

all. But since it was offered, there was but one way to receive it. It could not be merited, it could not be bought, it must be taken as a gracious gift to the undeserving, as a free gift to the penniless; it must be received as a little child receives a present, without a thought of having deserved it, without an idea of earning it or paying for it. Therefore it was as near to the little ones as to the aged and experienced, for none could receive it but in the spirit of a little child.

There are many now who make the same mistake. They will acknowledge that religion is probably a good thing, but then it is at present beyond them. They are not old enough, nor grave enough, nor steady enough. It might do, they think, for those who have no difficulties, no temptations, no needs—for those who have reached a serene height of calmness and indifference, but not for them—a great error! It is meant for the helpless, the needy, the weak, the defenceless; and whoever cannot confess himself to be one of these, cannot have part in it.

But now see

(3.) *How our Lord decided the matter.*

That the little children should come to Jesus was not only the desire of those who brought them. It was his desire, he wanted them. He wished for them. So when he saw his disciples turning them away he was moved with indignation. And that there might never be any mistake about the matter, he gave to them, and us also, a twofold assurance about it.

See *what he said*, ver. 14. Of the latter saying, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven," etc., we have already spoken. Consequent upon this are the two directions. 1. Affirmative. "Suffer...to come"—remove any thing that may hinder them, help them on the way, encourage, guide, bring them. 2. Negative. "Forbid them not"—do not stop them—place no obstacles in the way—make no difficulties for them—do not stand between the little ones and their privilege.

See *what he did*. "He took them up in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them." And that is what he is doing now, day by day. While many young people are waiting, hesitating, putting off, keeping away from him, he is receiving others, even little ones, blessing them with the knowledge of himself and his love, bestowing on them his protection and his favour. Ever since the Lord Jesus settled the matter in Perea, little ones have been entering the kingdom.

There can be no mistake about it. If you do not come to the Saviour now, while yet young, you are losing a glorious privilege,

and letting others get before you. And it is your own fault. For Christ is willing, ready, desirous, to welcome you, and to give you all those good things which belong to the "heirs of the kingdom."

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Give a brief review of the period of the Saviour's Judean ministry which intervened between the last lesson and the present. (See John chap. 7-10.)...Perea, the place of the lesson.....The events and teachings of Christ's Perea ministry. (Luke chap. 10-17.).....The principles of the home and family. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline.)....A word-picture of the little children brought to Christ....Some questions: (1) Why should children come to Christ? (2) How may we help them to come? (3) How do Christians hinder children from coming? (4) Wherein must we receive the kingdom as a little child?...The duties taught in this lesson: (1) Come to Christ in the right spirit for instruction, ver. 2. (2) Seek not only the letter, but the spirit of God's law, ver. 3-6. (3) Have love and unity in the home. ver. 7-9. (4) Oppose everything that tends towards the breaking up of a pure and united home. ver. 8-12. (5) Bring the children to Christ. (6) Be childlike in coming to Christ.

.....ILLUSTRATIONS. Story of a quarrelsome family who became peaceful when "two bears came to their house, bear and forbear."....Among a tribe of Indians, at the marriage ceremony the man and woman join their hands over a running stream to indicate that henceforth their lives are to flow on together.....Spurgeon says that out of many hundred children who have been received into Church-fellowship he has never been compelled to expel one from the Church....Fröbel (the originator of Kindergartens) had a motto, "Let us for our children live."....A man coming home from California was on a burning ship. Fastening around him his earnings in gold in a belt, he was about to leap overboard, and swim to the shore, which was not far distant, when a child came up to him and pleaded, "Won't you please to save me?" He cast aside his belt of gold, fastened the child upon his back, leaped into the water, and swam to the shore. He had lost the earnings of years, but saved the child. Let us count no cost too great if we can save the children.

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS. Ver. 6-16, 3010-3012, 9569, 9574, 9576. Ver. 9, *742 Ver. 13-16, *3228. Ver. 14, *371, 2872, 7081, 7087, 9861. Ver. 15, 9157, 10108, 10982. Ver. 16, *367, *2156. [The asterisk