

CATCHING UP!  
Mark 10:13-16

INTRODUCTION: Our Lord Jesus loved children. In fact, on one occasion when Jesus own disciples wanted to stop people from bringing their children to Jesus to have Him bless them Jesus got hot! There is a great eternal lesson we can learn from children: Mark 10:14-16. It is a wonderful blessing when parents want Jesus' blessings upon their children. All the parents wanted was for Jesus to put His hands on their children and bless them. The disciples acted more like bar bouncers than disciples. This was one of the few times Jesus got hot with His own team. How do you measure success? Matthew 18:1; Matthew 18:2; Matthew 18:3. If we want to "catch up" to Jesus we first must catch up with little children in the area of faith!

I. TRUST THE LORD AS A CHILD WOULD!

Remember the background here is the question: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus made a statement: Matthew 18:3. Jesus said children don't need to become more like you; but you need to become more like them. Adults often tell their children "You need to grow up! In other words, you need to catch up to me. Spiritually speaking Jesus turned that right around: "Children don't need to catch up to adults in the area of faith, adults need to catch up to children. " Children come into this world full of trust; they have no choice here. Jesus said: Matthew 18:4. To get into the kingdom of heaven we must become like little children and to become the greatest in the kingdom of heaven we must stay in the area of faith like little children and learn to trust our Lord! The problem with so many Christians today we are "childish, but not childlike." Jesus does not want us to be childish, pouting and griping, and putting ourselves first. But He does want us to be childlike; trusting innocently in our God who loves us and cares for us.

II. WE SHOULD APPLAUD THE SPIRITUAL DECISIONS OF A CHILD!

We are to welcome the children, young and old, who desire to draw near to Jesus: Matthew 18:5. In Roman culture children were considered non-persons. In that culture children, slaves and women were at the bottom of the list of importance. So, when Jesus told His disciples they had to become like little children. Fathers in Rome had the legal right to kill their children. Jesus turns this all around by saying unless we become like little children not only will we not be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, we won't even get into the kingdom of heaven. This love for children led the early church to set up the first orphanages. Children are still able to get excited and stay excited about the blessings of life. Adults often become impossible to excite and very difficult to keep excited about anything. We should never get over the joy of seeing someone be saved and become like a little child in faith.

III. WE MUST AVOID THE CONFUSION OF A CHILD!

In this context Jesus makes one of most chilling statements of His ministry: Matthew 18:6-7. This is one of the plainest and powerful warning Jesus ever gave. Nothing makes Jesus angrier than doing anything to either keep people from coming to Him or trying to lead people away from Jesus! Jesus does not want anyone to put a snare in someone's way to believing or walking through life with Him. Jesus is saying that if you would ever keep someone from coming to Jesus or obeying Jesus you would be better off dead! That is why Jesus said: Matthew 18:8-9. We need to be bridge to Jesus and not a barrier or roadblock to Jesus.