

“Kindergarten Kingdom!”

1. Intro:

- 1.1. Share on communion after 2nd song – See end notes.
- 1.2. Last week we covered the prayers of the Pharisee & the Tax collector.
 - 1.2.1. True prayer should **humble us** & make us **love others more**.
 - 1.2.2. We learned last week prayer shouldn't be like an **attorney** bringing an **indictment** against another man; but that we should be like **children** coming to a **Father**.

2. KINDERGARTEN KINGDOM! (15-17)

- 2.1. **REBUKED BY THE DISCIPLES!** (15)
- 2.2. As Seals & Croft sang, *“We may never pass this way again”* I think this fueled the same urgency, of those who feared Jesus wouldn't be passing this way again.
- 2.3. So, the babes were brought...indicating their parents appraisal & approval of Jesus.
 - 2.3.1. The **parents** had a desire; the **baby's** had a need; & **Christ** was all sufficient!
- 2.4. Mark tells us Jesus was **greatly displeased**, angry.
- 2.5. He **didn't say** *bring them to me*, but *don't keep them from me*.
 - 2.5.1. Because it seems that you get a child **into the presence** of Jesus, & they **go straight to Him**.
- 2.6. **RECEIVED BY THE SAVIOR!** (16,17)
- 2.7. **Focus on the children!** (16)
- 2.8. Little children belong with their loving Lord.
 - 2.8.1. **Q:** Dads, **how are you doing in this area?** {They in vs.15 is masculine}
 - 2.8.2. **Q:** Dad's, Mom's, anything in your lifestyle that might keep your kids in the future from coming to Jesus? (i.e. hypocrisy)
 - 2.8.2.1. **Jesse James** killed a fellow in a bank robbery and shortly thereafter was **baptized** in the Kearney Baptist Church. Then he killed another man, a bank cashier, and **joined the church choir** and taught hymn-singing. **He liked Sundays**, Jesse did, but he **couldn't always show up at church**. On two Sundays, he **robbed trains**.
 - 2.8.3. You probably not **robbing trains**...but would your kids say...
 - 2.8.3.1. **“Dad doesn't have to go to church, why should I!”**
 - 2.8.3.2. **“The way mom acts, I don't want a part of her religion.”**
- 2.9. **Focus on the adults!** (17)
- 2.10. **You** – He applies this truth to the crowd.
- 2.11. **Receive the kingdom of God** = Welcome God's **Rule & Authority** into your **heart & life**.

- 2.11.1. **Children** start with what **adults** have lost...**innocence!**
- 2.11.2. It's stooping & entering through the *children's door*, the *lowly door*, by *trust & humility*.
- 2.11.3. Little children possess **humility** because they lack anything to boast of, & can make no claim on God.
 - 2.11.3.1. We really don't have anything to boast of either! - We're like the **little dog** who acts ferocious & scares away the stray dog...not realizing the intimidation was the **large dog** standing behind us!
- 2.12. **Receive** – Key “receive” in vs.17.
 - 2.12.1. Ps.116:12,13 “What shall I render to the LORD For all His benefits toward me? I will **take up** the cup of salvation, And call upon the name of the LORD.”

3. **RICHES & THE KINGDOM! (18-27)**

- 3.1. **THE RICH YOUNG RULER COMES!** (18-23)
- 3.2. **Mark & Matthew** also tell this story. (Mrk 10:17-22 & Mt.19:16-26)
 - 3.2.1. He was most likely a ruler of the local synagogue.
 - 3.2.2. He was engaged on the **highest quest** possible, he was seeking life in its **fullness**, the **abundant plentiful** life.
- 3.3. **Q: The ruler's concern?...to inherit eternal life.**
 - 3.3.1. He had some **great qualities**:
 - 3.3.1.1. He was **serious** about finding out. [Mark – running & knelt]
 - 3.3.1.2. He had obvious **self-dissatisfaction**.
 - 3.3.1.3. He was **ready** to “go for it” he was ready to **do!**
 - 3.3.1.4. He was confident in **Christ's guidance**.
 - 3.3.1.5. He was young, rich, powerful, religious, moral, & sincere.
 - 3.3.2. He had some **misunderstandings**:
 - 3.3.2.1. He had the **misconception**, eternal life could be won by **good deeds**.
 - 3.3.2.2. He was **overconfident** in his own power to **accomplish** the task!
 - 3.3.3. Although the young man had many **good qualities**, one of them was **not spiritual understanding!**
- 3.4. **Good** – a polite compliment, but shows low estimate of the word “good”.
 - 3.4.1. I see Jesus graciously setting up the conversation, trying to get him to see “good” is much **deeper & wider** than he imagined.
 - 3.4.1.1. So maybe he would perceive his own imperfections.
 - 3.4.1.2. Maybe he would see **only God** is **good**.
 - 3.4.2. Christ then meets him on his own ground of **law** & refers him to **usual duties**.

