prayer requests

study notes

eastview
christian church

Eastview Christian Church
1500 North Airport Road
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Sermon Study

Jesus and the Children
Matthew 18:1-4, 19:13-15

vision

Eastview Christian Church is a fearless church of Christ followers whose ridiculous love and dangerous witness are irresistible.

AUTHOR'S NOTE (summary of key points for this study)

In the time of Jesus, children were "the lowest of the low" according to one theologian. The Greek word for child is neither masculine or feminine; they referred to children as "it." Some scholars cite today's biblical text as the first time in ancient Jewish literature (perhaps in all of ancient literature) where a child is used as a positive example. Many believe that our culture has gone too far to the other extreme; catering to our children. But the truth is that Jesus loved and valued children then, and He does now.

Gather (your group getting to know each other)

1. Share some examples of how members of your group have been involved with training children in the faith here at Eastview or in other ministries.

2. List all the ways you know that our church serves children. How thankful we should be for the Christian teaching offered here!

Go
(your group on mission)

If you have never served in the children's areas at Eastview, pray about volunteering, even short-term, to serve in this vital ministry. Coming to know Jesus as a child is crucial to life-long faith. How could you help Eastview's youngest learn to love Jesus?

Grow (your group growing as Christ-followers)

Key Scripture:

Matthew 18:4 "Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Discussion:

1. Have someone open in prayer.

2. Have someone read both sections of scripture aloud.

3. Pride rears its ugly head in Matthew 18:1. The disciples are not questioning whether they would even be in the kingdom of heaven, but are wanting Jesus to say that they are the greatest in the Kingdom. From your general knowledge of this chapter of the Bible, (or the other gospels) what might have given them that idea?

4. Jesus' lesson, that they must be like a child, does not mean that they are to be innocent, simple-minded or easily amused. Re-read 18:14. What quality brings us to the doors of the Kingdom?

5. What other qualities that children often exhibit are helpful in our faith walk?

6. Read the following scripture references together and give specific examples of how the parents in these situations had to humble themselves to obtain help for their children:

Matthew 9:18-26

Luke 8:26-39

7. Still considering the passages above, note and comment on Jesus' attention to, and healing of children in these passages. What are the similarities and differences? What stands out to you about how Jesus handled each situation?

8. One author says, "Humility is not a virtue by itself; but it is pure receptivity, the prayer for God's grace and forgiveness, the opening up of the heart to God." In our culture of "selfies" and "look at me," why is it so hard for us to be humble? What are the fears associated with exhibiting the personality trait of humility? Can you describe someone you know who is humble? How does that person live his/her life?

9. Re-read Matthew 19:13-15. How do the disciples blunder once again in this passage, and why do you think they acted this way? What did Jesus do in response to the parents' request and what lesson did he repeat?

10. Putting Matthew 19:13-15 in time context in Jesus' earthly journey, we note that on his way to Jerusalem and the cross, Jesus took time to pray for and lay hands on the children. What lesson about letting "busy-ness" interfere with meaningful interaction with our children can we take from His example? What change in our patterns could be made to benefit our children's relationship with us and with Jesus?

11. What is one thing you could do with your children, grandchildren, or any child you influence, to increase their knowledge of and love for Jesus?

Give
(your group serving each other)

There are times as we are raising our children, that it really does "take a village." What service could you offer, this week, to a group member to lighten his/her load of caring for the family?