



The Gospel According to Luke
Wk. 89 "God's Kingdom and His Children"
By Pastor Jody May

Luke 18:15-17 ESV

The Little Children and Jesus

¹⁵ People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁷ Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

The Poly-Parent Households Are Coming -

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/12/opinion/ivg-reproductive-technology.html>

- For most of human history, after all, families across the Western world were defined in largely biblical terms: one man, one woman, with children conceived through sex and sanctified by marriage. Everyone else was just a bastard.¹
- technology known as I.V.G. (in vitro gametogenesis)
- Here's how I.V.G. works. Under natural conditions, the body produces gametes — eggs and sperm — by taking nondifferentiated stem cells (with 46 chromosomes) and instructing them to split into more specialized cells, each containing just 23 chromosomes. In the male body, the process occurs in the testicles at puberty, and these specialized cells become sperm. It takes place in the ovaries of the female fetus in the womb and the cells become eggs. Both these processes are known as gametogenesis. In vitro gametogenesis, therefore, is precisely that: creating gametes outside the body, and in the laboratory instead. More specifically, over the past decade scientists have begun to find ways of coaxing human stem cells to produce eggs and sperm. To put it more bluntly: I.V.G. can theoretically allow anyone to manufacture an egg or sperm cell from a tiny sliver of their own skin.

As of June **2015**, **same-sex marriages** are recognized and performed in **California** as a result of the Supreme Court's decision in Obergefell v. Hodges, which overturned all **laws** prohibiting **same-sex marriage** on a federal level. What some moderate Christians believed was a fight over equal rights hopefully are coming to understand it was never about equality but that the fight for same sex



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marriage was to destroy the traditional model of marriage in society. The goal is to do away with traditional models allowing people to create their own person, in their image, denying the influence of a sovereign creator to give you what He seems fit.

The issue is that people believe that they can make a better person through biology and social manipulation instead of relying on the Grace of God and His love for mankind. The world interprets God's demands for our obedience, holiness, and devotion **as unloving**. Instead the world shows that its' desire is to love itself above God, to take His place. I say all this to this point, **perhaps the church has done a poor job in explaining, defining, and modeling God's loving view of children, His desire for good marriages and homes, so that people may flourish.**

Objective: What I would like to do today is go back to Mike's last point from last Sunday and build out the doctrine **developed during the REFORMATION that God loves children, and even when they die they are not discarded as the world would believe but they are transported into His loving care for all eternity.**

1. What's the connection between Children and the Kingdom of God?

Coming to the Kingdom IS coming in child-like Faith: Pharisees asked when it would come (17:20), Jesus said it was already here (17:21), It will be brought completely in unexpectantly (17:22-37), with it comes full Justice (18:1-8), and only those justified by faith get in (18:9-14), so unless we come like a child, humbled, dependent, empty of any moral works, we cannot enter in (18:15-17).

That's the gospel – you don't trust in any good works to save you, but you repent, and you rely completely on Christ's death on the cross and His righteousness to save you. – Mike Clark

First, we see child-like faith is helped by people with adult-like faith. Before you knew what you needed, your parents knew!

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These children were told/lead to go, encouraged by those that love them, to go to Jesus. **Child-like faith is heavily reliant on someone getting you or bringing you into the experience of Christ.** This scene reminds me of a famous movie and perhaps what even happened in your life. ***The Christmas Story Santa Clause scene where all the kids were dragged b their parents to see Santa, they cried the whole time and then got tossed down the slide.*** It's a frightening experience meeting someone that knows all about you, is in charge of getting you presents and then has no relationship with your parents whatsoever!

But here we see that Jesus is someone that is loved, He is by this point and time in that part of the world the biggest folk hero that they had ever scene. You have a kid with polio, He can fix that, you have a child with a cleft pallet he can correct that, club foot, scoliosis, cholera, leukemia, and if your child is possessed by demons no problem for this man he fixes that too! **He wasn't just some Rabbi that could pray for your Kid He is "The Rabbi, the Messiah", that wields the power of God!** These people were putting their hope in Him and their kids could see it! People were coming to Jesus because they were putting faith in Him because their circumstances had made them ready for change! **Coming to Jesus in child-like faith is usually accompanied by someone that has already experienced Jesus themselves.**

Secondly coming in child-like Faith is reliant upon Jesus! Unless Jesus brings it, no one comes into the Kingdom, all Kingdom blessings (faith, justification, adoption, emancipation, and sanctification) come through Christ!

