

## Jesus Loves Children

### CONCEPT

Jesus loves children.

### GOAL

Children will learn that Jesus loves everyone, including children.

### PASSAGE: MARK 10:13-16

**Key Verse:** "Let the children come to me." Mark 10:14

### PLANNING AHEAD

#### Lesson Supplies

#### Lesson:

- *READ~ALoud BIBLE STORIES VOL. 1*, Ella K. Lindvall, pp. 65-93
- *The Rhyme Bible Storybook for Toddlers*, L.J. Sattgast, pp.208-217
- *The Beginner's Bible*, Karyn Henley, pp. 432-437
- *The Bible in Pictures for Toddlers*, Ella Lindvall, pp.

#### Lesson:

Laminated, magnet-backed pictures of:

- Bible-time family walking
- Jesus' disciples looking stern
- Angry Jesus
- Welcoming Jesus, hugging a child

## Background Information / Teacher's Helps

This story of "Jesus loves the little children" is sandwiched between two stories of folks who thought they had ways to ensure getting to heaven. In Mark 10:1-12, the Pharisees tried to test Jesus on points of the law. Jesus held to a different standard than the Pharisees in his interpretation of the Law. The Pharisees sought to achieve righteousness and entry to heaven through their adherence to the Law and therefore searched for loopholes to excuse their behavior. Jesus taught that God's standard of righteousness is so high that it can never be achieved by fallen human beings (see Matthew 5:17-7:5). The purpose of the Law was to point to the perfection of God and man's utter inability to keep that standard (see Romans 3:19-20 and Hebrews 7:19). He frustrated the Pharisees when he spoke authoritatively about the Law because He removed their loopholes.

Immediately following the story of the little children is the parable of the rich young ruler. A law-observing young man who wanted to gain heaven through good works approached Jesus and asked how he could inherit eternal life. Jesus responded, "You know the commandments." The man responded, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up." "And looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him, and said to him, 'One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me'" (Mark 10:21). The youth was disappointed for he owned much. He trusted in his wealth for security in this life. He wanted it both ways—to trust God for his eternity but handle things on this earth for himself. Jesus had a better way.

The account of the little children records parents bringing young children to be touched by Jesus. A tender scene—except the disciples are fighting with the parents to keep the children away! Jesus was angry that these men would keep the children from Him and told them that these children were role models for those who would enter heaven! This was quite a surprise for the religious leaders in this culture who heavily valued the wisdom gained by years. Jesus expressed his value of the children. There are several reasons that these children are candidates for the kingdom of heaven. The first is their easy acceptance of Jesus. They allowed Him to take them in his arms and hold them. In addition, they had nothing that made them deserving of anything they received. A child's life is completely provided for. There is nothing s/he does to earn shelter, clothing or food. They are dependent on the goodness of their parents. Likewise, we must acknowledge our dependence on God to meet every need. Most significantly, we are totally dependent on the goodness of God to provide a way to live eternally with Him.

As you go through this week, thank God for all that His goodness has provided you. Ask Him to give you new understanding of His goodness toward you and a renewed perspective on your absolute need for Him. Thank Him for the goodness of allowing you to be a messenger to those He loves so dearly, those who are so ready to accept Him.

## LESSON PLAN

<b>PRAYER</b>	Pray for the children <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• w/your team before class</li><li>• during the week</li></ul> Pray simple short prayers with the children
<b>LESSON</b>	<p><b>“STORY JESUS LOVES CHILDREN”</b></p> <p><b>Instructions:</b> Don't try to get the children to sit or even to listen. When you start talking to one or two and the others see you engaging the children, some will join you. It's not necessary to make this a formal setting. Tell the story as many times as the children want to hear it. Let them put the laminated figures up. Read out of the story bibles several times to one or two children during the hour. Use your creativity to tell the story to the children in an animated, engaging manner.</p> <p><b>Main Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jesus' friends thought they should decide who was important enough to meet Jesus. (picture of friends looking stern)</li><li>• Jesus' friends told the children to go away.</li><li>• <b>Jesus loves ALL children</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Questions:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Do you think Jesus was glad? Do you think Jesus said, “I just don't have time to meet these children?” (Make a concerned face, shake your head back and forth.) NO!</li><li>▪ What do you think happened? He was mad at His friends. (Put up picture of angry Jesus.) He told them that He did want to meet the children. (Take down angry Jesus and put up welcoming Jesus.)</li><li>▪ Jesus hugged the children. He told his friends and all the people—and all the people around him—that the children were His friends, too. That's because <b>Jesus loves ALL children.</b></li></ul></li></ul></li></ul> <p>Jesus loves children that mean he loves you!</p> <p>Aren't you glad that <b>Jesus loves children</b>? Let's <b>pray</b> now and thank Him that He loves everyone and wants all of us to be His friends.</p>