

# Bringing Children to Jesus

Message 02 of 03 in the series: "Next is Now!"

## A. Children are a blessing from the Lord.

"Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hands. How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them!" Psalm 127:3-5a (NLT)

## B. Jesus loves children and wants them to come to Him.

"Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them. Jesus said, '**Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them**, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.' When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there." Matthew 19:13-15 (NIV)

**Life Application:** Children help us understand what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus.

"...the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?' Jesus called a little child to him and put the child among them. Then he said, 'I tell you the truth, **unless you turn from your sins and become like little children, you will never get into the Kingdom of Heaven**. So anyone who becomes as humble as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.'" Matthew 18:1-4 (NLT)

## C. At Centerpoint, we want to bring as many children to Jesus as we can.

1. We teach children God's Word so they can know Him.

"We will not hide these truths from our children; **we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord, about his power and his mighty wonders...** so the next generation might know them—even the children not yet born—and they in turn will teach their own children. So each generation should set its hope anew on God, not forgetting his glorious miracles and obeying his commands." Psalm 78:4-7 (NLT)

2. We teach children how to listen and respond to the Lord.

"...the Lord called a third time, and once more Samuel got up and went to Eli. 'Here I am. Did you call me?' Then Eli realized it was the Lord who was calling the boy. So he said to Samuel, 'Go and lie down again, and if someone calls again, say, "**Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.**"' So Samuel went back to bed. And the Lord came and called as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel replied, 'Speak, your servant is listening.'" 1 Samuel 3:8-10 (NLT)

3. We teach children how to praise and worship God.

"The blind and the lame came to him in the Temple, and he healed them. The leading priests and the teachers of religious law saw these wonderful miracles and heard even the children in the Temple shouting, 'Praise God for the Son of David.' But the leaders were indignant. They asked Jesus, 'Do you hear what these children are saying?' 'Yes,' Jesus replied. 'Haven't you ever read the Scriptures? For they say, "**You have taught children and infants to give you praise.**"'"

Matthew 21:14-16 (NLT) (*Psalm 8:2*)

4. We partner with parents in raising Godly children.

"Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. 'Honor your father and mother.' This is the first commandment with a promise: If you honor your father and mother, 'things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth.' Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, **bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.**" Ephesians 6:1-4 (NLT)

5. We train and equip people of all ages to minister to children.

"Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. **Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church**, the body of Christ." Ephesians 4:11-12 (NLT)

**D. We must not hinder our children from coming to Jesus or growing spiritually.**

Three hindrances:

1. Wrong perceptions about children's ministry and the spiritual battle for the hearts and minds of our children

"Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, **looking for someone to devour.**" 1 Peter 5:8 (NLT)

2. Misplaced priorities

"**Train up a child in the way he should go**, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV)

3. Lack of participation in children's ministry

"The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields." Luke 10:2 (NLT)

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**Connect Group Questions:**

Read Matthew 18:1-4 & 19:13-15. Then discuss the following questions:

1. Many young people today say they don't ever want to have children. This is very different from 50 years ago. Why do you think our attitude toward children has changed? Has God's attitude towards children changed? (Psalm 127:3-5, Hebrews 13:8)
2. Why do you think Jesus said we need to become like little children to enter the Kingdom of Heaven? What does this mean?
3. Who had the greatest spiritual impact on you when you were a child?
4. In your opinion, how important is children's ministry to our church?
5. Discuss the following five ways our church helps bring children to Jesus:
  - We teach children God's Word so they can know Him. (Psalm 78:4-7)
  - We teach children how to listen and respond to the Lord. (1 Samuel 3:1-10)
  - We teach children how to praise and worship God. (Matthew 21:14-16, Psalm 8:2)
  - We partner with parents in raising Godly children. (Ephesians 6:1-4, Titus 2:1-8)
  - We train and equip people of all ages to minister to children. (Ephesians 4:11-12)

How does it make you feel to know that our church is very intentional about ministering to children?

6. Discuss the following three ways we can hinder children from coming to Jesus and growing spiritually:
  - Wrong perceptions about children's ministry and the spiritual battle for the hearts and minds of our children (1 Peter 5:8)
  - Misplaced priorities (Luke 14:16-24, Proverbs 22:6)
  - Lack of participation in children's ministry (Luke 10:2)

Why do you think some people are reluctant to serve in children's ministry?

7. Spend some time as a group praying for parents and children in our church and for our children's ministry. Ask God to raise up workers so we can do more ministry and bring more children to Jesus.