

As a Little Child

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[0 : 0 0] All right. Please take your Bibles and join me in Luke chapter number 18. As you're turning there, I'd like to know if any of you in here would be so honest today to admit to me that at Thanksgiving, when your family comes together, you're still sitting at the kids' table.

All right. Any of you still at the kids' table over here? Katie, all right, and David Burkhardt, all right. And the reason I had so many kids is I wanted to fill up the kids' table so I wouldn't be stuck there anymore.

And I'm a middle child in my immediate family, but among all the grandchildren, I'm a middle in that. There's a lot that are older than me and a lot that were younger. So I had many Thanksgivings at the kids' table where I didn't want to be there.

Like what one comedian said, he said he loves the kids' table. He says, why would you want to hear your great uncle talk about his 401K when you could see little Billy pull a noodle from his nose, you know? It's a lot more fun at the kids' table sometimes depending on what your family is like.

But every culture has some form of kids' table. They have something where they would say there's a separation between these people and those they're not supposed to be in the room.

[1 : 0 6] In a Jewish culture that we're looking at here, they wouldn't even have the understanding of kids that we have today. You know, the greatest stuff. If you want to sell something, you sell it to kids and they'll sell it to their parents. There's a great industry about that, that kids are elevated, often to a fault in our society and decision-making.

Not the case among them at this time. That when these children showed up in the story, what Jesus did would have been shocking to them. It would have caught their attention. They would have been paying attention, wanting to have understanding.

So just a quick review of the story. So there's Jesus and the disciples. There's people, parents, we presume, that brought these children to them. It doesn't say whom, but it would make sense that it was the parents.

And they wanted them to lay hands on them, to touch them, to bless the children, as it says in the book of Mark, that he prayed and that he blessed them in a parallel passage to it.

This isn't uncommon. Even in our own culture, but in that day, remember when Jesus in Luke chapter number 2 went into the temple and there was Simeon and that he held Jesus and he was there to pray a blessing.

[2 : 1 4] Some of you have politicians hold and kiss your baby and get a picture made. That's a little weird, but all right. And people do that and want to be with somebody famous. Even here, one time a family stopped by the church and wanted to know where the priest was and if I would come and pray with their baby.

And so never had that before then and haven't had it since. So I was very glad to pray and pray that they would all understand that they were sinners and the parents would understand they were sinners in need of a Savior and that they would raise their family.

And over my 30-minute prayer, I think I covered everything in the Bible to them. But it's not uncommon. So you would see that they were doing this. And Jesus had been known as a teacher, had been known as somebody of authority.

So it says in verse 16, But Jesus called them unto him. So there seems to be little babies as it's mentioned here, But it also seems that some of them would have been able to walk to him because it says that he's calling them.

And as I said in Mark, it says he took them in his arms and he put his hands upon them and he blessed them. And I would just say we ought to just pause for a moment and just think about how wonderful and gracious Jesus is.

[3 : 28] Just that picture. And if you could just imagine your understanding of who Jesus is and imagining that from reading the Bible, it's just a beautiful thing that he would take time in doing that.

We'll speak more about that shortly. But just to understand the value in which he had put upon that moment, the lessons that he was teaching to all those that were watching, where Jesus is always moving in the Gospels, but he's never in a hurry.

He's never rushed, right? He's headed to the cross, but he's always got time to live out in front of them what he would want us to live out once he is gone.

And then he says two things. Let them come and never forbid them. That's what he told the disciples. Let the kids come and never forbid them. This is interesting because this is the only time that we saw a Lord who would speak a blessing upon non-believers.

Therefore, he puts in a very unique category. Jesus says, Let them come and never forbid them. For of such is the kingdom of God. That's why I can tell you today, just like Jesus received small children in this story, he will receive you if you will come in the same manner.

[4 : 41] For of such is the kingdom of God. I've been told before, and I think it's such a good thing to remember, all of you that teach the Bible, which should be every one of us in this room in some context or in some setting, said that you ought to give something for their mind, for their heart, and for their hands.