¹⁵ People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they **rebuked** them.

In our passage today Jesus according to Mark 10:14, another version (Mat. 19:16-29) of this same story, we see His reaction, that is God's reaction to those that would withhold a child's presence from Him.

Mark 10:14 ESV

¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, **he was indignant** and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.



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Jesus was "indignant" when the disciples kept the families from coming to Him! The Disciples had forgotten it seems, for they had possibly learned from the pharisees by observation, what they thought was important, ***that if you couldn't do for yourself you weren't worthy of the Kingdom of God.*** Jesus, according to the text in Mark was hacked off! DO NOT hinder them from coming to me, for the Kingdom of God belongs to ones such as these. Don't you ever keep people, especially children from coming to Jesus!

So, let's just make sure we see the main thrust of this parable today before we move on. **The way into the Kingdom is like a child fully trusting Jesus to save and trusting those around you that know Him to help you find Him. Keep fighting pride in ability to do anything even mustering up Faith as we all have been taught is a gift according to Ephesians (2:8).** This brings us to our second question today where I want to spend the bulk of our time:

2. How does God view children? (What happens when they die?)

¹⁶ But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Mark 10:16 ESV

¹⁶ And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

Let me put it this way, the reason that this verse works as a metaphor as how one needs to come to faith in God, is because of the truth behind what is being shown here, God loves children and views them as His.... In light of this view of Christ and children and what the Bible says about the treatment of infants we can learn about the fate of children who have died before a visible conversion experience. This is where Reformed Christians have developed the belief of an "Age of Accountability".

That's extremely important to everyone in this room! ^{1ST} because almost all of us have experienced the death of a child in some way. Perhaps you or someone close to you has had a miscarriage, a still birth, a child lost to SIDS, accidents, and



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yes abortion. Where have these children gone, how does God view them? And 2ND, just as important, this knowledge is SO HUGE for a world that doesn't know **what to do with the grief of losing a child!** But there is so much hope and testimonial power in the gospel when you can tell a neighbor that their child was actually spared a fate of growing up in a world that is hard and they have been rewarded with being in the presence of God, and you have the possibility of seeing them again if you will take this life seriously!

Facts that need to be dealt with!

1) **First**, let me just state upfront that **all children are born depraved**, there is no change in the doctrine of sin. All children are born from the seed of Adam, they need a savior, they need a second birth, they need to be rescued unless in order to get into the Kingdom of God. **(1 Kings 8:46; Ps. 51:5; Ps. 58:3; Ps 143:3; Prov. 20:9; Eccl. 7:20; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 3:10-12; Eph. 2:3; Is. 48:8; Gen. 8:21).**

- Is. 48:8 You... were called a transgressor from the womb.
- Ps. 58:3 The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born.
- Ps. 143:2 In your sight no one living is righteous.

That means if babies and children go to heaven it is not because they are sinless it is because of God's Grace! That is how everyone gets to heaven!

Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

2) **Second**, that means infants are saved the same way we are, **through the sacrificial/substitutional work of Christ, He does it for them!** There is only one hope:

1 Timothy 4:10 ESV

For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God. Who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

3) **Thirdly**, we are saved by **GRACE** but we are **DAMMED** by our works.



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Revelation 20:12 ESV

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

What does that mean about babies?

Nowhere in the Bible is anyone ever threatened with hell merely for the guilt inherited from Adam. Instead, whenever Scripture describes the inhabitants of hell, the stress is on their willful acts of sin and rebellion (1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:6; Rev. 21:8; 22:15). Scripture always connects eternal condemnation with works of unrighteousness-willful sin....

The foremost work of the sinner is unbelief. That is the primary damning work. The Bible tells us, "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abided on him" (John 3:36).

Little children have no such record. They have no basis on which to believe or not believe. They are incapable of discerning right from wrong, sin from righteousness, evil from goodness. Scripture is very clear on this truth. Little children have no record of unbelief or evil works, and therefore, there is no basis for their deserving an eternity apart from God. – John MacArthur¹

What tells my heart that this is right?

