

Text— Mark 10:13-16

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

A recent television news broadcast reported that most American children are being raised by single parents because marriage is on the decline. Unfortunately, it certainly appears to be the case, for one policy being promoted by the current president of the United States is the providing of free daycare and preschool to those with little children. Yeah, it seems the president considers it a good practice for children to be raised by daycare facilities and public schools, rather than being raised by their own parents.

It's sad that the marriage of one woman to one man for life is no longer as common as it was in the past. The sin of fornication is on the rise; and, as a result, so-called "unwanted pregnancies" are also on the increase. Some expectant mothers simply choose to murder their babies by means of abortion. Others give birth to their children and then have other people, such as relatives or daycare providers, raise them. Unfortunately, God's Word is readily ignored as many fathers totally disregard their responsibilities, for they fail to provide for the physical and spiritual needs of their children.

Hence, a real return to the Lord and His Word is desperately needed in our nation, for there would be fewer single parent families if sexual activities between men and women were restricted to those couples bound together in holy wedlock. Hebrews 13:4 clearly states, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

The Holy Bible in Ephesians 6:4 commands, "ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And, 1 Timothy 5:8 adds, "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Thus, fathers have a God-given

responsibility to provide for their children's physical and spiritual needs; and, those fathers who fail to do so are deplorable.

People need to realize that children are actually gifts from God, for Psalm 127:3 declares, "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Furthermore, our Scripture selection supplies us with some very interesting and helpful information as we behold:

"JESUS' ATTITUDE TOWARD LITTLE CHILDREN"

With that as our theme, may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) What Jesus' attitude toward little children is
- 2) What childlike quality Jesus considers to be necessary in all people

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Verses 13 & 14, ----- (Mark 10:13-14)

Some people truly valued their children and the Lord Jesus, for our sermon text opens by informing us: *they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.* Interestingly, Luke 18:15 reports, "And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them." Oh, it is sad that Jesus' disciples considered it bothersome and wrong when young children were brought to Jesus to be touched by Him that they might receive a blessing.

The disciples sinned in rebuking those who brought young children to Jesus, for *when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.* Thus, Jesus' attitude toward little children is that He desires they be brought to Him! Jesus does NOT want little children kept away from Him.

Hence, it is quite sad to this very day that some professed Christians do NOT wish parents to bring

their children – even infants – to Christ by means of the waters of Holy Baptism, even though Jesus has Himself commanded, in Matthew 28:19-20, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Yes, ALL NATIONS, ALL people, need to be baptized in the name of the Triune God.

Children are certainly a part of a nation; so, children – yea, infants – are to be baptized, “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,” declares Acts 2:39. Indeed, the promise of forgiveness of sins and salvation comes to individuals of all ages by means of the Gospel of Christ when preached or attached to the waters of Holy Baptism, for Holy Writ plainly states, “the gospel of Christ... is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. [For] even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 1:16-17; 1 Peter 3:21-22; Romans 10:17)

Note well that the Lord Jesus Christ was *much displeased* by those who would not permit little children to come to Him for a blessing. Therefore, let no parent keep their child from Christ!

Look again at the second verse of our Scripture selection and consider the fact that Jesus says: *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God*. Think about it. Little children – infants – are an example to us adults in that they are humble and dependent, not haughty and independent, when it

comes to their relationship with the Lord.

A childlike faith in Jesus Christ is what we all need to have— faith which totally rests upon the Lord without questioning His means and methods of granting faith, sustaining faith and growing faith. A childlike faith is NOT a childish faith, but is rather unquestioning full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as one’s personal Savior and Lord.

We need to be like David the psalmist, who in honesty confessed in Psalm 131:1-2, “LORD, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.” Additionally, in Matthew 18:2-4 we read, “And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” So, it is vital that we get off our high-horse of pride and self-esteem and humble ourselves before the Lord, sincerely repenting of our sins and clinging to Him with full trust and confidence as our personal Savior and Lord.

Let us never forget that Jesus’ attitude toward little children is an attitude of welcoming love, for little children do not have the hangups adults often have with high self-esteem and a lack of taking God at His Word. Children simply believe God without demanding proofs. So, let us do as 1 Peter 2:2-3 instructs, for there we read, “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” Yes, let us desire to regularly feed on God’s pure, preserved, Holy Word, for 2 Timothy 3:15-17 teaches us that, “the holy scriptures... are able to make [us] wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. [For] All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be

perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.”