I like to do that, divide this teaching today in those categories. Something theologically about what Jesus' view of children and what we can pause and look at today as we think about this.

Because I wouldn't want anybody to have holding them up a view that they would enter the kingdom because they have come from a certain type of family or that they have been baptized a certain way.

I would want to remove anything that would hold that up. Secondly, the intent of this passage is to ask you if you have come to Jesus as a little child. That would be something for your heart today.

And then lastly, something for your hands, something practical. Some practical instruction on how we should respond to the fact that while we're in the care of children, they will come to an understanding of right and wrong.

[5 : 46] And at that time, will they come to a saving knowledge of Jesus? That is a privilege and a responsibility that we've been given as individual families and then collectively as a church.

So Jesus is taking time for children. Would have been very, at least fascinating for them to watch. No one had that view of kids. They haven't accomplished anything in their lives.

When the disciples didn't welcome, they didn't welcome kids' ministry into the equation. The disciples saw it and they rebuked them. They're protecting Jesus' time. This isn't of his, it isn't valuable to him.

It isn't worth his time here. And they stop the parents. And so even the disciples, they continue to need teaching about what matters in the kingdom of God. Next week, Lord willing, when we look at the rich man, and they, and Jesus says, a rich, it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

The disciples will say then, who then can be saved? Like if it isn't, if you're not impressed with the Pharisees, and if you're not, what is it? And so Jesus is continuing discipling and teaching, instructing them.

[6 : 55] He's demonstrating to them the answer to this question here in this object lesson. So one thing I would like to remove here is first the misunderstanding of it.

And I don't know your background or your tradition or where you were at before you came to Christ or where you came to this church. But I want you to know that Jesus didn't welcome the children into his lap and into the kingdom because they were without sin.

From your own experience with your own kids or from the neighbor kids, you should know that children are not without sin, or not without sin, right? It seems reasonable, but this seems to be a reasonable question.

Why did Jesus say, they just said that this Pharisee was not ready, that the publican was justified but not the Pharisee. But what is it about the children? And so scripture makes it very clear that children are not sinless.

When David's description of himself in the womb and in Psalm 51, he says, Behold, I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me. Not just true for David and his parents, but true for all of us.

[8 : 03] Children are not exempt from being part of all mankind. 1 Kings 8, 46, If they sin against thee, for there is no man that sinneth not. And that's true regardless of age.

So it says in Psalm 53 that we come, we go astray as soon as we're born, speaking lies. Proverbs 29, Who can I say I have made my heart clean?

I am pure from my sin. My kids can't see it, say that. My parents' kids couldn't say that, that I have made myself clean. You know, children come from the womb lying to you, right?

They're crying in the other room. You run in there. What's wrong? Well, there's nothing wrong. They're just telling you a lie as quick as they can. The first lie that they're able to. So we see this. I tell that my kids get their good looks from me because Stephanie still has hers, right?

Good little dad joke. Dad joke and compliment my wife all in one. Pretty good day, right? But they not only get some of those things from me, but they also inherit a sinful nature.

[9 : 05] They not just sin, but they sin like their father. They sin in the same manner that I do. The Bible's very clear, Ecclesiastes 7.20, that there is not a just man upon earth, regardless of age, that doeth good and sinneth not.

I ask that you stay with me as I walk through what is not being said about children. They are not without sin, but the kingdom belongs to them and those who will enter in such as them.

You know, death is the evidence that sin exists and they do die even before they're made conscious choice of sin. It's because of sin that death comes upon all men. Now, we were created in the garden without the need for death, but when sin entered into the equation, entered into the world, it now pays, we all pay the consequences for it.

So, we know that sin is upon all men. So, I would expect that many of you that grew up in a Baptist church would be, have been taught about the condition of accountability, of differing ages, of differing children, until they reach the condition of being personally accountable, they belong to God in a special way.

I would like to look at that just for a moment. This is, for me, is more than just the doctrine of filling in the blanks and creating a narrative that makes me feel good. I would tell you that it does, that it is, but it's also something that I believe most reflects my understanding of the nature of God and supported in Scripture.

