

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Mark: Jesus The Perfect Servant Of God

Part II: The Perfect Service Of Jesus, The Perfect Servant Of God, Mark 1:1-10:52

MM. Christ's Call For The Unconditional Discipling Of Children

(Mark 10:13-16)

I. Introduction

- A. We learned in the first lesson in this series that Mark's Gospel presents the perfect service of God's Perfect Servant, Jesus, with Mark's focus of having rebounded unto upright Christian service from personal failure.
- B. Mark's defection from missionary service in Acts 13:13 involved a lapse in faithfulness of some sort: either he was outside God's will in going on the missions trip in the first place or he should have kept going on the trip.
- C. Such unfaithfulness plagues many marriages in the form of divorce and remarriage, but unfaithfulness can also plague the home in the failure of parents and Church leaders to disciple the children born into a marital union that gets rehashed by divorce and remarriage, an issue that Jesus addressed in Mark 10:13-16 (as follows):

II. Christ's Call For The Unconditional Discipling Of Children, Mark 10:13-16.

- A. The Mark 10:13-16 section on Jesus' teaching on children complements His comments in Mark 10:1-12 on marriage, Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament, p. 149.
- B. However, we learned in Mark 10:1-12 that divorce and remarriage was allowed by the Pharisees opposite the unconditional permanency of marriage that God designed, so there was a spiritual threat to the children born into marriages that split and were rehashed by divorce and remarriage, what Jesus addressed in Mk. 10:13-16:
 1. While Jesus ministered to the crowds who thronged Him, people from all stations in life were bringing *paidia*, children ranging from babies to preteens that He might touch them, "a visible means of conveying God's blessing on their future lives (cf. Mark 10:16)," Ibid.; Mark 10:13a.
 2. However, Jesus' own disciples were offended at this practice since it was not culturally fitting (Ibid.), so the disciples forbade the people from bringing these children to Him, Mark 10:13b.
 3. This prohibition by the disciples was all the more problematic for these children when we consider the rules of divorce and remarriage in that day: "(i)n case of separation of the parents, the mother had charge of the daughters, and the father of the sons; but the latter might be entrusted to the mother, if the judges considered it for the advantage of the children," Alfred Edersheim, Sketches of Jewish Social Life, 1974, p. 100. Thus, the break-up of an initial marriage along with remarriage and the addition of more children by a later spouse, coupled with the parting of boys from their mothers and daughters from their fathers led to all sorts of insecurity and spiritual needs in little children that only God could fill. For Jesus' disciples then to restrict such spiritually needy children from coming to Him was spiritually distressing for them!
 4. When Jesus saw the disciples forbidding such children to come unto Him, Mark 10:14a states that He was "indignant, angry" (*aganakteo*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the N. T., 1967, p. 4), a "verb of strong emotional reaction" that "is unique to Mark who highlighted Jesus' emotions more than the other Gospel writers," Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 149.
 5. He told them to "start allowing" the children to come to Him and to "stop preventing" them (Ibid.), for to such belonged the kingdom of heaven, Mark 10:14b. Jesus clarified this statement, noting that one must "come to Jesus in childlike trust and dependence" to enter the Kingdom of God, Ibid., p. 150; Mark 10:15.
 6. Christ then took these needy children up in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them, Mark 10:16. The verb for "blessed" (*kateulogei*) is in the imperfect tense that denotes continuous action, it occurs only here in this form in the New Testament and it "emphasizes warmhearted fervor with which Jesus blessed each child who came to Him," Ibid. The warmth thus administered to many children already hurt by divorce and remarriage, with the loss of close access to a birth mother or father, was offset by the warmth of the Son of God, demonstrating the great need for children to be disciplined by the Lord Himself!

Lesson: Just as God calls for marriages to be unconditionally permanent to provide stability for society, so He calls parents and spiritual leaders in the Church to disciple these children, bringing them into close spiritual fellowship with their Creator and Savior, especially if such children come from homes afflicted by divorce and remarriage.

Application: May we disciple the children who cross our pathway in ministry to come into close spiritual fellowship with the Lord, especially those boys and girls who come from troubled homes where divorce and remarriage has already greatly afflicted them.