- 3.5. I'm sure this young man thought he was going to be asked to do something **pretty spectacular**...but instead, **ordinary obligations**???
- 3.5.1. He had **Naaman syndrome!** (2 Kings 5 esp.13)
- 3.6. Nobody is saved either by **keeping the Law** or by **becoming poor and generous**.
- 3.6.1. It was our Lord's way of making him face up to his **covetousness**.
- 3.6.2. Outwardly he obeyed the laws Jesus named in v.20; **but** he forgot about "**Thou shalt not covet**"(10th com) (Jesus quotes 7th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 5th com)
- 3.6.3. **If we covet, we may end up breaking all the other commandments!**
- 3.6.4. Sometimes your **radiator** needs **water/antifreeze**...other times it needs a **complete flush!**...this man needed a **complete flush!**
- 3.7. He rejected the gospel as he loved his possessions more than **God & his neighbor**.
- 3.8. He had to grapple with **2 issues**: "**Go & sell**" & "**come & follow**" [neg & pos command]
- 3.8.1. He lacked the element of control over his life that comes from outside
- 3.8.2. Jesus called him to **submit** his life to **control**.
- 3.8.2.1. *Submit, surrender, follow me!*
- 3.8.2.2. **Yield your life to the control of God!**
- 3.9. He **went away**...**where?** - Back into the **world**; to former **friends**; to the **grave**; to **judgment?**
- 3.9.1. Actually it never says. He ended the story short of that.
- 3.9.2. I think a **great painting** would be of him walking away, head dropped, shoulders drooping, hands hanging limp.
- 3.9.2.1. *George Fredrick Watts painting came close, 1897 (profile).*
- 3.10. **Q: Was Jesus' prescription for this man intended for **everyone**?**
- 3.10.1. "A doctor does not ask **all** his patients to take the **same medicine**."
- 3.10.2. The man **became very sad** precisely because he had a **different will of his own**.
- 3.11. Good intentions do not count!
- 3.11.1. The **wave** is mighty but the **spray** is weak,
And often thus our **great & high resolves**,
In their **forming** as an ocean wave,
Break in the spray of nothing.¹ [Mere conviction of sin does not atone!]
- 3.12. Last week we learned the **Tax Collector** went away **justified**, & this week this **young man** went away **sorrowful**...**what happens at the close of your prayers?**²
- 3.13. **So we learn:**
- 3.13.1. [1] One can be **interested in eternal life** w/o **possessing it**.
- 3.13.2. [2] One can "**obey God rules**" but only in a **superficial sense**.
- 3.14. **This guy missed the kingdom by one garage sale!**

¹ Griffith Thomas; pg.280

² Warren Wiersbe; With the Word; pg.682.

- 3.15. **THE RICH YOUNG RULER GOES!** (24-27)
- 3.16. This resulted in an occasion to talk about the diff of a rich man entering heaven.
- 3.16.1. Thus leaving the disciples shocked, as the theology of the day viewed **wealth** as a sign of **God's favor**.
- 3.17. **Eye of a needle** –
- 3.17.1. A **very wealthy pastor** was dying in his mansion, and his flock gathered round to ask him for his last wish. "Before I die," he said, "I would like to take a ride." And they asked the rich pastor what he required for that final ride before entering the kingdom of heaven. And he said, "I would like a **very small camel** and a **very large needle**."
- 3.17.2. **C.S. Lewis** once observed that **God can** bring a camel through the eye of a needle but the camel will **not be the same creature** having come through a needle's eye! 😊
- 3.18. **Impossible with men; possible with God** –
- 3.18.1. **Two great lessons here:**
- 3.18.2. [1] **Many** have learned the lesson it's **Impossible with men**. Then shrugging their shoulders they **give up** in **hopeless despair**. And then live a **miserable religious** life, w/o **joy, strength, or victory!**
- 3.18.2.1. Carrie Underwood sings, "*pouring raindrops back into a cloud.*"
- 3.18.3. [2] **Others** learn **all things are Possible with God**.
- 3.18.4. It is **possible** even for a rich man to enter the kingdom **with God**. When a man becomes **linked up with God**, all **impossible** things become **possible!**

