

# Let the Children Come

Temptation is an enticement to sin with a false promise of reward (See Gen. 3:4,5). Because we often forget how destructive temptation is, Jesus teaches that we first must destroy it. In Vol. VI of "The Works of John Owen," he taught that falling into temptation defiles our consciences, disquiets our peace, weakens our obedience, and clouds our vision of God. Ultimately, as Jesus teaches in this text, falling into temptation can lead to Hell itself.

## Mark 10:13-16

**13** And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. **14** But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. **15** Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." **16** And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

### 1. We are not, by nature, child-friendly (v.13)

One of the clearest evidences of the Gospel's presence in a society is its effect upon the rights of women and children. One can see it around the world and in our city. Here, the disciples rebuke folks for wasting Jesus' time by asking Him to touch their babies. Many times, we actually act the same way.

### 2. Jesus indignantly corrects us (vv. 14,15)

This is the only time in the gospels that Jesus is described as "indignant." Furthermore, His indignation is not directed toward the scribes and Pharisees, but, rather, toward His own disciples! Why? Because they were distorting His character and abusing their authority. Jesus corrects our views, both of children and also of ourselves.

#### A. Our view of children (v.14)

##### I. They must come to Him. (v.14a)

We must not hinder children from coming to Jesus Christ. How can we carry out this command? First, as citizens of our city and world, we must advocate for and minister to the children. Poverty rates, abortion rates, educational opportunities, and family health should always demand our attention. Secondly, in the Church, we must remember our vow to "assist these parents in this Christian nurture of their children." This involves teaching, discipling, and encouraging the children (including serving in the nursery) and also exhorting the parents of our children to rear them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Thirdly, for parents, we must remember these five fundamentals:

- a) give your children over to the Lord for His purposes, not your own
- b) set a Godly example for your children
- c) pray regularly with and for your children
- d) faithfully teach your children the Bible
- e) use every means that God gives you to rear them for His glory

It is instructive to see that these five "fundamentals" are exactly what we promise to do as parents in our third baptismal vow.

#### B. Our view of ourselves (v.15)

Jesus teaches us that the reason we do not include the children as we ought is because we have failed to see ourselves as children and to come to Jesus ourselves as those who desperately depend upon Him like a child on His parent. This is worth thinking about.

**3. Jesus lovingly blesses our children (v.16)**

Jesus gives these kids far more than their parents requested. They asked Him to “touch them,” but, instead, He takes them up in His arms, affectionately showing them His love and esteem for them. Then, He touched them and He “blessed them.” Wow! What must He have said to them? One can only imagine. All of the ancient blessings from Abraham and Joseph and Aaron and Moses and David and Isaiah fell upon the ears of these little ones. And, all around, the people were amazed at the love of Jesus for the children.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What evidence do you see in our society that we undervalue and underserve our children? In the church?
2. Share at least one experience you had as a child when someone other than your parent blessed you.
3. What are the greatest challenges the parents in our church face as they seek to rear their children in the Lord?
4. What are the most significant turns in the road we need to make in the nurturing and development of our children?
5. What are the most significant lessons we as adults need to learn from our children?

**Going Deeper**

1. What changes do you need to make in your approach to blessing the children—both your own and also those in the church and the world?
2. How do you need to become more like a child?