**Let Kids Come to Jesus**

***13****Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people,****14****but Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.”****15****And he laid his hands on them and went away.*

 Children are worthy of the kingdom of Heaven and to come close to Jesus, and we are called to strengthen their faith in Him.

 Greetings dear brothers and sisters as we celebrate the commencement of our Sunday School in Children’s Sunday and also enjoy our graduates. Appropriately, we are talking about children today, and it is important to know that the youngest of society did not appear prominently in the Scriptures – the reason being that they did not hold an important place in society at that time. The top of the societal social pyramid was occupied my men, follow by women, and then children, not counting slaves or servants. Generally, children were thought inappropriate to be interjecting themselves among adult conversations, and it is on this basis that we see the disciples behaving in the way that they do in the passage. Thus, we are talking today about Jesus’ perspective on children. May the Lord awaken us to the value that they have and should have in our eyes. Let’s go to our explanation…

 Adults are called to encourage children to grow in their faith in Jesus. The Lord had just gotten done giving explanations to his own disciples about marriage and how some people were not called to be married because of specific reasons. It was as if it was suddenly noticed – right in the middle of this important teaching – that kids wanted to approach Jesus. Even though children should not have been interrupting the Rabbi (for Jesus was an itinerant rabbi), they were innocent in their intent.

 In Jewish tradition, on the day of Atonement, parents would often bring their children to the elders so that hands would be laid on them. It is thought that perhaps this may have been a possible reason why this event took place – that adults viewed Jesus as an elder of the nation, even though he was much younger.

 What is most important about this passage is Christ’s command. He said the following: first, “*Let them come*.” Second, “*Do not hinder them*,” and third, he gave the reasoning – “*for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven*” (meaning the kingdom of God). Therefore, Jesus’ view of society’s approach to children’s status was that it was wrong. On the contrary, children should have been heard, should have been approaching Jesus freely, because they already belonged to the Kingdom of God. So, we ask, why? We find the answers in their qualities as children: they are innocent, dependent on parents, and weak in their societal position.

 Often, we forget that innocence and that weak, dependent status of theirs is, in fact, an example to us. We forget that if we also do not approach God with a truly broken, humble, clean, and honest heart, that our adultness would be a barrier between us and Him in our spiritual growth.

 Thus, we are called to two exercises as a result of this: first, we must realize the value of children and not allow them to approach any other leader than Jesus Christ. Second, we must work toward a lifestyle of self-examination, especially our prayer-style, to make sure that it is humble.

 Remember: kids do not know big words. Kids do not calculate when they’re going to tell the truth or what they truly want. Kids do not know politics or diplomacy from the beginning – they only learn how to lie after some time, from adults. When kids feel safe, they speak very comfortably with you and me.

 We also, without being immature (and thus childish), are called to be innocent, honest, clean-hearted, and God-dependent in our faith-walks.

 May the Lord simplify us, clean our hearts from endless calculation, so that we can enjoy the Kingdom of God as kids do.

 Remember: Children are worthy of the kingdom of Heaven and to come close to Jesus, and we are called to strengthen their faith in Him. The Lord bless you all. Amen.