



THE GOSPEL OF

**MARK**



## Sermon Series Notes

“Childlike Faith” (Mark 10:13-16)

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**The disciples rebuke of those bringing their children.** What exactly did they say? I have to believe the main reason for the rebuke is that Jesus did not have time for such things. There is no indication that these children had physical infirmities, or were demon possessed, etc. All these parents wanted was for Jesus to touch and bless their child. This was common among the expectations of rabbis in this day, and it is common today in the church.

An observation we don't want to miss; There is a significance to the laying on of hands and blessing. Numbers 6:22-27 gives the verbal blessing the priests were to regular say on behalf of the Israelites, and the Bible is filled with examples of church leaders laying hands on people for a variety of purposes.

**Jesus' indignance with His disciples.** This is a strong word that means “very displeased.” The disciples think they are doing Jesus a service, but they are very wrong. Imperfect disciples do not always reflect what Jesus is really like.

### The Disciples' Assumptions

- Jesus does not have time for the seeming insignificant task of touching children.
- As a matter of priority, these children are not at the top of Jesus' list.

Note: It is not just the children being rebuked/neglected by these disciples, but the parents.

Note: The most important thing a parent can do for their child is bring them to Jesus.

The truths we learn from the disciples' wrong assumptions:

- Children are important, even a priority, to Jesus
  - We have spent \$ and effort on making our children's ministry first class.

- Make your children a priority (Marcus McClure’s comments about his parents busyness in ministry).
- Make bringing your children to Jesus a priority
  - It’s much better if you come to Jesus first, then you can take Jesus to your children. Jesus can bless your children through you.
- God is never too busy for you, and He never shows favoritism
  - People typically shunned in this culture that Jesus made a priority – two blind beggars, lepers, outcasts, women etc.
  - God loves you, just as much a God loves anyone else (John 3:16; II Peter 3:9).
    - Jephthah, Ishmael, Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, the Prodigal, the rulers Paul the apostle was a witness to,

**Key phrase in the text:** “...anyone who will not receive the kingdom like a little child will never enter it.”

#### The Lessons in Jesus’ Statement

- Characteristics of Children Synonymous with Children of the Kingdom
  - Note: They are not innocent
  - Complete Dependence
    - The Greek word for child used here refers to the youngest and most helpless of children. It is the word used for Jesus when the magi come to worship him. It is the also the word used in Mark 5:41 for Jairus’ daughter, who was twelve years old. So it refers to children in the time of life when they are completely dependent on others.
  - Simple Trust
  - A Sense of Wonder (miracle, marvel, astonishment)
    - Little boy in the elevator in Beaver Creek, just pushing the elevator button was exciting to him, and even more so because he was headed with his family to floor #7, the floor where the outdoor hot tub is. After floor 7 button was pushed he kept saying “7,7,7,7,” and while doing so jumping up and down with excitement.
- Receiving the Kingdom Like a Child
  - Complete Dependence

- Deut.8:17 You may say to yourselves, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...
  - I Chron.29:14...Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.
  - I Cor.4:7...What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?
  - Eph.2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – **not by works**, so that no one can boast.
  - Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.
- Simple Trust
- “Childlike Faith”
  - John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whosoever **believes in him** should not perish but have everlasting life.
  - Eph.2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, **through faith**, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.
  - Romans 10:3-4 Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. Christ is the end of the law so that there may be **righteousness for everyone who believes.**
  - Read Romans 10:1-10
  - Gal.3:3...After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?
  - Nothing to do with effort, intellect, maturity, social status, etc.
    - John 5:39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life.
    - I Cor.2:1-2 (see message from Acts, Athens)
    - I’m a bit concerned about a contingency within the church that puts a lot of stock in intellectual advancement. Most seminaries are not producing men and women of faith and genuine Christ-likeness. Let’s never forget Acts 4:13. The number one knowledge we are encouraged to advance in as Christians is the knowledge of the Scriptures, and of Christ (II Peter 1:5). And if our theological knowledge does not increase

our faith, what's the purpose? That's why I like books like the one I just finished on vacation – "Chase the Lion."