Verse 15, ----- (Mark 10:15)

The expression, “kingdom of God,” refers to the kingdom of heaven, the church of God’s grace now and God’s glory later. Note well that the kingdom of God must be received as a little child, that is, with unquestioning faith that simply takes God at His Word. Let us never forget Jesus’ attitude toward little children is an attitude of welcoming love since they simply trust and confide in Christ, loving Him because He first loved them. Let us likewise place and keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord.

Verse 16, ----- (Mark 10:16)

Picture it in your mind: Jesus with little children, even some infants, brought to Him— *And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.* Did Jesus tell those who brought the little children that He was too busy to bother with them? No! Did Jesus tell the parents that they should have left those little ones at home? No! Did Jesus push those little ones away? No! Jesus took those little children *up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.* That was a beautiful sight, to be sure; and, Jesus’ blessing those little children proved that He loved them and cared about them and their most important need which is the salvation He provides.

Therefore, Jesus says in no uncertain terms in Matthew 18:10-11, “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.” Jesus is the Savior of young sinners no less than old sinners. In Matthew 18:6, Jesus adds, “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” Therefore, how dare any parent withhold Holy Baptism and God’s Word from their

children. Such parents will answer for their terrible sins of neglecting their child’s greatest needs.

Indeed, Jesus is the Savior of little ones no less than He is the Savior of adults, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Romans 3:23-26) Everyone needs Jesus Christ, for Acts 4:12 clearly informs us, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

Let us never forget what Jesus’ attitude toward little children is: He loves them and desires to bless them, for He has redeemed them as well as adults.

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As we continue to ponder our sermon text, let us see what childlike quality Jesus considers to be necessary in all people.

Lets listen again to the words of our sermon text, Mark 10:13-16, -----.

Think particularly about the fact that Jesus says: *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.*

Note well that Jesus Christ holds little children’s faith up to us as an example that must be followed. Yes, we ALL need to have CHILDLIKE FAITH because such a faith has no doubts about the truth of God’s Word, no doubts that Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners, no doubts that Jesus loves all people; and, no doubts about the dire need for Jesus since all people are by nature sinners in need of the only

Savior from sin.

Childlike faith IS NOT childish, but is rather an absolute necessity since John 3:16-18 clearly states, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Hence, unbelief – rejection of Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior and Lord – leaves one condemned to hell by God, for Mark 16:16 says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." John 3:36 adds, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Thus, God's Word is crystal clear: sincere faith – complete trust and complete confidence – in Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior and Lord is an absolute necessity of one would be saved. In other words, a childlike faith in Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior and Lord is a quality Jesus considers an absolute necessity in all people. It's as Jesus informs us in our sermon text when He says: *Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.*

Note well that there is NO WAY to God and heaven other than having a childlike faith, full trust and confidence, in Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior and Lord. No one can be saved by his or her own works, for Romans 3:19-20 declares, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:27-28 adds, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded.

By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Observe then that one's own works do not even contribute to one being justified, declared righteous, in God's sight. Childlike faith alone in Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior and Lord justifies before God.

Think about the faith of a little child, for in our sermon text Jesus says, as we read earlier: *Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.*

Does an infant or a little child boast and brag, claiming to have made a decision for Christ by his or her own volition and powers of choice? Never! A little Christian child simply believes in Jesus because he or she has received the gift of true faith from God who gives it, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast," reports Ephesians 2:8-9. Thus, the childlike quality Jesus considers to be necessary in all people is childlike faith— simple, humble, God-given, full trust and confidence in Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior and Lord.

Furthermore, believers looking to Jesus in childlike faith know that it is without a doubt that, "We love him, because he first loved us," as 1 John 4:19 plainly states.

Let us go forward remembering what we've considered from our sermon text regarding Jesus' attitude toward little children. Let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins; and, let us continue to humbly but firmly trust and confide in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, having childlike faith in Him because He is in fact our loving Redeemer who has kept God's Law perfectly for us and has paid for all of our sins in full with His own holy and precious blood which He shed while nailed to the cross of Calvary. Let us never forget that Jesus is our risen Redeemer and living Lord, our only Way to God and heaven. Amen.

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