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## Meeting the Messiah Start Acting Like Children

*Week 37*     **Mark 9:33-37, 10:13-16**  
*September 21, 2025*

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### LIFE LESSON:

**We must approach Christ with a childlike attitude and not live life with a childish attitude.**

### I.     **VV. 9:33-34**

It is ironic that our passages today deal with being childlike because the argument the argument being had between the disciples is about as childish as it gets. It reminds me of the old “my dad can beat up your dad” argument. Notice that the conversation happened when they were at the house. There is no doubt that the three years that the disciples had followed Jesus was packed full of ministry and teaching, but Jesus always took the time to sit down with His disciples and discuss what they had seen and heard and the spiritual and emotional impact it had on them.

Once confronted about their conversation, the men went silent. Many times, when we argue we realize how childish or mundane the argument is once we are forced to reflect on it. We are also reminded by Jesus’ question that we cannot hide anything from the Lord. Jesus knew what was in their thoughts and words and now He wants to lead them into a personal reflection to see if what they are seeking is what they are envisioning.

### II.     **VV. 9:35-37**

Leadership in the Kingdom of God does not always allow us to rub elbows with the highest members of society. Sometimes we must minister to those that society looks down on. Jesus illustrated this many times with people such as the woman at the well, Mary Magdalene and lepers. In our natural way of looking at things, we cannot see status except in crowns, money and fame. In this case, Jesus is showing that it is children that

are welcomed into His presence and those who have faith such as that. It is not having high rank given by the world (which that is not necessarily wrong) that gives us stature in the Kingdom. It should not be self-elevation that we are seeking in the first place, but if we want to be great then we must be humble. It is the humble that God will elevate, and it is the proud that will be humbled in the end. It is surprising that men who were far from wealthy and had given up everything they had to follow Jesus was now arguing about who is going to be the greatest and what position they would hold. No matter where we are in society when Jesus calls us to follow Him, we have made a step up and our exact location and usage by God should be taken as a privilege and appreciated in humility. JC Ryle writes, "It is a solemn fact, whether we like to allow it or not, that pride is one of the most common sins which beset human nature. We are all born Pharisees. We all naturally think far better of ourselves than we ought. We all naturally imagine that we deserve something better than we have. It is an old sin. It began in the garden of Eden when Adam and Eve thought they had not gotten everything that their merits deserved. It is a subtle sin." As subtle as it may seem, our pride has and will cause us to take our eyes off Jesus and others and look solely to our own interest no matter the cost to others who are around us. These men who have been following Jesus and being part of His inner group have now had a child stood before as their example. That would have to cause some raised eyebrows, but that is how the Kingdom works. It is by serving that you lead in the Kingdom of God. Welcoming the smallest in society is to welcome Jesus which is to welcome God the Father.

### **III. VV. 10:13-14**

Jesus was receiving the children, but the disciples thought that their ministry was above that. They had not recognized that Jesus had a better handle on His Own ministry than they did. We do not have the authority to adjust God's work to fit our agenda. It is always to be done God's way not matter how it may affect our social standings. We may be called to work among the affluent, but it seems that more times than not it is the "lesser" of society that we minister to since those who are well off usually are not too accepting to the gospel.

Jesus told them that the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are as the children He is accepting. It is not

those who have all the answers but those who trust Jesus and understand the privilege of being in His presence. We are not to stop anyone who is willing to come to Jesus no matter who they are or what they seem to offer if anything at all. Those who are willing to come to Jesus on His terms are the ones that the Kingdom of God is made up with.

#### **IV.   VV. 10:15-16**

Verse fifteen is where we need to understand the difference between being childish and childlike. Childishness is much more in line with our natural nature. It means to be self-centered and willing to pitch a fit if we do not get our way. We are more concerned about what we can get out of a situation even if it means others get nothing out of it. Childish also means that we want all the credit we can get so that we get the attention and the praise. Like a child who does anything and wants to make sure that everyone is watching or is always trying to outdo other children to look better than those around them.

Childlike is more of a humble attitude and being trusting. To see the welcoming arms of Jesus and run to them because of the love that is offered. The Dependent attitude of a child is second to none. They know they need help even when they are trying to learn something on their own. Salvation and a relationship with Jesus call us to recognize our dependance on Him. The older we get the more our pride gets in the way or admitting our dependence even when we know we need help or mercy. Without these traits we cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. The main reason for this is that we are too busy trying to develop our own kingdom or queendom which allows us to run it the way we want to. Repenting is turning from trying to do it our way and turning to Christ in faith and reliance upon Him.

To illustrate His love and acceptance of the children, Jesus blesses them by laying His hands on them. To be in the hands of Jesus is a blessing in and of itself, but to know that Jesus blesses intentionally those who come to Him makes it that much more of an act of grace for us to fall down and worship Him for. The blessing of the children is of importance for many reasons but none more so than the fact that the mind of a child is being directed by whatever they hear at a very early age. Even children are thinking about God in their

## **PERSONAL REFLECTION:**

- 1. Are you content to be used where God has put you even if He never promotes you to another level or place?**
- 2. Do you ever sit down with Scripture and examine how you are living your life and the way you are thinking about situations to see if they line up with glorifying God?**
- 3. Are you more willing to minister to someone who is higher on the ladder of society than with those who are rejects?**
- 4. If God treated us in our desperate condition the way you treat others in the same position, what shape would you be in on the day you stood before Him?**

own way while young and we get the opportunity to help mold their minds and teach them truth so that when the world comes at them with godless ideas the children will have truth to compare it to and fall back on. The poor in many ways can too be manipulated as people take advantage of their desperation. Again, the church can show love to them without looking for anything in return while letting people know that are in desperate situations that Jesus loves us regardless of where we stand in society and that we too, even if not monetarily poor, was spiritually bankrupt and was in total need of a Savior.

## **COMMENTARY USED:**

Ryle, J. C. Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of Mark: A Commentary [Updated] (p. 128). Aneko Press. Kindle Edition.