Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. {16} And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

### Opening prayer:

**Introduction:** We're getting ready to have our Vacation Bible School - and I'm excited. I'm excited because what we're about to do is something that will touch the very heart of God. You see, Jesus loves children! He loves children deeply. And Jesus has commanded that children be allowed access to Him, that they be brought to Him so that He can bless them.

One of the few times in Scripture we see Jesus **much displeas** is in this passage. Let's examine this text in detail and see what this means.

### 1. We Must Bring Children To Where Jesus Is So They Can Be Blessed

**FOCAL** (Mark 10:13 KJV) "And **they brought**

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- 1 haptomai {pronounced hap'-tom-ahee}, Aorist Middle Subjunctive, *to fasten oneself to, cling to, adhere to*
  - 2 aganakteo {pronounced ag-an-ak-teh'-o}, Aorist Active Indicative, *to be moved with indignation, to be very displeas*

**young children to him, that he should touch<sup>1</sup> them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them."**

As our Lord Jesus walked and ministered, people started bringing **young children** to the Master - as the King James says - **that He should touch them**. What was **actually happening here?** When we read the *parallel texts in the other Gospels* we see a little more light shed on what was going on.

**Luke 18:15 (NIV)<sup>3</sup> "People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them. ..."**

**Matthew 19:13 (NIV) "Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. ..."**

Parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents - **BELIEVERS SAVED BY GRACE** - were bringing their children to Jesus so that He could *touch their lives*. I have heard parents say

**"I want to let my child make his or her own choice for or against Christ"**

Then these parents leave it up to the *child* to go to the Lord. But listen up, Beloved! Unless *the believer* brings *the children* to Jesus, then **those children will never be**

**saved**. I CANNOT guarantee that being a good Christian parent will automatically cause a child to be saved. We know Scripturally that this is not true! King David, a man who was **after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:13-14)** had a son **Absalom** who caused much grief to his family and to God. There are times when children - no matter how well treated - will continue to reject God. So I can make no guarantees that bringing children to Christ will *automatically* cause their salvation. But I can guarantee this: *failure* to bring children to Christ will *nearly always* guarantee their loss.

Listen Beloved - **children do not naturally come to Christ - they are brought by adults to Him, surrendered to Him, so that He can place His hands on them and pray for them.**

**FOCAL (Mark 10:13 KJV) "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch<sup>1</sup> them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them."**

The word that the King James text renders **touch** is also found in several other Scripture passages in **exactly the same tense-voice-mood construct**. We see this combination found in the story of the woman with the issue of blood, in:

**(Matthew 9:21 KJV) "For she said within herself, If I may but touch<sup>1</sup> his garment, I shall be whole."**

and again in:

<sup>3</sup> New International Version Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society

(Matthew 14:36 KJV) "And besought him that they might **only touch** the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole."

Just as these people wanted to *touch Jesus in a personal way* for healing, Jesus wanted to *touch these children in a personal way*. This would only happen when the adult believers took responsibility *as adults*, and brought those children to Jesus.

Why must children be brought to where Jesus is?

Because children, regardless as to how lovely they are to the parents (and **children are a blessing from the Lord<sup>4</sup>**), are still *spiritually dead* until they are touched by Jesus. These children were very young - perhaps many were babies. You might think, "Does it matter if a baby comes to where Jesus is?" Yes, dear friends, it does matter! All of my children were raised up in Church. They first lay in the cradle, but later set in the pew while the preacher preached. Since they were brought where Jesus was, each one of these children that God gave me have accepted Him as Savior. If left to their own devices they would have remained **blinded by the god of this world**, as the Scripture says:

**2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (HCSB)<sup>5</sup> "But if, in fact, our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who**

4 Psalm 127:3-5 (New American Standard Bible) "**Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; They will not be ashamed When they speak with their enemies in the gate.**"

5 Holman Christian Standard Bible Copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville Tennessee.

**are perishing. Regarding them: the god of this age has blinded** the minds of the unbelievers so they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. "

Children are particularly targets of Satan and the fallen. Look at these truths:

- In America people who should know better are seeking legislation to allow young teenagers to abort their pregnancies *without parental consent*.
- Video games are always driven to promote *violence and sexual infatuation*, and these games are targeting our young people. One game, which boasts of a *simulated world* allows its "maker", the young person, to cause the characters of that world to *realistically do things that adults should only do in private*.
- Television shows are *in your face* demanding that aberrant sexual behavior be regarded as normal. Children and young people watch this many hours per week, and have begun to believe that there is nothing wrong with bad behavior. Tolerance of all but Biblical Christianity is preached.

