

Let go

Mark 10:13-16

October 4, 2015

Jesus was angry. His disciples were turning people away. They were turning people away and scolding them for trying to bring their children to Jesus to bless them, and that made Jesus mad!

Jesus was angry! Hear him! It's not (gentle voice):

Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

No, it's (angry voice):

Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these!

Jesus was angry because he wanted to see the children. He wanted to bless them. The children mattered to him. But he was angry, too, because his disciples just didn't get it.

First, they were telling the man driving out demons in Jesus' name to cut it out, because, of course, he is not part of "our group." And now they're driving children away, because they think Jesus shouldn't be bothered, because they think Jesus has better things to do, more important things to do, more important people with whom to spend his precious time.

The disciples were acting as gatekeepers, taking upon themselves the defense of this new family, this new institution, of which they are now a part: securing the borders, guarding the gospel, protecting their leader, protecting Jesus.

Newsflash! Jesus doesn't need your protection! Do you know how much time and energy is wasted, how much damage is done to the gospel, by followers of Jesus trying to protect it, trying to defend it against its enemies and detractors, instead of trying to live it and to joyfully share its good news? The greatest threats to the gospel do not come from outside, but from inside.

Jesus was angry because those closest to him, those who, if anyone should, should know better, just didn't get it. And they were at risk themselves of missing the kingdom of God altogether!

I assure you: whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.

Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child. Like a little child, a very little child, a baby, because the ones Jesus blessed that day were small enough to take up and hold in his arms as he placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Like a child ... let go!

Let go of your need to protect Jesus.

Let go of your need to defend your faith.

Let go of your need to have all the answers or even any of the answers.

Let go of your need to define who is in and who is out.

Let go of your need to be reassured that at least you are in.

Let go of your need to be respected, to be admired, to be praised.

Let go. Receive the kingdom of God like a child. Allow yourself to be taken up, to be held, to be loved, to be blessed.

Is it easy? Is it easy to enter the kingdom of God? Oh, yes! It is easy, so very easy! And this is the seed of hope that is planted in you, in each of you, that it is easy, that you do not have to do anything at all to enter the kingdom of God ... except let go.

So it's hard, isn't it? It's so very hard to enter the kingdom of God, because it means you have to let go. Will you?