[10 : 31] There's a distinction between those who can and are old enough to discern and those that are not. As I said, there's an adult table and there's a kid table. In Jonah 4.11, it said, are you going to destroy this city with so many people here, six score, thousand persons that can't discern between right and their left hand?

All right, real quick, all of you raise your right hand in here. All right, some of you are old enough in here. Okay, you got it, it looks like, right? When you're younger, it's speaking about this discernment between being so young that they're not able to discern good from evil.

In Deuteronomy, it says, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil. Deuteronomy 1.39. And so, they had no sense of the law, they had no sense of disobedience, they had no sense of guilt, there was no conscience rebellion against the law of God.

The Bible makes a distinction between those who can discern right from left and obedience from rebellion and so does your family and that might be why some of you are still at the kids table. Alright? They say, you're not yet discerning.

You're still going to fight over the drumstick or whatever at the table here. It talks about discernment. Infants and small children in Jeremiah are referred to as the innocent.

[11 : 46] Also in their skirts, Jeremiah 2.34, is found the blood of the souls of the poor, innocents. I have not found it by secret search but upon all these, the poor, the souls of poor, innocents.

Which makes abortion such horrendous act against the image of God and it's not just the murder of anyone but it's the murder of innocent, helpless people that were given a responsibility to protect from the womb all the way to the tomb in people's lives.

James 4.17, it says, therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin. They do not yet know to do good. And so, I'm not alone in this understanding.

I choose the term a condition of accountability as opposed to an age of accountability because it would differ from one person to another. It would differ in conditions of mental capacity of people.

From the time of David, 2 Samuel 12, verse 16 through 18, I'm going to read all, both of these, three of these verses here to you just to take you to where David is at in this story.

[12 : 55] David, therefore, besought God for the child and David fasted and went in and lay all night upon the earth and the elders of his house arose and went to him and to raise him up from the earth but he would not neither did he eat bread with him and he came to pass on the seventh day that the child died and the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead for they said, behold, while the child was yet alive we spake unto him and he would not hearken unto our voice how will he then vex himself if he will tell him that the child is dead?

The people were concerned to go to David and to tell him this child that you have been praying for has passed. How will he respond? He is this broken and here's David's response in verse 19, but when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead.

Therefore David said unto his servants, is the child dead? And they said, he is dead. Then David arose from the earth and washed and anointed himself and changed his apparel and came into the house of the Lord and worshipped.

Then he came to his own house and when he was required he set bread before him and he did eat. David was embracing the fact that his child would not come to him but he could go to his child.

That he stopped, he worshipped and he ate in that moment. We see a big contrast from this response of David to the same response of when his adult son Absalom died.

[14 : 22] David would weep bitterly and so much that someone had to tell him that if he didn't pull himself together he had to pull himself together for the good of the family and nation. 2 Samuel 18.33 And when the king was much moved and he went into the chamber over the gate and wept and as he went and he said O my son Absalom my son my son will God that I have died for thee O Absalom my son my son.

A different response from a father because apparently a different understanding of the death of two sons. So that was understood by David. Also an understanding by Job which was written even before Moses.

Why did I Job 3.11 when Job was in the darkest hour of his day he said why did I not from the womb why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly?

He's saying why is it that I needed to live this life? And he said Job didn't believe that if he died that he would just cease to exist. He says in Job 19.26 and though after my skin worms destroy his body yet in my flesh shall I see God.

He was speaking about being at rest with the Lord believing if he had died in his infancy that he would have been at rest with the Lord. So it seems to be an understanding that David has about the nature and character of God the one of Job.

[15 : 42] So these children are not safe in the arms of God because of their parents faith but they're safe in the fact that they have a special relationship. If you notice in here there's no discussion of baptism there's no discussion of the faith of their parents.

That Jesus' statement about these children was not because of the covenant made with their parents. It wasn't because of some act that had been made. There was no in this picture there is no godmother and godfather.

There's no ceremony that's taking place. He makes a statement about these children when he just recognized that they are small children. God was not giving the kingdom just to a select group of children.