- Jesus could have wowed us with theological wisdom and human intellect that would have left our jaws dropping, but He didn't. He brought things down to a level that anyone could understand, because He wants us to respond to Him in childlike faith, especially when it concerns the most important decision in life – eternity, and the kingdom of God.
- A Sense of Wonder
  - Pastor Viv Laird never lost the sense of wonder about life, and the grace of God. I miss him.
  - I Timothy 1:15-17; I can imagine Saul of Tarsus as a rigid, self-righteous, lack of joy Pharisee. That all changed when he received Jesus and really understood the gospel.

Knowing what Jesus meant by the key statement in our text helps us to identify the wrong religious paths in our world.

*The major world religions are Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, New Age, & Christianity.*

A Hindu's goal is to become free from the law of karma...to be free from continuous reincarnations. Only the soul matters which will one day be free of the cycle of rebirths and be at rest. Hinduism gives a person freedom to choose how to work toward spiritual perfection. There are three possible ways to end this cycle of karma: 1. Be lovingly devoted to any of the Hindu gods or goddesses; 2. Grow in knowledge through meditation of Brahman (oneness)...to realize that circumstances in life are not real, that selfhood is an illusion and only Brahman is real; 3. Be dedicated to various religious ceremonies and rites.

Buddhists do not worship any gods or God. People outside of Buddhism often think that Buddhists worship the Buddha. However, the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) never claimed to be divine, but rather he is viewed by Buddhists as having attained what they are also striving to attain, which is spiritual enlightenment and, with it, freedom from the continuous cycle of life and death. Most Buddhists believe a person has countless rebirths, which inevitably include suffering. A Buddhist seeks to end these rebirths. Buddhists believe it is a person's cravings, aversion and delusion that cause these rebirths. Therefore, the goal of a Buddhist is to purify one's heart and to let go of all yearnings toward sensual desires and the attachment to oneself. Buddhists follow a list of religious principles and very dedicated meditation. When a Buddhist meditates it is not the same as praying or focusing on a god, it is more of a self-discipline. Through practiced meditation a person may reach

Nirvana -- "the blowing out" of the flame of desire. Buddhism provides something that is true of most major religions: disciplines, values and directives that a person may want to live by. Nirvana is reached through what is called the eight-fold path.

- 1. Samma-Ditthi — Complete or Perfect Vision**, also translated as right view or understanding. Vision of the nature of reality and the path of transformation.
- 2. Samma-Sankappa — Perfected Emotion or Aspiration**, also translated as right thought or attitude. Liberating emotional intelligence in your life and acting from love and compassion. An informed heart and feeling mind that are free to practice letting go.
- 3. Samma-Vaca — Perfected or whole Speech**. Also called right speech. Clear, truthful, uplifting and non-harmful communication.
- 4. Samma-Kammanta — Integral Action**. Also called right action. An ethical foundation for life based on the principle of non-exploitation of oneself and others. The five precepts.
- 5. Samma-Ajiva — Proper Livelihood**. Also called right livelihood. This is a livelihood based on correct action the ethical principal of non-exploitation. The basis of an Ideal society.
- 6. Samma-Vayama — Complete or Full Effort, Energy or Vitality**. Also called right effort or diligence. Consciously directing our life energy to the transformative path of creative and healing action that fosters wholeness. Conscious evolution.
- 7. Samma-Sati — Complete or Thorough Awareness**. Also called "right mindfulness". Developing awareness, "if you hold yourself dear watch yourself well". Levels of Awareness and mindfulness - of things, oneself, feelings, thought, people and Reality.
- 8. Samma-Samadhi — Full, Integral or Holistic Samadhi**. This is often translated as concentration, meditation, absorption or one-pointedness of mind. None of these translations is adequate. Samadhi literally means to be fixed, absorbed in or established at one point, thus the first level of meaning is concentration when the mind is fixed on a single object. The second level of meaning goes further and represents the establishment, not just of the mind, but also of the whole being in various levels or modes of consciousness and awareness. This is Samadhi in the sense of enlightenment or Buddhahood.

\* **The word Samma** means 'proper', 'whole', 'thorough', 'integral', 'complete', and 'perfect' - related to English 'summit.'

Muslims (Islam) believe there is the one almighty God, named Allah, who is infinitely superior to and transcendent from humankind. Allah is viewed as the creator of the universe and the source of all good and all evil. Everything that happens is Allah's will. He is a powerful and strict judge, who will be merciful toward followers depending on the sufficiency of their life's good works and religious devotion. A follower's relationship with Allah is as a servant to Allah.

