

Sermon Series: “When Heaven Invades Earth”—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN—5/13/07

Title: “For Such Is the Kingdom of God”

Text: Mark 10: 13-16

Intro.: *Ills.: Doctor moved by young boy’s prayer*

Theme: God brings His kingdom within us through child-like faith; yet, we should not be fooled into thinking that child-like means simpleton faith. Rather it is as deep and broad as God is.

Child-like faith is God’s desire and design . . .

· ***Because it cuts through phony-bologna, adult-like religion***

1. The disciples thought that religion was only for the adults, the serious, the true believer
 - a. Jesus counters their misguided notion by saying “**stop hindering**” and “**allow (get out of the way)**”
 - b. Argument that faith is a “God-thing” because a *paiduon* was probably a toddler—**(for of such a kind at this one does the kingdom of God belong—vs. 14)**
2. **Ills.: Unexpected Question**
3. We make faith and the kingdom of God too complicated because truly we want to be in control
 - a. **Ills. The story of King Ahaz and Isaiah (Isaiah 7)**
 - b. It is unbelief when we try to interject ourselves into playing God and manipulating the world for selfish desires
4. Child-like faith trusts alone in God for health & safety, future & family, provision & occupation faith & forgiveness

· ***Because it can see what human eyes can’t see***

1. “*No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.*” 1 Cor. 2: 9
2. **Ills.: Invisible Cars**
3. This is not blind-faith which is easily mislead but an eyes-wide-open faith based on his past, current, & future love
4. “*Since God did not spare even His own Son but gave him up for us all, won’t God, who gave us Christ, also give us everything else? Romans 8: 32*

· ***Because it takes God at his word***

1. **Illus.: Taking it literally**
2. **Print and read 2 Timothy 3: 14-17**
3. Do you really believe God at his Word? Believe his word of forgiveness and quit living in guilt (Rom 8: 1).
4. Do you believe God at his Word? Believe that you can say no to sin and quit living under its power. (Titus 2: 11-14)
5. Do you believe God at his Word? Believe God has and never will forsake you (Heb 13: 5-6)

· ***Because it takes sin, the Devil, and temptation, seriously***

1. “*unless you turn from your sins and become as little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven.*” (Matt 18: 2)
2. Too sophisticated in our logic and excuses for continuing in things that we know are wrong and destructive
3. **Ills.: Perspective on Temptation**
4. *Be on your guard because the devil is like a roaring lion prowling around, seeking whom he may devour....but you resist him, standing firm in your faith. 1 Peter 5: 8,9*

· ***Because it sees dying and going to heaven as a natural thing***

1. Sometimes we live as if as if we are dying and die as if we shall never live again
 - a. So consumed with trying to shore up our decaying bodies, witness to Christ’s life-changing power is blunted
 - b. “*I am the Resurrection and the Life, he who believes in me shall live even though he dies, and he who lives and believes in me shall never die.*” John 11: 27-28
2. **Ills.: Child-like view of death and heaven**

3. *"She is not dead but she is asleep!"* (Jesus said in response to Jairus' little girl's death)
4. Jesus says, *"Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all."*
5. Our greatest witness to every person, of every social/economic position, (because everyone dies), is our surreal, uncanny, out-of-this-world calm and peace and joy at going home
6. **Ills.: Couldn't be any better**
7. And Jesus will *take us into his arms and bless us* just as he did with the little child brought to him