4. FORSAKING ALL FOR THE KINGDOM! (28-30)

- 4.1. **SACRIFICE?**
- 4.2. Following the rulers refusal to "*forsake all*" Peter said, "*We forsook all*"!
- 4.2.1. Jesus seems to overlook any self-congratulation here, but instead points to His own faithfulness.
- 4.2.2. **Any sacrifice will be more than repaid!** - Which seems to make **ANY & EVERY sacrifice...only a temporary sacrifice!**
- 4.2.3. **If I say** give me **\$10**, & I'll turn around & give you **\$100** now/**\$1000** later.
- 4.2.3.1. That doesn't sound like a **sacrifice** to give up my **\$10...but an investment!**
- 4.3. **The disciples left all** – not much, but **all** to them.
- 4.3.1. **God's store** includes even widows "mites".
- 4.3.2. **The disciples followed** – they broke with the world, which is the real test.
- 4.4. **Earthly** increase is promised, **Heavenly** blessings assured.

- 4.5. **End:** Receive the kingdom of God as a little child –
- 4.6. **Childlikeness:**
- 4.6.1. **Love** (a child is cherished for months before a spark of returned love; He 1st loved us);
Dependence (a child finds dependence on, & safety in, the care of his parents; **believer** trusts in Christ);
Humility (children ask a ton of questions showing they need knowledge; **believers** should be eager to learn spiritual things);
Obedience (*children learn to do as told; believers must also... sometimes by difficult lessons!*).
- 4.6.2. **This is the Kindergarten Kingdom!**
- 4.7. **Childishness:**
- 4.7.1. One who is childish wants: his/her **own way, own plans, own protection, own world, & be his/her own boss!**
- 4.7.2. The Rich young ruler was an **example** of this. [poor little man!]
- 4.7.3. **This was the best way to miss the Kingdom!**
- 4.8. Ps.131:1,2 “**LORD, my heart is not haughty, Nor my eyes lofty. Neither do I concern myself with **great matters**, Nor with things **too profound** for me. Surely I have **calmed** and **quieted my soul**, Like a **weaned child** with his mother; Like a weaned child *is* my soul within me.”**
- 4.8.1. Another version, “*Like a baby content in its mother’s arms, my soul is a baby content.*”
- 4.8.2. Don’t **walk away sorrowful, lay content** in His arms of Love!

The city dump. That's what it was that day in **1904** when a young African American woman, **Mary McCloud Bethune**, saw it. Nevertheless, she and other willing hands **built a shack** on that desolate place, for **she had a dream** that, with God's help, she could help other African American women learn to **read and write**. The first desks were wooden packing crates; the ink was blackberry juice.

As I wandered among the collection of tall buildings, classrooms and dormitories that is now **Bethune-Cookman College**, I stopped at a plain stone that marks the place where Mrs. Bethune's body was laid to rest at the age of seventy-nine. It had taken more than half a century for her dream to become a reality. The words carved on that stone told her whole story: "She has **given her best** so that others might **live a more abundant life.**"

The cup in the Lord's Supper serves as **two reminders**:

[1] We are to **look back** to the shed blood of Christ, and

[2] **forward** to the Lord's 2nd Coming.

For all Christians, there will be a **last** sharing of the bread and the cup on this side of eternity.

When we meet once again, we will be in Christ's presence.

One church at the close of communion *raise their cups in anticipation* and say, **"Next time, with Christ!"**

Welcome To The Table (Poem)

This is the feast of heavenly wine,

And God invites to sup;

The juices of the living vine

Were press'd to fill the cup.

Oh! bless the Saviour, ye that eat,

With royal dainties fed;

Not heaven affords a costlier treat,

For Jesus is the bread.

The vile, the lost, He calls to them;

Ye trembling souls appear!

The righteous in their own esteem

Have no acceptance here.

Approach, ye poor, nor dare refuse

The banquet spread for you;

Dear Savior, this is welcome news,

Then I may venture too.

If guilt and sin afford a plea,

And may obtain a place,

Surely the Lord will welcome me,

And I shall see His face.

Olney Hymns, **William Cowper**, from Cowper's Poems, Sheldon & Company, New York