

KIDS

Reaching, Raising, and Becoming like Children

Begin. Read Matthew 19:13-15 and Matthew 18:5-14 aloud. After reading, give everyone 4 minutes of silence to reflect on the passage. Consider some of the following questions during this time:

- How does this passage give me joy, encouragement, or hope?
- How does this passage challenge me?
- What does God invite us to do in response to this passage?

Reflect. *Matthew 19:13-15*

1. The disciples shooed the children away from Jesus. Certainly this was to protect him, but Jesus viewed it as disparaging of the children. How is this same attitude toward children present in society today? How did adults relate to you when you were growing up?
2. Pastor Tom referenced the book, *The Blessing*. Using Jesus' blessing of the children as an analogy, authors Trent and Smalley list five things vital to passing on the blessing to the next generation: 1. Meaningful Touch, 2. A Spoken Message, 3. Attaching High Value, 4. Picturing a Special Future, 5. An Active Commitment. Which of these stands out to you as especially important? Why?
3. Do you feel you received "the blessing" from your parents? (This would include things like love, affirmation, and a belief in your future.)

Matthew 18:5-14

4. What does it look like for you as a parent, grandparent, uncle, aunt, or church member to "welcome" children (v. 5)?
5. How do Jesus words (v. 6-7) impact you? What thoughts or feelings do they evoke?
6. In verse 8 and 9, Jesus tells us to eliminate the things in our own lives that can hinder the next generation. Sometimes we are unaware of how unhealed wounds from our own upbringing are hindering our ability to reflect the love of God to our children or grandchildren. Have you ever experienced an inner healing from God that made it possible for you to better love others? Please explain.
7. Do you believe you have written or spoken your blessing to your children, grandchildren or other loved ones?

Prayer: Spend time in prayer for one another.

Challenge: Consider writing a "blessing" for your children, grandchildren or someone you really care about, a special way for you to say how much you love them and what you appreciate about them. *What would you say to capture how God's reaches and receives them in his love?*