Though a Muslim honors several prophets, Muhammad is considered the last prophet and his words and lifestyle are that person's authority. To be a Muslim, one has to follow five

religious duties: 1. Repeat a creed about Allah and Muhammad; 2. Recite certain prayers in Arabic five times a day; 3. Give to the needy; 4. One month each year, fast from food, drink, sex and smoking from sunrise to sunset; 5. Pilgrimage once in one's lifetime to worship at a shrine in Mecca. At death -- based on one's faithfulness to these duties -- a Muslim hopes to enter Paradise. If not, they will be eternally punished in hell. For many people, Islam matches their expectations about religion and deity. Islam teaches that there is one supreme God, who is worshiped through good deeds and disciplined religious rituals. After death a person is rewarded or punished according to their religious devotion. Muslims believe that giving up one's life for Allah is a sure way of entering Paradise.

New Age promotes the development of the person's own power or divinity. When referring to God, a follower of New Age is not talking about a transcendent, personal God who created the universe, but is referring to a higher consciousness within themselves. A person in New Age would see themselves as God, the cosmos, the universe. In fact, everything that the person sees, hears, feels or imagines is to be considered divine. Highly eclectic, New Age presents itself as a collection of ancient spiritual traditions. It acknowledges many gods and goddesses, as in Hinduism. The Earth is viewed as the source of all spirituality, and has its own intelligence, emotions and deity. But superseding all is self. Self is the originator, controller and God of all. There is no reality outside of what the person determines. New Age teaches a wide array of eastern mysticism and spiritual, metaphysical and psychic techniques, such as breathing exercises, chanting, drumming, meditating, to develop an altered consciousness and one's own divinity. Anything negative a person experiences (failures, sadness, anger, selfishness, hurt) is considered an illusion. Believing themselves to be completely sovereign over their life, nothing about their life is wrong, negative or painful. Eventually a person develops spiritually to the degree that there is no objective, external reality. A person, becoming a god, creates their own reality.

I want to add one because it's right in our back door, and many famous and influential people are adherents to it's beliefs, and that is Scientology. Some famous Scientologists are Tom Cruise, Kirsie Allie, Priscilla Presley, John Travolta, & Edgar Winter.

Scientology: The term "Clear" is derived from a button on a calculator that deletes previous calculations. According to Scientology beliefs, Clears are "optimal individuals" who have been cleared of false information and memories of traumatic experiences that prevent them from adapting to the world around them in a natural and appropriate fashion. Scientologists believe that clears become more successful in their daily lives, are healthier, experience less stress, and possess better communication skills. The reactive mind stores mental images which are not readily available to the analytical (conscious) mind; these are referred to as [engrams](#). Engrams are painful and debilitating; as they accumulate, people move further away from their true identity. Avoiding this fate is Scientology's basic goal.

Dianetic [auditing](#) is one way by which the Scientologist may progress toward the [Clear](#) state, winning gradual freedom from the reactive mind's engrams, and acquiring certainty of his or her reality as a thetan (self, spirit, or soul).

## CONCLUSION

Christianity is not about achieving but receiving; Religion says tell me what I need to do, Christianity says receive by faith what Jesus did; The kingdom of God is for those who have zero status or ability to help themselves in life, for those who feel unimportant, shunned, left out; The humble are readily welcomed into this kingdom, but the proud must be first become humble. No one enters based on merit, worthiness, or ability, but only by faith.

Gal.1:6-9

John 1:12...to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become the children of God.

II Cor.5:21 God made him who had no sin wo be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Romans 1:17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

- Receive forgiveness, & eternal life, by faith
- Be Reminded
  - Perhaps you've lost the awe, wonder, and appreciation for the gift of salvation
  - Col.2:6-7 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.
  - Images of children receiving gifts
- Repent, & be refreshed, renewed, refilled as a result of free forgiveness & cleansing.
  - Penance is not biblical; penance is voluntary self-punishment inflicted as an outward expression of repentance for having done wrong.
  - Hebrews 4:16
  - David, when he needed to get right with God, sacrifice & offering you did not require...; David received forgiveness after being saved the same as he did to be saved. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him. See II Samuel 12:10; Psalm 32:1-2.
- I Timothy 1:15-17

