CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
AUGUST282021

Scripture Story: Mark 10:13-16; Matthew 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17.
Commentary: *The Desire of Ages* (or *Humble Hero*), chapters 55, 56.

trust like a child



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flashlight

"It is still true that children are the most susceptible to the teachings of the gospel; their hearts are open to divine influences, and strong to retain the lessons received. The little children may be Christians, having an experience in accordance with their years" (*The Desire of Ages,* p. 515).

keytext

"People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.' "

(Mark 10:13, 14, NIV)

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what do you think?

Which do you think is more difficult: For a child to feel self-reliant or an adult to become dependent?

Make a list of three qualities of a child that adults should never outgrow:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Which of these qualities would you desire the most? Why?

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In what way can believers in Christ be childlike but not childish? Explain the difference.

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did you know?

It seems as if humans are rarely happy with their age. Kids want to grow and be "big people," and grown-ups envy the energy and life of youth. Have you ever noticed that the root of the word "juvenile," which means youth, comes from the same word that we get the word "rejuvenate"? The noun form is "rejuvenescence," which conveys the notion of renewing youth. The oldest record of this term goes all the way back to the early 1600s. But long before such words were invented, Jesus valued the concept of "becoming like a child."

INTO THE STORY

"People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them."

(Mark 10:13-16, NIV)

"Then some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, 'Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.' After laying His hands on them, He departed from there."

(Matthew 19:13-15, NASB)

"And they were bringing even their babies to Him so that He would touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they began rebuking them. But Jesus called for them, saying, 'Permit the children to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.' "

(Luke 18:15-17, NASB)



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OUT OF THE STORY

Compare the three perspectives of the same event and note how the stories are different and how they are similar.

Why do you think people were bringing their children to Jesus? What are some attributes of Jesus that endear Him to parents?

How did the disciples respond to this attention? Why do you think they responded the way they did?

Mark's Gospel says that Jesus became "indignant" when the disciples rebuked the people. What does this say to you about how Jesus related to common people?

How does a child receive the kingdom of heaven differently than someone who is older? What are some attributes of children and their approach to faith that adults tend to struggle with?

Why do you think this story is in the Bible? What is the message God has in it for you today?

punch lines

"And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward" **(Matthew 10:42, NIV).**

"Don't let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity" **(1 Timothy 4:12, NLT).**

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven' " **(Matthew 18:1-3, NIV).**

"Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" **(Matthew 18:4, NASB).**

"Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it" **(Proverbs 22:6, NASB).**

further insight

"In the children who were brought in contact with Him, Jesus saw the men and women who should be heirs of His grace and subjects of His kingdom, and some of whom would become martyrs for His sake."

—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages,* p. 512.

connectingtolife

Sabbath

Read John 1:10-13.

Read and respond to the voting question in the *What Do You Think?* section of this week's lesson. As you reflect on the many encounters between Jesus and people, think about the way such people received the Savior. Did those who came to Christ in simplicity, humility, and with utter dependence on His mercy fall away or struggle? Consider how people such as Nicodemus and the rich young ruler were confounded by the nature of Christ's kingdom while the "childlike" seemed to "get it." In today's Bible reading it says: "He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God" (NLT). What would be different about your life if you started each day by "believing" and "receiving" Christ as a child would?

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Sunday

Read Hebrews 11:6.

Read the *Into the Story* section and use the questions in the *Out of the Story* section to guide your study. The three perspectives on the story of Jesus blessing the children are very similar. What phrase or portion of this passage speaks personally to you today? What do you think is the central message God has for you in this story?

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Monday

Read Mark 10:13-15.

I see two lessons that emerge from our *Key Text:* (1) Don't get in the way of a child coming to Jesus, and (2) the way to His kingdom is with a childlike spirit. What other lessons emerge? Think of a child in your sphere of influence that you can pray for and perhaps help get to know Christ better.

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Tuesday

Read Mark 9:37.

Read the quote from *The Desire of Ages* in the *Flashlight* section and think of an adult you know who truly believes that children are "most susceptible" to the kingdom of God. Think of Sabbath School teachers, youth leaders, and people who celebrate the wonder of childhood. What words would you use to describe their leadership and their impact in your church?

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Wednesday

The *Punch Lines* in this week's lesson underscore the value of children and youth in Scripture. Read through each passage and note the verse that is speaking to you today. What stories from the Bible illustrate these verses? Place names or events from Scripture that convey the childlike qualities Christ is calling for in His followers. For example: when David decided to attack Goliath, it was not because he felt grown-up but because he trusted that his God was big. His childlike trust in God is what compelled such grown-up courage.

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Thursday

Read 1 Timothy 4:12.

Take time to intentionally observe children today. Watch the way they learn, play, interact, and relate to the people around them. Consider how they deal with problems or challenges that seem too big for them. Think of three children in your church and write them a note of encouragement, affirming a quality about them that is inspiring. Be as specific as you can with your note of affirmation. You can decide whether you share these words anonymously or not, but make a clear path to Jesus for the children you know and maybe you will discover what Jesus meant by the phrase "the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Mark 10:14, NIV).

Friday

Read Psalm 125:1.

Reflect on an event or experience in your life when you had to depend on someone else with complete and simple trust. What are some of the emotions you felt? How does childlike trust make you a mature believer in Christ?

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this week's reading*

The Desire of Ages (or *Humble Hero*), chapters 55, 56.

A special adaptation of *The Desire of Ages,* entitled *Humble Hero,* has been created just for you by the White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at: www.cornerstoneconnections.net. By following this plan you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.

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