The devil's tactics has an impact on this generation. Listen, dear friends: Children, no matter how beautiful - and I find all children beautiful - are *spiritually dead until the Master touches their lives*. We read in Ephesians:

**Ephesians 2:1, 4, 5 (HCSB) ".. And you were dead in your trespasses and sins ... But**

**God ... made us alive with the Messiah even though we were dead in trespasses. By grace you are saved!"**

**Pastor Jack Graham<sup>6</sup> writes:**

"There is a man in the Bible by the name of Jotham (see 2 Chronicles 27-28). His father, Uzziah, was a godly king. But one day, Uzziah went into the temple, disobeyed God, and was corrected as a result. Jotham, who later became king, was angered about what happened to his father in the temple.

The Bible tells us specifically that

**..... Jotham did not attend services of worship at the temple after that because of his anger.**

**Scripture goes on to tell us that he paid a terrible price for that. As a result, Jotham's son, who also became king, lived his life as an idol worshiper, even sacrificing the lives of his own children in worship to the gods.**

**I wonder how many children are sacrificed today because some parent got mad at the church or its leaders and said, "We're not going anymore." .....**

**I wonder how many parents decided they didn't care if they set the right example or not. Above all else, I don't care if my children know me as a preacher, teacher, or minister. I want them to know me as a dad who loves God and lives the love of God in our home. That's leadership. That's being an example. That's being a testimony that will make an eternal difference in the life of your children."**

**The child, just like the adult, needs to be exposed to Jesus. He is the only hope of salvation for the child, He is the only hope of salvation for the adult. President Ronald Reagan said:**

**"If children prayed together, would they not understand what they have in common, and would this not, indeed, bring them closer, and is this not to be desired? So, I submit to you that those who claim to be fighting for tolerance on this issue may not be tolerant at all. ... we poison our society when we remove its theological underpinnings. We court corruption when we leave it bereft of belief. All are free to believe or not believe; all are free to practice a faith or not. But those who believe must be free to speak of and act on their belief, to apply moral teaching to public questions. ... if we look back through history to all those great civilizations, those great nations that rose up to even world dominance and then deteriorated, declined, and fell, we find they all had one thing in common.**

**..... One of the significant forerunners of their fall was their turning away from their God. ... Without God, there is no virtue, because there's no prompting of the conscience. Without God, we're mired in the material, that flat world that tells us only what the senses perceive. Without God, there is a coarsening of the society ....**

**And without God, democracy will not and cannot long endure. If we ever forget that we're one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under."**

## **2. Children Exposed Early To Christ Are Better Equipped To Accept Christ As Savior**

**FOCAL (Mark 10:13-14 KJV) "... His**

disciples rebuked those that brought them. {14} But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased<sup>7</sup>, and said unto them, Suffer [allow] the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

The Bible says that Jesus was *much displeased* or *very upset* when the adult believers kept the children from coming to Him. Our Lord then said "allow those children to come to Me". But you ask, "Why Lord - why not tell the children to stay away until they grow up enough to understand?" And Jesus answered, "for of such is the Kingdom of God."

Children are *always* in a better position to accept Christ as Savior than an adult is. Why? Because adults who have grown up bereft of Bible teaching are often *much harder to convict to salvation* than children who are still young in understanding. You see, children have not built up the *walls of logic* that adults build over long years of exposure to the world. Children have wonderful facilities that, until corrupted by the skepticism of the world, they can be influenced in the direction of Christ. Jesus often used children to illustrate salvation. On one occasion He pulled a child to Himself and said:

**Matthew 18:3-4 (NIV)** "And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little

<sup>7</sup> aganakteo {pronounced ag-an-ak-teh'-o}, Aorist Active Indicative, *to be moved with indignation, to be very displeased*

children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

The child's mind has not yet become hardened to the mind of God much like the adult unbeliever's mind is. Accepting Jesus Christ as Savior only comes when you humble yourself like the child, and surrender to the truth that *you are lost and undone without Christ*. You must, like the child, be able to *bend the knee and the will* to the Master if you will be saved.

**FOCAL (Mark 10:14 KJV)** "... Jesus ... said unto them, [allow] the little children to come unto me ... for of such is the kingdom of God."

