

“GOD OF THE LITTLE ONES”

GOD IN BLANK SPACES | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON | MATTHEW 18:1-6; 19:13-15 | OCTOBER 7/8, 2017

“Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’” (Matthew 19:14)

The Triune God, the Mission of God and Jesus’ Incarnation

The Triune God Who Sends and Gives

Jesus shows God’s Character and Activity

Jesus, His Followers and Children (Matthew 19:13-15; 18:5-6)

“Let the little children come...”

“Do not hinder them...”

“The kingdom belongs to these...”

The touch of Jesus

Living with God in the Blank Spaces of Children

STUDY GUIDE

1. What was the earliest moment of your life that you remember experiencing God or knowing God?
2. This weekend we continue our series “God in Blank Spaces” by looking at Jesus’ interaction with children, exploring what that means for us. Begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you, and then continuing with the study.
3. Read Matthew 18:1-6 aloud. In what ways does Jesus say His followers should be like children (vss 1-4)? What do you think it really means to become like a child in this sense?
4. In Matthew 18:5-6 Jesus tells his disciples something more direct about His view of children. What do you think it means to welcome children in Jesus’ name? What would you say it means to cause children to stumble?
5. What are some of the spaces in our world where we see little children stumbling or not being welcomed? What role do you think we have in remedying this?
6. Now read Matthew 19:13-15 aloud. While there were times where children might be brought to a rabbi for blessing, in Jesus’ day children were usually viewed as lower-status dependents. What do you think the disciples were thinking as they rebuked parents who brought their children to Jesus?
7. How do Jesus’ words here indicate a change of direction? Why would Jesus say this?
8. Some say that our culture has switched the other direction from Jesus’ day, now idolizing children. Others say that while children are valued today, there are still blank spaces that need to be looked at. How do you think Jesus’ words of welcome and blessing should lead us in this discussion?
9. What is one thing that God is speaking to you through this study? If you are on your own, write it down and pray about it. If you are in a small group, take time to discuss this with one another before praying together.

FURTHER REFLECTION

- Join with our Missions Festival on the next two weekends and midweek (October 14-22). Check the schedule here: eastbrook.org/missionsfest.
- Explore information about how to serve with children and what is going on in the world around us with children:
- Find out more about Eastbrook’s ministry to children and students: eastbrook.org/kids and eastbrook.org/students
- Statistics on children in Milwaukee: <http://ow.ly/Q7es30ffggy>
- National statistics on children in poverty: www.nccp.org/topics
- The State of the World’s Children: www.unicef.org/sowc2016

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