

JESUS' WRATH

Lincoln Park Baptist Church, West Newton, Massachusetts
May 2, 1965

Scripture – Mark 10:13-16

Introduction:

Modern painting and poetry often have given us a wrong impression about Jesus by portraying or describing him as the meek and gentle Jesus, who wouldn't harm a fly. Jesus is often presented as the harmless prophet who went about doing good.

The picture that we have of Jesus in the Gospels is an entirely different one. Jesus is more like a revolutionary figure than like a do-gooder. He did not hesitate to speak his mind on burning issues of the day and to attack his opponents with very strong language. To us this may be a shock, but if it brings about a true understanding of the meaning and significance of the life and message of Jesus, let it come.

We may be shocked, for example, to learn that Jesus was seized by indignation. Yet this is exactly what we have in the passage that has just been read: (Mark 10:13-16) – *"And they were bringing children to him, that he might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. (1) But when Jesus saw it he was indignant, and said to them, (2) 'Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Kingdom of God. Truly, (3) I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.' And he took them in his arms and (4) blessed them, laying his hands upon them."*

The message of this text can be summarized in four words:

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| (1) indignation | (3) declaration |
| (2) petition | (4) benediction |

We shall consider these terms in the order given.

I. Jesus' indignation. Jesus is indignant because the disciples do not allow the children to come to him.

A. By taking a look at the things that provoked Jesus' wrath, we can discern what was uppermost in Jesus' mind.

- (1) He was indignant when the merchants were utilizing the temple for trading purposes and personal gain. The report says: *"He entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he said: 'Is it not written: 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations?' But you have made it a den of robbers.'"* He was indignant at men who used the religious institutions of their day as a cover for personal gain. He was concerned with pure and genuine worship of God.

(2) He was indignant when the disciples hindered the little from coming unto him.

B. Jesus was not indignant when personally offended. While he was being crucified he could say: *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."* We are indignant when we are offended. Jesus was indignant when others were offended.

II. Jesus' petition: *"Let the children come to me, do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."* How do we hinder the children from coming to Jesus?

(1) In our homes, we can make Christ lack attraction. Delinquency in our suburban homes:

-- emptiness	-- no personal involvement
-- little love	-- no challenge outside material possessions
-- no care	

(2) Our attitude toward the church. What we do speaks louder than what we say. We want our children to go to Sunday School but we do not get involved. Christ said: "Do not hinder them."

III. A declaration: *"Truly, I say to you, whoever does not received the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."* What is Jesus pointing to? What is there in children that makes them a pattern for those who would enter the kingdom?

A. Trust and dependence. The child receives life and care and love as a gift. He accepts it as part of his life. He trusts that his needs will be provided for. He is not self-sufficient, but is dependent. To enter the kingdom, one needs to recognize his brokenness.

B. The child is receptive. He is curious and has an open mind to what happens around him. We also need a receptive heart to receive the kingdom. The Parable of the Sower – the seed fell on different types of soil:

-- along the road	-- among thorns
-- on top of the rock	-- on good ground

IV. A blessing: *"And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them."*

Conclusion:

- (1) Let us never put obstacles in the way of those who want to approach Jesus.
- (2) Let us be responsive to him, recognizing our brokenness, recognizing our dependence on him, accepting his challenge to have an open mind and a receptive heart.
- (3) Let us gratefully expect his blessing.