Deuteronomy 1:39 ESV

"³⁹ And as for your little ones, who you said would become a prey, and your children, **who today have no knowledge of good or evil**, they shall go in there. And to them I will give it, and they shall possess it." – God sees the lack of understanding of good and evil for the undeveloped mind...

Jer. 19:4 Because the people have forsaken me and have profaned this place by making offerings in it to other gods whom neither they nor their fathers nor the kings of Judah have known; and because they have filled this place **with the blood**

¹ <https://read.amazon.com/?asin=B007FZOZ22> (Pg. 76-81)



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of innocents. – God calls children of unregenerate/child sacrificing pagan people - innocents...

Jonah 4:11 ESV And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle? – This city was larger than this number pointing to God's description and care for those that knew not that they were willful sinners.

2 Samuel 12: 23 ESV But now he is dead. Why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." – King David recognizes where his baby is, and secure with where he was with God, knew he would see him again (as compared to Absalom).

1 Kings 14:13 ESV And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him, for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found something pleasing to the Lord, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. – God destroyed all the house of Jeroboam, with no graves BUT for his only innocent child who was buried like a King!

Let's sum it up like this:

R.A. Webb, writing back in 1907 a book called *The Theology of Infant Salvation* was published by the Presbyterian Committee on Publishing, said this, "If a dead infant were sent to hell on no other account than that of a original sin, having inherited the Adamic sin nature, there would be a good reason to the divine mind for that judgment because sin is a reality." In other words, there would be reason for God to send a dead infant to hell, just on the basis of the fact that he possessed a sinful nature. "But," writes Webb, "the child's mind would be a perfect blank as to the reason of its suffering. Under such circumstances it would know suffering but it would have no understanding of the reason for its suffering. It could not tell itself why it was so awfully smitten and consequently the whole meaning and significance of its sufferings being to it a conscious enigma, the very essence of the penalty would be absent and justice would be disappointed and cheated of its validation."

So, what is God's view of children? They belong to HIM! He is their protector, He sees them as innocent until such time, as judged perfectly by Him, that they demonstrate to Him that they practice the sin of disbelief and are rebellious to



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God through willful choice. Salvation is obtained not by their work but is obtained by the work of Christ and is effectually given to children by an act of grace by God.

Now, there is something else to celebrate here. As we always see in the Bible the remnant, true believers, left on earth, is always small from generation to generation. But the truth of how God treats, loves, and saves children is that when we get to Heaven, we will see a **vast army of believing people for God has been claiming the innocent ever since the fall!** Now family what do we do though in light of God's revelation? Well, our first step was to recognize the importance of the family as God designed it, to step into the call of leadership development, to realize that children are the best receptors for the gospel, and we change up our Vision statement to – "Cultivating Kingdom Minded Families". And now in point three I want to tease out the beginnings of where we are going.

3. What then shall we do?

- **First, we Model the life of a Disciple** – Do you show you trust Jesus, does your family see that you love Him, depend on Him, and more importantly do they see that you are obedient to Him?
- **Second, we Love them Thoroughly** – Do we understand our children, do we see that they all have specific needs, are we willing to sacrifice all the big areas of our lives, time, money, and our emotions?
- **Third, we Teach them Passionately** – *"and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."* – **2 Timothy 3:15**
 - We will revamp and improve our Foundations program from babies through high school.
 - We will work to bring together our best resources, our people, so that the church may share in its' richness of educators.
 - This endeavor will be a parent empowered ministry supported by the corporate church, all hands-on deck.
 - This program doesn't take away home discipleship but empowers it and improves it.



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- **Fourthly, we Invite the Lost** – God loves all the children of the world so we will invite them, seek to influence them, and create an atmosphere promoting evangelism that develops a heart for the lost in our kids.
- **Fifthly, we Commit to Prayer and Meditation** – We all ask in our prayer lives where we will fit in and in what ways can I contribute?

PRAYER

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father, that loves children and is seeking to bring them into a full knowledge of His Grace and Truth.

Go in the name of the Son, that will bless us in this endeavor to "Cultivate Kingdom Minded Families".

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that does the work of conversion and empowers us to develop these young disciples of Jesus.