Doctor moved by young boy's prayer

In the fall of 2005, my 9-year-old son, Austin, had his tonsils removed. Before the surgery, an anesthesiologist came in to start an IV. He was wearing a cool surgical cap covered in colorful frogs. Austin loved that "frog hat." When the doctor started to leave, Austin called out, "Hey, wait." The doctor turned. "Yeah, buddy, what do you need?" "Do you go to church?" "No," the doctor admitted. "I know I probably should, but I don't." Austin then asked, "Well, are you saved?" Chuckling nervously, the doctor said: "Nope. But after talking to you, maybe it's something I should consider." Pleased with his response, Austin answered, "Well you should, 'cause Jesus is great!" "I'm sure he is, little guy," the doctor said, and quickly made his exit. When Austin's surgery was finished, the anesthesiologist came into the waiting room to talk to me. He told me the surgery went well, then said, "Mrs. Blessit, I don't usually come down and talk to the parents after a surgery, but I just had to tell you what your son did." Oh boy, I thought. *What did that little rascal do now?* The doctor explained that he'd just put the mask on Austin when my son signaled that he needed to say something. When the doctor removed the mask, Austin blurted, "Wait a minute, we have to pray!" The doctor told him to go ahead, and Austin prayed: "Dear Lord, please let all the doctors and nurses have a good day. And Jesus, please let the doctor with the frog hat get saved and start going to church. Amen." The doctor admitted that this had touched him. "I was so sure he would pray that his surgery went well," he explained. "He didn't even mention his surgery. He prayed for me! Mrs. Blessit, I had to come down and let you know what a great little guy you have." A few minutes later, a nurse came to take me to post-op. She had a big smile on her face as we walked to the elevator. "There's something you should know," she said. "Some of the other nurses and I have been witnessing to and praying for that doctor for a long time. After your son's surgery, he tracked a few of us down to tell us about Austin's prayer. He said, 'Well girls, you got me. If that little boy could pray for me when he was about to have surgery, then I think maybe I need his Jesus, too.'" **Tina Blessit, "A Prayer Before Surgery," Today's Christian (July/August 2006), p. 27**

Unexpected Question

The first-grade class was touring the printing press of the local newspaper. The huge, noisy presses captivated the children. In a quieter moment, the tour guide asked if anyone had any questions. His training didn't quite prepare him for one girl's innocent query: "Why do cats and dogs fight?" **Paul A. Capalbo, Somersworth, New Hampshire. Christian Reader, "Kids of the Kingdom."**

Invisible Cars

When we were driving through Pennsylvania Dutch country, my seven-year-old grandson, Michael, couldn't get over all the Amish buggies. "Grandpa, why do they use horses instead of cars?" "Because they don't believe in automobiles," his mother explained. It was quiet for a minute, then Michael said, "But can't they see them?" **Harold F. Bermel, Havertown, Pennsylvania. Christian Reader, "Kids of the Kingdom."**

Taking it literally

Our five-year-old son Mark couldn't wait to tell his father about the movie we had watched on television, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. The scenes with the submarine and the giant octopus had kept him wide-eyed. In the middle of the retelling, my husband interrupted Mark: "What caused the submarine to sink?" With a look of incredulity Mark replied, "Dad, it was the 20,000 leaks!" **Joy Anne Miller, Walla Walla, Washington. Christian Reader, "Kids of the Kingdom."**

Perspective on Temptation

When my daughter heard me say, "According to this newspaper article, most automobile accidents occur within a fifteen-mile radius of home," she wisely asked, "Mommy, then why don't we move?" **Fran Principe, Jackson, New Jersey. Christian Reader, "Kids of the Kingdom."**

Child-like view of death and heaven

My 4-year-old granddaughter and I were talking one day about death. Her grandfather has cancer and I wanted to prepare her for the inevitable. She didn't like the idea of talking about Pappy dying. But then we talked about how we all will die someday and we listed names of people close to her, including herself. I explained that each person will go at a different time. She thought for a moment. Then it all came together in her mind. "Oh, we take turns, right?" "Exactly right," I replied. Now that it made sense, she happily went out to play. **Margaret Bumbaugh, Christian Reader, Vol. 34.**

Mark 10:13-16

¹³And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, "Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵"Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all." ¹⁶And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them. [NASB]

2 Timothy 3: 14-17

¹⁴ But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. ¹⁵ You have been taught the Holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷ It is God's way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do.