



# Jesus Blesses the Children

Mark 10:13-16

BIBLE BACKGROUND  
FOR LEADERS

## The Least of These

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Imagine a celebrity today on his way to a big movie premiere. Surrounded by “handlers,” he hurries from his car into the theater, basking in the admiration of fans but not stopping to give anyone special attention. This may be the picture the disciples had of Jesus. They saw it as their job to keep the masses away from Jesus—especially those as insignificant as children. After all, Jesus was a very important spiritual leader, and he needed all his strength and emotional energy to fight off the attacks of the Pharisees. He needed to be spending his time with those who were influential and powerful. He certainly shouldn’t be wasting his time with small children.

## Jesus Redefines “Important”

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As he did many times in his ministry, Jesus challenged the status quo. He ignored what the disciples considered politically important—appeasing the religious leaders of the day—and spent his time blessing children.

The parents had come to Jesus seeking a blessing on their children from this great teacher—perhaps a few words of blessing with his hand on their heads. But he did more than that; he took the children in his arms and hugged them! And *then* he blessed them.

In this act of blessing the children, Jesus showed the common person—even the small child—how important we all are to him.

## Jesus Provides an Example

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Another theme also winds through this passage: To make it to heaven, you must become like one of these small children. What did Jesus mean by that? What makes one fit for God’s kingdom? The religious leaders had it all wrong. They relegated children to a

place of insignificance until they grew to adulthood. Instead, we must value and encourage the qualities of children that make them receptive to the grace Jesus offers.

What are the qualities of children that make them well-suited for God’s kingdom? They’re humble and trusting, and so naturally prepared to put their faith in Jesus. Jesus’ message is that, just as children place their trust in their parents, we must be humble and willing to place our trust in God. We can’t work our way into heaven through right actions, as the Pharisees tried to do. We must relax and trust Jesus, as these small children did.

## The Jesus Connection

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Jesus, the Lord Almighty who created the world and conquered death, cares about each baby, each child, each youth, and each adult—Jesus is passionate about you and wants a friendship with you. Wow!

Can you fathom the depth of Christ’s love for you? Read Romans 8:38-39, and bask in your Savior’s love. Then think about these questions: What does it mean to you that you’re important to Jesus? How can it shape your life? Pray about the second question. You can write your prayer here.

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## DIGGING DEEPER

Mark 10:13-16

► Bible Point—Everyone is important to Jesus.

Key Verse—“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Mark 10:14).

## Daily Challenges

Choose one or more of these activities to do this week.

- **Each day this week, begin your morning by thanking Jesus for his deep love for you. Thank Jesus for loving you when you were unlovable—remember that his love took him to the cross for you. Thank Jesus for loving you despite your sin.**
- **Count your blessings! Write them down one by one. Spend time praising Jesus for the blessings he’s given you.**
- **Not only are you special, but all the people you encounter each day are special, too. Make an effort to treat each person you meet this week with the kind of respect, love, and care that Jesus would.**

## Through the Week

Use the following passages to explore additional biblical perspectives on how everyone is important to Jesus.

### Monday—Zephaniah 3:17

- How does it make you feel to know God takes great delight in you? in other people?

### Tuesday—Galatians 2:20

- What does it matter to you that Jesus gave his life for you?

### Wednesday—Ephesians 3:17-19

- How much do you understand how wide, long, high, and deep Jesus’ love for you is?

### Thursday—Romans 8:35-39

- How do you feel knowing that nothing can separate you from God’s love?

### Friday—Isaiah 40:11

- How has God gathered you in his arms and held you close to his heart?

### Saturday—Matthew 9:36

- What does it tell you about Jesus to know he had compassion on the crowds?

## Talk Topics

- Talk about how the way we treat others changes when we realize how important each individual is to Jesus.
- Talk about times when you’ve felt unimportant. How does what you learned today help you when you think about those times?
- Talk about the way Jesus taught his disciples about equality in this passage.

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