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Pastor Matthias Krier

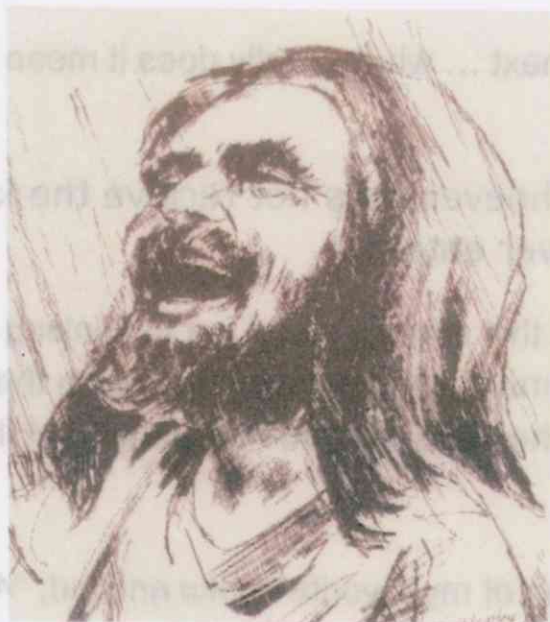
October 3, 2021

Message

Let the Children Come to Me

A verse that I do remember somewhat growing up in the church is this one: *"Let the children come to me, do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."* I remember hearing over and over that Jesus loves the little children, but I don't remember ever feeling it. I remember feeling love from my parents, but I did not feel the love of Jesus until my later teens.

How many of you have been watching the new series called *"The Chosen"*? Because it is a series, they are able expand the possibilities of what Jesus may have been like in everyday life including his sense of humor, his laughter,



his playfulness, and how he may have been with children. In practically every episode, I have teared up for one reason or another wishing I had

been introduced to this Jesus as a child. I believe it would have helped me to experience Christianity as a relationship instead of a religion. Don't get me wrong, we can take our discipleship seriously, but we may need to lighten up a bit and not take ourselves too seriously.

For example, the disciples seemed to have taken themselves or Jesus too seriously. Let's take another look at our scripture for today:

¹³ People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs

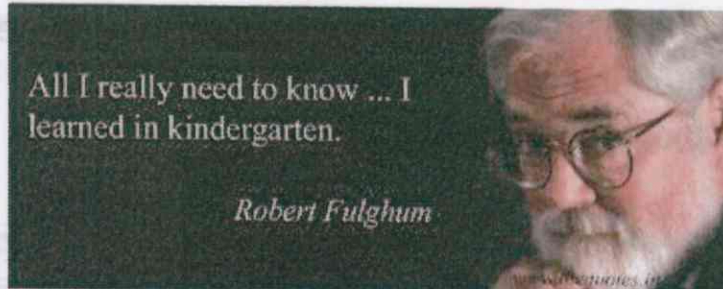
Jesus reprimanded his disciples for trying to keep the children from him. Since children were meant to be seen and not heard, this was a bold prophetic move on the part of Yeshua to give children such a prominent role at that time.

Now for what comes next ... what exactly does it mean in this next part of the scripture;

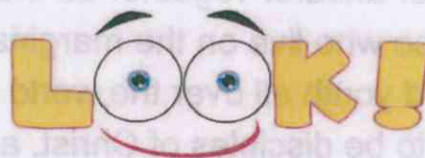
¹⁵ Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.'

As I reflected on what this might mean, I got to thinking about how complicated we have made religion instead of using the KISS method. Everyone remember the KISS method? My version of this is "*Keep it simple, silly.*"

So I turned back to one of my favorite books entitled, "*All I Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten: Uncommon thoughts on Common Things,*" by Robert Fulghum.



- Share everything.
- Play fair.
- Don't hit people.
- Put things back where you found them.
- Clean up your own mess.
- Don't take things that aren't yours.
- Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.
- Wash your hands before you eat.
- Flush.
- Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.
- Live a balanced life--learn some and think some and draw some and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.
- Take a nap every afternoon.
- When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.
- Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.
- Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the Styrofoam cup--they all die. So do we.
- And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned--the biggest word of all -- LOOK.



