

# "Come Here, Kids!"

**"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not."**

(Matt. 19:14, Mark 10:14, Luke 18:16)

Jesus offers this instruction to His disciples as though they really needed this clear word to remove any doubt about His attitude about children. The word **"suffer"** means literally to "let." It would be better read, "Let the little children come." It carries the idea of "being commanded" to "welcome the children to come to Jesus!"

When you consider that these neophyte disciples were not really what we might call "child sensitive" men. This command was offered to rugged, outdoor, task-oriented men who needed this instruction.

This was not an instruction to woman, per say. It was not the "man's" natural way to welcome the children. They have to learn this. Remember, when the mothers would bring their children to Jesus? They wanted Jesus to bless their children. The disciples tried to discourage the mothers from bringing their children to Jesus, insisting that the Master was too busy for their interruptions.

These same disciples had to be taught to "humble themselves as these little children." (Matt. 18:4) Again this was something they obviously needed to learn from the Master. They often had the wrong attitude and understanding about children. They were clearly told to **"welcome the children,"** just as Jesus Himself modeled welcoming the children.

It is important to notice the words **"little children."** This word compares to our English word "babes." We might think of them as preschooler or more accurately Nursery – Toddlers, who are very dependent and require a lot of attention from caring adults.

The words **"to come unto me"** carry the weight of "coming into the presence" of Jesus. If Jesus welcomed children to be in His presence then, how much more now would Jesus implore us to bring the children into His presence? The risen, living Savior still welcomes the little ones to come to Him. You see, Jesus loves kids, especially "little children." Jesus, then, is the object of their coming. It is "Him," and "Him alone," they come for. He knows how to deal with them. He is what they need.

The strong words, **"forbid them not"** are laden with the thought of "not to hinder." We adults have the power to encourage or to discourage children from being in the presence of Jesus, even today. It might be helpful to understand the opposite of "to come" is "to stay away." There is no instruction given by Jesus that the children should be "kept away" or be "blocked out" or "impeded" in any way from coming to Him. These words must have had impact upon the disciples as this command occurs in all three of synoptic gospels. It must speak to us today! (See Matt. 19:13-15, Mark. 10:13-16, and Luke 18:15-17)

Let us welcome little children to come in the presence of Jesus! Why not bring them? Jesus still says, "Come Here, Kids, I want to see you!"

## Some application questions:

1. In what ways do you see yourself "ignoring" children who might come to Jesus?
2. If you have been "bothered" by children, could you ask the Lord to give you "His heart" for the children and change your attitude?
3. What are some ways we "hinder" the children from coming into the presence of Jesus?
4. Think of some ways you could be more "child sensitive" and helpful to bring children into His presence.

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