

“Let the Little Children Come to Me”  
Devotional on Member-Care for Missionary Kids  
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Matthew 19:13-15 “Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” And he laid his hands on them and went his way. (NRSV)

“and do not hinder them from coming to me” (NASB and NIV)

- Children were brought to Christ by their parents. WHY? “that he might lay his hands on them and pray”—To receive a blessing: to receive a loving, meaningful touch; to receive prayer; to receive the Lord’s affirmation.

Disciples rebuked them. Why? Perhaps because the disciples considered these children unimportant in comparison to “the real ministry.” These kids were a distraction from the more important tasks of preaching/teaching, healing, etc. How often have we seen these same perception among missionary parents with their own children?

Jesus’ response—He noticed these children and invited them to Himself. He rebuked the disciples for their narrow perspective because they didn’t see the big picture. “Don’t hinder them from coming to me”—in what ways do we hinder children/youth/young adults from coming to Christ?

What does the term “Christian” mean? It means “Little Christ.” We are to be little Christs to others. Do we look so much like Christ to MKs that they want to come running to us/to Him? Or do we subtly give off the message that they are distractions, nuisances? We are to be the Lord Jesus Christ to our MKs.

“the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” How? Their faith-- their transparency -- their affection for Christ. But another way to look at it is that we are turning over the kingdom to them because MKs often become the next generation of missionaries. So what model of ministry are we leaving them?

Jesus blesses them.

Gary Smalley’s “The Blessing,” 1) meaningful and appropriate touch; 2) spoken affirming message; 3) imparting how valuable the child is to the child; 4) giving the child a picture of the future; 5) expressing commitment to the child.