He was speaking about all of them of such manner. It wasn't just ten kids came up one day and Jesus said to these ten kids will I give the kingdom but he was speaking that the kingdom was for children as of them.

He even speaks about the children of pagan nations. Ezekiel chapter number 16 verse 20 he says this moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters whom thou hast born unto me and these thou hast sacrificed them to be devoured.

[16 : 48] Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter that thou hast slain my children and deliver them to the cause that they passed through the fire for them? See they're not the children because they were the children of believing Jews in this case they were not these were the children of a pagan nation.

They were his children because they exist. They were born unto him for his glory. They are sinners but they are not objects of divine wrath.

And so this is the theological truth that needed to be understood in what's happening in the story but let's address your heart in the story. So Jesus is saying that there's a manner in which these children will come to Jesus which you can come in same manner.

It didn't come based upon the faith of their parents it didn't come upon some religious outward ceremony that there's a manner in which children came to Jesus with no pretense with no earning with complete dependency on him as you hold a child who doesn't hold themselves up right?

Just completely trusting in you to hold them. And a question that you need to address and think about it's a popular lie that's been going it's always been around and it continues is aren't we all God's children and wouldn't we all be welcomed in God's arms?

[18 : 05] That's how we speak about it maybe that's how you've heard it at a funeral before is that everybody that dies especially everybody that dies in the south right? Everybody that dies in the south is a child of God isn't that true about it?

In Acts chapter number 17 Paul is speaking to a group of people that are worshipping idols and he begins quoting the poets of the day which believe that humans were the children of God so the poets of the day they were on the top of the billboards for writing songs that were saying that were all the children of God so Paul looking at these lifeless idols that were in front of them says if this is true then since we can move should we not think of God should we think of God as silver and gold and stone Acts 17 28 for in him we live and move and have our being as certain also of your poets have said this is he's quoting their poets of their day and we are his offspring well for as much as we are the offspring of God we ought not to think that Godhead is like on the gold or silver or stone graven by art and man's device at the times of this ignorance God winked at see the belief that we're all the children of God is long held it's popular it's even part of our pop culture today it was then poets said it today other musicians say it is that we're all the children of God we all get to enter into heaven someday because we're all

God's creation we're all God's children but verse 30 said at the time of ignorance God winked at but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent you must repent when it comes to standing before God you are no longer at the kids table you have a choice to make you know the difference between right and left as I proved in here earlier but it's more than it's not true we are all God's creation but a child is a specific category in mankind Ephesians chapter number 1 verse number 4 according as chosen us in him before the foundation of the world he should be holy and without blame before him in love having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself through Jesus Christ we've been now made adopted unto him according to the good pleasure of his will and those of us that are his children says in

Romans 8 9 and if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his another way that he says it is my sheep know my voice that we have the Holy Spirit that would live inside of us affirming the fact that we are his children and God did not adopt cute little orphans but he adopted us as enemies Romans 5 10 for if we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son much more reconciled we shall be saved by his life we came to an understanding of right and wrong we came to an understanding that we were the enemies of the cross and we came to him as a child fully dependent on him we come to Jesus as these children will come as verse number 17 as a little child shall no wise enter therein not sinless but absolutely dependent on him for everything and what a contrast between that prayed resume of the Pharisee which I give my tithes I don't do this I'm not extortioner I don't commit adultery I do all these good things in comparison to a child

God is telling us to come as little children not as a proud adult who believes that they've earned their spot at the table but as little children so having been challenged in our minds and in our hearts now I want to ask you what are some of the ways that this passage should shape our lives in following Jesus in our next step how should this truth shape our lives Luke 18 15 and they brought unto him also infants that he would touch them but when the disciples saw it they rebuked him see Jesus had more important things to do thought the disciples like he had an appointment with an up and coming CEO who made some serious money the rich young ruler that was the next person that would have been on the timeline for Jesus and so these kids needed to go before that meeting was going to happen and Jesus confronts that understanding with the disciples he tells them how important that it is an older pastor much older pastor in his late 80s he told me he said let me give one piece of advice about ministry he says if you have a nickel for ministry put it in children's ministry and how many of you came to know

