

LESSONS FROM JESUS AND CHILDREN

Watching Jesus with children provides lessons for adults

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴When 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. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” ¹⁶And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. (Mark 10:13-16)

LESSONS FROM CHILDREN

- Children are dependent
- Children are literal; they take words at face value
- Children are filled with imagination, discovery, expectation

LESSONS FROM JESUS

- Jesus has different priorities than his followers
- Jesus embraces the powerless

For Lunch Discussion:

- How could you foster childlike qualities in your walk of faith?
- What could you do to make one of Jesus’ priorities your own?

QUOTES OF NOTE

Children are not afraid to ask for help. They have no problem admitting that they are over their heads. To children, a call for help is a proud expression of their dependency on those who love them. Adults, on the other hand are anxious about calling for help. We are hesitant to admit we’re in trouble. Calling for help is humiliating; it is an admission of need, an acknowledgement of weakness, and we don’t want to experience that kind of humiliation. (Mike Yaconelli, *Dangerous Wonder*)

Jesus taught us to pray for daily bread. Have you ever noticed that children ask for lunch in utter confidence that it will be provided. They have no need to stash away today’s sandwiches for fear none will be available tomorrow. As far as they are concerned, there is an endless supply of sandwiches. Children do not find it difficult or complicated to talk to their parents, nor do they feel embarrassed to bring the simplest need to their attention. Neither should we hesitate to bring the simplest requests confidently to the Father. (Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*)

There is a point in a child’s development when the child’s mind seems shaped like a question mark—every sentence begins with “Why.” The answers seem only to raise more questions. Most parents understand that although it is more important to attempt an answer, often the question is irrelevant. For little children, what is most important is the act of questioning itself because children’s questions are more than a request for information. Their questions are an act of affection, of communion, of trusting.... In a healthy family, children’s questions are not about answers—their questions are about relationship.... In a welcoming environment where questions are safe, children are infected with curiosity—a fascination with truth, an unrelenting hunger to know and be known, to capture and be captured, to touch and be touched.... The reason so many of us have lost our childhood curiosity is that we’ve been tamed. Our world is populated with domesticated grown-ups who would rather settle for safe, predictable answers instead of wild, unpredictable mystery. (Mike Yaconelli, *Dangerous Wonder*)

The true measure of a man is how he treats someone who can do him absolutely no good. (Samuel Johnson, 18th century British biographer)