The **Kingdom of God** is populated with those individuals who, like children, have rejected the *wisdom of this world* for the *wisdom of God*. As the Apostle said:

**Romans 11:33 (NKJV)<sup>8</sup>** "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!"

and

**1 Corinthians 1:25 (NKJV)** "... the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

<sup>8</sup> New King James Version Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Children **do not need to know every facet of a plan** before they will submit to it. They merely need to know that God is good, that God is Jesus, and that Jesus died for them and rose again. Children do not have to have every detail explained before they can enjoy the blessings. They just have to know that the blessing is in Jesus - and then they go for that blessing by faith.

**ILLUSTRATE:** A good example of this happened just the other day. A gentleman professing Christ as Savior wrote me and told me that while he was praying one day the Lord gave him a vision that was a **picture of prayer**. Now, I want you to know that I am not discounting visions. I believe that God can speak to His children through visions if He so desires, and God has often done this in the Scriptures. So I am not in any way ridiculing what this brother professed. However, when I opened this gentleman's *picture of prayer* I saw several great Biblical truths were violated by that picture. I'll not elaborate, nor say who sent this letter to me, but I will say that the picture - though it may have been received by a vision - that vision did not come from God. You see, God *does not* violate the truths that He has established in His Word. His Word is the *final authority* on whether a vision received is God given or derived from some other source.

I wrote this dear man back, and gave him detailed Scriptural support to show that his *vision* could not be from God. The man's reply was that he *just knew* that this was from God. And since he *just knew* that, **he rejected any Scriptural consideration that did not support his view**. Yet has not God said in His Word:

**2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NASB) "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."**

If **all Scripture is inspired by God** then - regardless as to whatever else I may feel - *the Scripture must be true*. And if the Scripture is true, and I accept this on childlike faith, then I must reject anything which stands in opposition to the Scripture. Childlike faith in His provision keeps me from falling into traps of error (like the trap that this dear man has fallen into).

**3. You Cannot Be Taken Up Into His Arms And Blessed Until You Come As A Child Would Come**

**FOCAL (Mark 10:15-16 KJV) "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive<sup>9</sup> the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. {16} And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."**

Must you accept Jesus as Savior, or as Lord, or as Savior and Lord in order to be saved? Jesus gave us the answer in this wonderful passage when He said "**Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein**"

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<sup>9</sup> dechomai {pronounced dekh'-om-ah-ee}, Aorist Middle Subjunctive, to the hold of, take up,, receive, grab on to

Week after week I am blessed as your Pastor to have these dear children come up to me during Children's Church. They often come and sit in my lap. One thing I've noticed is that the older the child is, the less reluctant it is to be gathered up in the arms of the Pastor, to be loved, to sit on the floor with him and learn of Jesus.

**Illustrate** If you will NOT receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, you will never become a citizen of that Kingdom.. Have you ever seen a child's reaction at a birthday party? Have you ever compared the child's reaction to the adult's reaction? An adult will pick up the wrapped package. He will then look at the wrapping, while commenting on its beauty. If there's a pretty bow the adult may "oooh" and "aaah" over it. The adult will look for a card or a letter attached to the package and will probably open that card, read it, and thank the giver before ever opening the gift. Then the adult will usually carefully open the package, being careful not to tear the paper too much so *it can be reused* (though truthfully, few of us ever reuse it).

What does the child do?

The child runs to where the birthday presents are sitting. He then grabs his gifts and, without any of that *looking at the card nonsense* the child will tear the wrapper off the gift. You see, what matters is *getting to the prize inside*. The child doesn't care how beautifully wrapped the gift is. The child just wants the gift! So it is with the Kingdom of God.

Some of you have heard the preaching of the Gospel for

years now. You have heard how you are sinners in need of the Savior. You have heard the Master's Words:

**(John 14:6 KJV) "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."**

You have heard Him say:

**(Romans 3:10 KJV) "... There is none righteous, no, not one:"**

and

**Matthew 7:21-23 (NIV) "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"**

and yet you have become hardened in your hearts. You believe that you are good enough to go to Heaven, or that God will overlook your failure to trust in Jesus for salvation. So you persist in unbelief. You look at the wrapping on the package, you read the card, but you fail to take it to yourself and believe.

Oh, my Beloved, that you would believe in Him as a

child. That you would come to Him yourselves, and bring your children faithfully to His side in private devotions and in public worship! There is no way to be saved apart from a relationship by faith with Jesus Christ. Quit looking at the wrapper! Look at the Prize, at Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior! Believe in Him, and thou shalt be saved!



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