[23 : 04] Christ before the age of 18 would you raise your hand I don't think any of you are surprised by that I once made the argument that most people come to know Christ before the age of 18 because parents and churches focus most of their energy on children's ministry so it only makes sense but I think that was faulty thinking because what happens is as we grow older we as poor people consider ourselves rich as we grow older we become like the rich man who cannot go through the eye of a needle of a camel going through the eye of a needle the older we get the richer in our own minds we become heard a testimony of a man that I invited to come and share his testimony and priest tonight Walter Stevens when he got saved in his testimony his wife was a fortune teller he was a carry a chainsaw was involved and Jesus was involved that's all you need to know to be back tonight you're going to hear this story but when you hear a story as an adult the older we get the more we become like the poor man who thought he was rich and so

I say Selah not just my daughter's name but I just say let's pause and let's meditate on that and before we look at some practical lessons on how we bring our children to Jesus let the gravity of our assignment set in with an understanding of a condition of accountability that I would have that I believe I find here in scripture we know that the small children around us will go from innocent to believers or enemies of the cross as they grow up here maybe that's not correct maybe what I'm showing you today in my understanding is not I do know that God is good I know whatever he does is right but let's say that this model what I'm saying is correct that among us that these children will go from a time of innocence to a time of understanding and right and wrong and it's going to happen as they're running in our hallways it's going to happen when they're in our wanna program it's going to happen all along the way let's also recognize that not only does it happen among us but we have an important ministry because before they get to that age they're watching us and they're learning from us their view of

God that's why it said in a couple chapters ago that a sin against a little one is such a horrible crime and a millstone should be put around you because when you hurt a little one you distort their view of who God is and it's such a horrible thing so we have a ministry with children who are coming to an understanding of right and wrong and then we are there with them when they get to that point let's also come to a belief that these children get to that at a very young age people put their faith and trust in Jesus many of you put your faith and trust in Jesus at a young age which also means at a young age they could come to a place of not putting their faith and trust in him and choosing rebellion as adults run and we're thinking and trying to make all these important decisions in our lives and we're trying to do all the things that really matter and we're saying don't bring the children into the room right now because we have something too important to do Jesus says let them in and forbid them not because you may be making big decisions about where you're going to live and what you're going to do they're making eternal decisions if you've already made your eternal decision then your life ought to be centered around helping other people that have not yet made that eternal decision and where is our greatest ministry as a church is to help families as their children are getting to the age where they were making that eternal decision the man in last week's story who prayed and told

God how good he was he was once a small child in a home probably hearing the same type of prayer that he offered the Pharisee he said a prayer this is the kind of person I'm at he very likely that wasn't original content by him he was probably a person who grew up in a home with a dad that prayed a similar prayer he grew up with people that were saying that he was good enough that he could justify himself and that's what he said before the vision started in 2006 I had the opportunity to visit a lot of churches in the area I knew I wouldn't have the opportunity to do that again and so I visited saw many wonderful gospel preaching churches and I'm grateful we are working together as brothers and sisters in Christ to get the gospel to our community but I went to one church and I found myself in a business meeting that's always awkward right and you try to slip out like I don't belong here and but I and all that's happening and one person an older deacon sorry deacon it's not your fault this one here right he just said

I don't know I'm afraid that's exactly what will happen we'll attract kids and they'll be running around and they'll break things and they will destroy our building can I tell you in almost 18 years since I went there that that church wasn't destroyed by children it's been destroyed by moth and by rust and by not having an understanding of Jesus love for the children let me give 13 statements of practical teaching before we go to lunch if you invite me to lunch I go quicker any takers in here and what are you having one alright so before I give these to you briefly it brings a strong conviction into my life there is not a room or your living room regardless of how many times you decide to come to this altar or not come to this altar anytime that I preach the word or anybody teaches the word of you you're forced to make a decision we are making decisions based upon the word and I want to challenge us understanding once again that we in our hallways and in our classrooms and in our conversations when we accept it or reject it and it ought to be the highest priority of all of us in here to do what we can to make sure that they have a clear understanding that

