

Rossville Church of Christ Doorpost Devo



April 14, 2024



Encouragement from God's Word

What I Love About Jesus: His Love for Children

Jesus loves the little children. The Son of God had time for children. The Maker of the worlds saw the great value of little ones. The Messianic King saw his realm and kingdom as one that joyfully welcomed the dependent, the small, the young, and those who reflected a receptive, childlike heart. The Son of Man had a fiery passion to protect his little ones. Children were not too small or too powerless to be worth his time.

Scripture Plan: Read

Mon, Tues, Wed.:

Matthew 5:1-6 Each Night

Thurs., Fri., Sat.:

Matthew 5:7-12 Each Night

Devo Plan

1. Mon.--Read and Pray Together
2. Tues.--Read, Pray, Ask Questions, and Discuss
3. Wed.--Read, Pray, and Think about how to Apply
4. Thurs.-Sat.--Repeat steps 1-3 with New Passage
5. Sunday--Pray and Reflect on What was Learned in Worship and Class

Rossville Church of Christ

Doorpost Devo



April 14, 2024

Discussion Questions

Matthew 5:1-6

Discussion Question #1: What does it mean to be blessed? How does the world use that word?

Discussion #2: How is Jesus' idea of blessing different than the world's definition? What does the good life look like in Christ's kingdom?

Discussion #3: What does it mean to be poor in spirit? Discuss what this might look like in a person's life.

Matthew 5:7-12

Discussion #1: What does it mean to be a peacemaker? What kind of situations might call for us to be peacemakers?

Discussion #2: How can we have a pure heart? What keeps our hearts from being pure?

Discussion #3: How is it possible to rejoice in persecution? Why should we rejoice in suffering?

Apply and Obey

To obey what God says, this upcoming week I will...

I will share what I learned with...

Prayer Points

- Lord, Thank You--for being the true God of life and blessing.
- Lord, We Praise You--for your love for us even when we are totally undeserving and totally powerless without you.
- Lord, Help Us--to prioritize in life the things that you desire and prioritize. Help us see blessing even in suffering and pain.

They were not too insignificant to warrant his understanding, compassion, and care. He treated them as precious in the sight of God. He saw them as representatives of true greatness in a world striving for acclaim and status. Truly, Jesus loves the little children.

This refrain should not be a trite sentiment or merely a line in a familiar song. This truth is central to the heart of the living Christ. There is something about children that, for Jesus, so uniquely reflected his heart, his purpose, and the kind of kingdom he was bringing into the world. His reign is one that does not find its strength in bravado or might or arrogance, but in dependence, humility, purity, love, and wonder. Consider a few of the passages that reflect Jesus' love and care for children:

“And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.” (Mark 10:13-16)

“An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest. But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side and said to them, “Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the one who is great.” (Luke 9:46-48)

“And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:2-6)

What stands out here is that Jesus valued people who in that society didn't have much or any cultural status. The temptation many of us have in our relationships, without even realizing it sometimes, is to treat people instrumentally.

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the *doorposts* of your house and on your gates." --Deuteronomy 6:4-9

We can easily see others for what they can do for us or we choose to associate and identify with those that we think will reflect well on our status. Perhaps they can advance us or help us or make us seem greater. But Jesus has a different perspective. He indignantly refuses to buy into the assumption that people are only valuable if they can provide something to you. He rejects the idea that blessing children is too unimportant or too time-consuming. Rather, it is at the very heart of what he came to do—love the vulnerable, the dependent, and the weak. Jesus says that to identify and associate with someone who has no cultural or relational status or pull is to identify with him. To love and receive a child in the name of Jesus is to love and receive Jesus.

This kind of love is not manipulative, self-advancing, or self-serving. This is the love that Jesus modeled so clearly and so perfectly in his life. He was not calculating or cold in his relationships, associating only with those that could advance his cause and agenda. He invited and embraced people who had nothing to offer him but a humble heart. He welcomes those that are discounted and forgotten by the world. He is also fiercely protective of little ones, giving stark warnings about leading astray those who have hearts of humility and innocence. If to identify and receive a child in Jesus' name is to receive Jesus, then to hurt or reject a child is to reject Jesus. Jesus' love for children is a picture of his love for all of us. It is a love not dependent on what we can do for him in return. It is not a love tied to our status or strength. It is a love that flows from his very heart.

In a world where children face so many horrors and sufferings that they do not deserve, Jesus' heart for children is one of the many reasons why I love and trust Jesus so much. His call to "let the children come to me and do not hinder them" is a happy and beautiful invitation from the Savior. This call should drive all of us as disciples to point little ones to Jesus and do nothing to hinder them from knowing him. Why? Because with Jesus, they are perfectly safe. With Jesus, they are perfectly loved and valued. With Jesus, they belong to the one they were made to love. May we always be striving to love children and one another like Jesus does and do nothing to obscure their vision of Christ's pure love for them. Why? Because Jesus loves the little children.

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the *doorposts* of your house and on your gates." --Deuteronomy 6:4-9