

Speaking to the soul



Childlike

Then Jesus called for the children and said to the disciples, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn’t receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.” Luke 18:16-17

Jesus continually surprised people, but his reaction to children would have been particularly astonishing to his hearers. Children had no status in law and at best they were regarded as potential adults who needed to be seen but

certainly not heard. The disciples were keen to protect their rabbi from the children so he could get on with the serious business of instructing the adults. However, as so often was the case, Jesus turned their thinking upside down. Not only did Jesus welcome the children, but he said they provided the role model for his disciples to follow.

What was Jesus getting at? He wasn't encouraging his followers to be childish. He wanted them to come to him with openness and simple trust. The beauty of children is that they haven't lived long enough to make life complicated. I'm sure he also wanted to encourage a spirit of adventure in them. I love seeing the delight in children's eyes when they experience something new. The Christian life is a daily adventure in which God is constantly inviting us to face new challenges and opportunities. Only a childlike attitude will do.

Jesus' words couldn't have been stronger. Not only were children to be the role model for every Christian disciple, but Jesus declared that if anyone refused to come like a child, they would be denied entry into the kingdom of God. That's a very blunt message, but he wanted them to know that an arrogant person would never be welcomed by God. It is only as we humble ourselves like children and come to God with empty hands that he is able to bless us.

QUESTION

What do you most need to learn from the example of children?

PRAYER

Help me, Lord, to become more and more childlike as I trust you in every part of my life. Amen

Photo - Discover life at one of Ireland's most striking lighthouses, set on a dramatic, wave-battered coast. To mark European Heritage Open Days 2025, St. John's Point Lightkeepers' Houses, will be open for free tours on Sunday 14th September, 10am–4pm. St. Johns Point, 1 Point Road, Killough, County Down

