

The Importance Of The Unimportant

Mark 10:13-16

#1 - The Disciples' Mistake, vs. 13

People—mothers, fathers, older children, and others—were bringing little children (paidia, those ranging from babies to preteens to Jesus for His blessing.

The disciples rebuked them and tried to keep them from going to Jesus. That was the Disciples' mistake—a big one, that got Jesus agitated toward them.

Were the parents creating some great faux pas—breaking customary protocol by bringing their children to Jesus? NO. It was customary for parents to bring their children to the rabbis for a blessing, and so it was reasonable that they would bring the little ones to Jesus. Some were infants in arms, while others were young children able to walk; and He welcomed them all.

The disciples weren't being subtle about this, nor was their objection to the children coming to Jesus a mild objection. Our English Bibles use the word “rebuke” to describe the disciples' objection. The word for “rebuke” is a severe description, used elsewhere in Mark of exorcisms (1:25; 3:12; 9:25), opponents of God's will (4:39; 8:30–33), or of outright censure (10:13, 48). This was no minor response of the disciples.

#2 - The Importance Of Being Unimportant, vs. 14-15

The disciples' reaction was severe toward the parents, and Jesus' response to them forbidding the children to come to Him was equally as severe.

The Bible says in verse 14, “But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant.” The King James translation puts it a bit more diplomatically by saying, “he was much displeased.” That's putting it mildly!!

The Greek word for “indignant” means “to arouse to anger,” that is, to vent oneself in expressed displeasure rather than simply brooding about it. The object of a person's indignation reveals a great deal about that person. Jesus' displeasure here reveals his compassion and defense of the helpless, vulnerable, and powerless. “ ‘Let the little children come to me, ... for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.’ ” Rather than disbaring children, Jesus commends them as the true heirs of the kingdom

In Jesus' eyes, even the unimportant in this world are important to Him—and consequently, they should be important to us as well.

Jesus then makes this a teaching moment to His followers. He announced that the children were better kingdom examples than were the adults. We tell the children to behave like adults, but Jesus tells the adults to model themselves after the children!

In what ways are children a pattern? In their humble dependence on others, their receptivity, their acceptance of themselves and their position in life. Children live by faith. By faith they accept their lot, trusting others to care for them and see them through.

We enter God's kingdom by faith, like little children: helpless, unable to save ourselves, totally dependent on the mercy and grace of God.

#3 - Jesus Elevates The Unimportant, vs. 16

Jesus elevated the unimportant. He made a big deal about them. He took time with them.

The ritual of blessings was well known in Israel. Noah blessed Shem and Japheth (Gen 9:26–27), Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau (Gen 27; 28:1–4), and Jacob blessed his sons and grandsons (Genesis 48–49). Such blessings tended to be official in nature, related particularly to the passing on of one's name or property. "A father's blessing establishes the houses of his children." The laying on of hands was also a priestly rite of investiture in Israel, whereby wisdom (Deut 34:9) and the spirit of office (Num 27:18–20) were conferred on the ordained. This rite was also continued in early Christianity.

Jesus was conferring His blessings upon them.