[29 : 36] God is good and that he is loving so first one here make sure that you're guarding nourishing and focusing on your own spiritual condition are you putting Christ first do you make time to worship fellowship with other Christians read the word of God and to pray whatever you want to see in the life of your kids must first be in yours if you want your kids to develop good friendships with other Christians you must develop good friendship with other Christians if you want them to put Christ first you have to put Christ first we set the example as parents as crucial and rearing Christian disciples do you realize the importance of living out your Christian faith every day in front of your children do they see that Christ is first in your life and that you seek to glorify him in everything that you do the commitment to weekly worship with your family at church is one of the most positive things that you can do for them the intentional effort to be at church when we gather reinforces for our worship communicates a major truth to our kids

God is the center of our lives your faithful church attendance can have an eternal influence on your kids they need to see that God is at the center of your life and they're watching and they're listening and they are determining a value system on what allows us to be at something or not to be at something demonstrate to your children that your most important human relationship that you have and prove this by showing respect for your spouse and displaying sacrificial love and physical affection for him or her so much of your kids understanding of love is being seen as they're watching a husband and wife that's why the world goes so much at wanting to remove either one of us from the equation wants to remove a man or wife because it's really hard to have a definition of biblical terms if you haven't seen it lived out in your parents what does forgiveness look like oh I've seen that this morning around breakfast what does unconditional love look like oh

I saw that when mom ran into the garage with her van didn't happen could though all right and all these things they ought to be seeing it lived out as they hear the words being taught to them they ought to have very vivid pictures of what that looks like show your child and tell your child that you love them every day show them and tell them that you love them every day work diligently at building a relationship with them take time from their earliest days to communicate with them about deep and important things read the word number five read the word of God with your child and pray with and for your child every day number six give your child responsibilities do whatever it takes to create with him or her a godly work ethic do not do not do for your children what they are capable of doing for themselves those who hate work are among the most unhappy and fulfilled people in all of the world Adam and Eve had responsibilities to fulfill even in the garden of Eden before sin entered into the world sin work is not to be despised but

God graciously gives us the gift of real responsibility in the world and they should see us take it on like that number seven do not bail your children out of consequences that arise because of their own actions and choices it is essential for them for their earliest days to learn that sin has consequences you will not always be there to rescue them and you should not enable them number eight teach them by example that Christ expects us to be presenting our bodies to him as a living sacrifice the world teaches us that it's all about us and it creates a culture where we love ourselves first and best but God gives us opportunities from early years to serve other people take them on a short term mission trip do something in this community to serve but help them see that we are to offer our lives and our service to him in worship teach them to respect others show them by example that it is the soul of another person that they should value and not the outer person's shell part of showing respect for others involves on their part being how we dress in such way including encouraging forgiveness praise and setting a godly example we don't do things just because we want it and all of our decisions we think

God how do I use whatever you given me to serve other people and then impress on them the brevity of life that life is a vapor that they should analyze their desire to accumulate things because life is so short we demonstrate to our children by our actions and our priorities that material things will never be enough and they will never satisfy us one day we will give an account of our lives to our creator only one life will soon be passed and what done is for Christ will last help your children understand that this earth is not our home and therefore we should not treat it as such and demand to commit respect from your children do you live in such a way that is worthy of respect do you say one thing and yet live another even a young child can understand hypocrisy number 12 teach your children that pleasing God is their ultimate goal to do this means something being alienated from the crowd pray with your child for one friend who is godly and true

[35 : 12] God will provide this friend I prayed that when I was in high school and my understanding how important it was that I would live a life that was pleasing to the Lord and having no friendships and I remember my mom praying with me at night that I would have a Christian friend you know what I found God brought a Christian friend into my life make number 13 and lastly make sure your discipline is consistent and abounding in mercy these principles must be put into place from a child's earliest days it's easier to build children than to repair men and if children grow up with these truths as part of their everyday lives it will make the job of pairing them a more joyful experience Greg is thinking about writing a book on marriage as he's not been yet married right a person in the middle of parenting I have to respond to all of myself Jesus isn't bringing those kids into his lap for a sentimental reason that they matter because everybody just loves kids

