

# **Approaching Jesus as Little Children: Inclusive and Compassionate**

## **The Kingdom of God is for Those who Come to Jesus as Little Children and are Inclusive**



A child is not intimidating to anyone, though parenting one can be a daunting task. Children are not seen as a threat from which one must guard oneself. They are generally unassuming in nature and have not learned to put on airs. Another word that exemplifies this attribute is the word approachable. Jesus was approachable to the extent that He was severely criticized for “hanging” with unrighteous sinners. There was something about his countenance and persona that drew people to Him rather than away from Him.

The historic record indicates that a Rabbi would be the last place any harlot would go help -- not to mention the temple. They were considered the lowest of the lowest along with tax collectors and frankly, any Gentile or Samaritan. Jesus totally shook the established religious morays by eating with tax collectors and sinners. To the eastern mind, having someone into your home to eat at your table was tantamount to identifying and condoning their lifestyle.

Children felt comfortable around Jesus. In fact, He encouraged his disciples to let them come to Him. One translation espouses the idea that He is pro-actively saying to make it easy for them to come. He took them into His arms and blessed them (Mark 10:16). His whole manner seemed to be an invitation. The only ones who considered Him a threat were those who had a vested interest in keeping the status quo. The closest He came to intimidation would be his righteous indignation exhibited as He cleansed the temple courts of the profiteers and perhaps when He walked through a crowd wanting to kill Him. Otherwise, He had the reputation of receiving all who came to Him.

Even when Jesus came into Jerusalem in what is called the Triumphal Entry, it looked nothing like a traditional conquering king riding in on a white horse and an entourage of soldiers. He came humble, riding on the foal of a donkey, at eye level, totally accessible to the people. He would not conquer with the sword; He would conquer our hearts with the most magnificent love ever exhibited!

It is with this same love poured into our hearts that we must frame our discussions about "taking the city for Jesus" Indeed, any non-believer would probably cringe at the thought of such language, not having the framework to understand what the church would mean by such a statement. Biblically, whole cities have been given over to the Lord.

Currently, in many places in the Argentine revival in Uganda and Columbia, the Lord is impacting through His church, whole cities. This does not mean 100 percent converted since there will always be those who reject the truth. But when truth is exhibited in the manner of Jesus, with compassion and love, and with corresponding signs and wonders, it is far more difficult to reject. He is the truth embodied. His Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. His believers must not just espouse the truth, but live it in such a dynamic way that the ministry of Jesus is duplicated in their lives.

Unfortunately, when it comes to the "cultural wars," Christians have often been mean-spirited and viewed people as the enemy rather than those for whom Jesus died. The weapons in a believer's arsenal do not include the sword of cutting words and armor of intimidation, rather, the sword of the Spirit which is "good news&ldqyo; not angry, mean-spirited jabs.

Christians are to be shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves (Mat. 10:16). Wisdom may not at times convince someone whose mind is made up, but at least it will not alienate and polarize people to the extent that there is no dialogue possible. Salt and light attract. The former brings out flavor, the latter, illuminates and adds warmth. Therefore it is incumbent upon the *ministers of reconciliation* to become reconcilers, not by compromising truth, but by speaking truth in such a way that it is spoken in the same non-intimidating manner embodied in Jesus.

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