I love this one word admonition! Why? Because, I believe we forget how to look at the world through the eyes of a child. Many have lost their sense of wonder and awe and how Robert Fulghum says we need to:

Live a balanced life--learn some and think some and draw some and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

The author goes on to say, *"Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and equality and sane living."*

In the very last verse of our passage for today is this verse and image of Jesus and the little children:

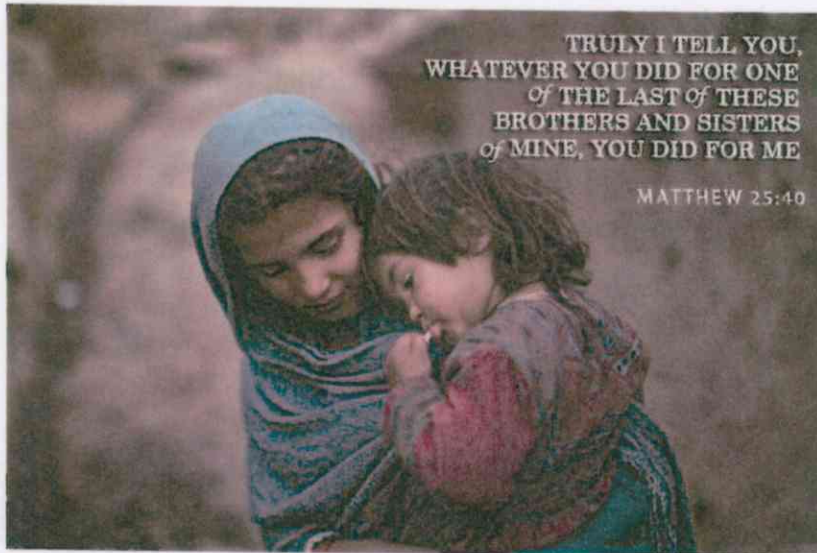


¹⁶And he took them up in his arms,
laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

On this World Communion Sunday, the church is called to be universal and inclusive and that no one, especially our children, are left outside in the cold, or hungry, or thirsty or unsafe. Together as the body of Christ, we are called to serve where those who live on the margins of society are fed, safe and nurtured. Children and youth all over the world are in a world of hurt and we, as those striving to be disciples of Christ, are called to leave no

one behind who has been marginalized due to their sexual orientation, ethnic origin, color of their skin, gender or gender identity.

I believe that Yeshua includes everyone at the table and that means everyone for full inclusion and equality. Jesus made it clear with these words:



I have been asking individuals in this church as well as the Ad Council these three questions. And now I ask you on this World Communion Sunday where we are asked to see the big picture of who we are called to be and what we are called to do. I have been asking our church leadership to consider putting together a vision statement. The church has a mission statement that guides us day to day in service to the community, but what is the vision for the church on this World Communion Sunday. I have been asking these questions to our church leadership and now I am asking you:

- 1) What do you believe the people of the world hunger for?
- 2) What do you believe the people in Butte hunger for?
- 3) What do you hunger for?

As we ponder these questions in the weeks and months to come, I invite you to a time of preparation for Holy Communion. Today, all over the world, followers of Christ are gathered to be fed. After being fed, we are

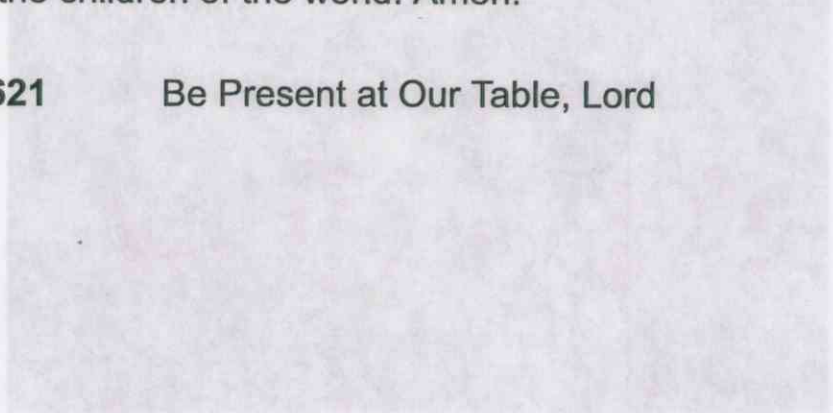
empowered to serve courageously in a world that needs the church now more than ever. May we continue this time of preparation with a few moments of silence and then sing # 621, "Be Present At Our Table, Lord."

I will ask Fred to play through it once before we sing:

Let us pray: Oh gracious and everlasting God, we come before you in all humility as we contemplate what it means to experience the kingdom of God like a child. May your kingdom come, your will be done, as we care for not only our children, but the children of the world. Amen.

Hymn of Preparation # 621

Be Present at Our Table, Lord



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- 1) What do you believe the people of the world hunger for?
- 2) What do you believe the people in Dallas hunger for?
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As we ponder these questions in the weeks and months to come, I invite you to a time of preparation for Holy Communion. Today, all over the world, followers of Christ are gathered to the table. After being fed, we are