I mean I do I really do but what I'm saying here isn't sentimental but it's serious is that we have a responsibility to live out the gospel in front of the kids that God brings and he keeps sending kids to us on midweek on Thursday he keeps sending more and more kids to us our nurseries will never be big enough we are being given a responsibility so I pray that God will do for you as he has done for me as I consider my responsibility to my kids and the kids of this church the best time for them to receive Christ as a child is when they are as a child right the best time to receive Christ as a child is when they are a child understanding what it's like and if you did not come to Christ as a child it's not too late to come to him as a child come with no pretense come fully dependent on him who will care for you some of you didn't come to Christ as a child but today you can today you can come to him as a child and we should teach them would you pray with me every head bowed every eye closed believer one day some parents knew that they needed to get their kids to children and they didn't care if it wasn't socially acceptable they didn't care if they weren't greeted and welcomed by the disciples but they knew that this man

Jesus was gracious and he was caring he was speaking truth and they said I'm going to get my kid to them could I encourage you those of you in here that are parents would you do whatever it takes to get your kids to Jesus as you pray for them on the same day a group of well-meaning but ignorant followers of Jesus stood in their way I'm going to ask you to help make sure that we never ignore Jesus' command to forbid them not may this church never die of rust and moth may it always be walls that need to be painted and may there always be kids that are running through here because we understand how God cares for them would you make it a serious matter to know the names of our kids in our church and join our families in prayer some of you my heart goes out to I know you're praying that they would be coming to know

Christ because even though they did not come to Christ in their child years they can still come to Christ as a child today and so we will pray and we will serve alongside of you asking for that and then to the unbelievers that would listen in to our meeting today either in the room or online you do not have to give up your intellect to trust the Bible you just have to give up your pride come as a child you don't have to give up your intellect to come to trust the Bible you just have to give up your pride it makes complete sense it is completely logical it is completely explained to you today give up your pride and do not believe the lie of popular culture that you're a child of God because everyone is that it is simply not the case to be a child of God you must come to him as a child of God and you should come to him today just like Jesus received the small children in this story he will receive you you will come if you will come in the same manner if you're not believing today would you just pray to

Jesus say I come as a child no more pride no more excuses I come to you receiving that gift then I'm going to take some time and pray and I'm going to make sure you have plenty of time maybe you come to the altar Stephanie maybe you join me at the altar we pray for our kids I want them to know the gospel but let's take time and pray for the children and our homes Thursday Thank you.

[40 : 48] Thank you.

Asking, Lord, that you would forgive me when I would put the priority of anything in my life above the salvation of my children. Lord, there is no good thing that I will ever be involved in in this ministry that is of greater importance to me or of greater responsibility.

Father, I pray for every parent in this room today and for their children. I pray for the children in the nursery all the way through, Lord. As they grow and they come to an understanding of right and wrong, they come to an age, Lord, in which they can understand the gospel.

I pray that the Christianity that we've lived out in front of them makes the gospel, Lord, as irresistible. Lord, it makes it as something, Lord, that they cannot wait to live out as well because they see a joy in us, Lord.

They see a substance about it, Lord, that allows us to be unmovable during the most difficult of times. Father, you have given us as a church an incredible privilege and a responsibility.

[42 : 18] And, Father, I pray that you would help enable us to be used to see many kids that run these halls this year and through all the years until your return come to a saving knowledge of you.

Lord, I know that right now upon the hearts of some parents and some others in here are the names of some kids. And, Lord, I'm praying for the Holy Spirit's conviction in their life. I pray that the gospel that they did hear and the gospel that they are now hearing, Lord, will bring conviction to them.

And that no one in this room or that comes into contact with us, Lord, would ever leave not recognizing that you invite them into your arms. You invite them into the kingdom if they would only come as a child.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.