**Jesus and the Children**

**The Word**

Read together Mark 10:13-16

**The Big Idea**

Jesus had a compassionate heart for children, and he calls us all into a child-like dependence that characterizes his Father’s kingdom.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. As you consider Jesus’ heart towards children and the priority he gave children, what is your honest assessment of your own posture towards children in this season of your life?

2. In Luke's account of this story, he explicitly states that these are little children, drawing our attention to their helplessness, dependence, and trust in others (particularly their parents). In your own life, where do you find it difficult to surrender, humble yourself, and maintain a posture of dependence before God?

3. Consider the statistics and information about children presented on Sunday (both the information about children in general and at Grace specifically). What stood out to you most from that?

4. As you consider the call towards active discipleship of children, what role do you think you should play at this time? And what are the main barriers and obstacles (whether internal or external)?

**Sermon Outline**

I. Background: The Nature of the Kingdom

A. Surprises as to who’s in and who’s out

 Samaritan woman, Pharisee and tax collector, Rich young ruler

 B. Points us to the reality of God’s story

 1. Born into dependence - garden

 2. Don’t eat of that tree – just trust me

3. We arrogantly assume we can be like God and live apart from him

4. Israel learned to live in dependence out of Egypt into desert and promise land

 5. Cycles of: blessing, rebellion/forget, judgment/punishment, restoration

 Same story - God keeps reminding, “You’re not meant to live apart from me.”

6. God’s promise to soften the people’s hearts: Ezekiel 36:25-27

II. What does Jesus want to teach us through children?

A. Jesus is saying life is not meant to be lived apart from me; you have nothing to offer me

 B. Take on the humility of a child - wake up! This is true of you

C. Revelation 3:17: The danger of the illusion of self-sufficiency

D. Jesus call is to follow which means laying down our autonomy, control and trust in self

E. In the kingdom, maturity actually means increased dependence. Consider Proverbs 3:5-6

III. What do we learn about Jesus' heart for children?

A. Jesus is indignant at the disciples’ rebuke

B. He just explained this in Mark 9:36-37

C. The kingdom belongs to children and they need to be discipled now—not as an imposition or nuisance for Jesus

 1. This is commanded in Deuteronomy 6:5-9

 2. This is one of our largest mission fields