

VI. *The grand reason for inviting the infants to His presence and to His arms. "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven"*—Luke and Mark have it the Kingdom of God.—Let us first examine the phrase "Kingdom of Heaven" or the kingdom of the heavens, which so far as the New Testament is concerned is found in Matthew alone. As has been well observed, in the other gospels and in the epistles, it is replaced by the corresponding expression, "the Kingdom of God" and in certain isolated cases we find the modified expression the kingdom of God's dear son, the kingdom of Christ and of God, the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God's heavenly kingdom. The kingdom referred to in all these expressions is a real kingdom: a community, that is to say, consisting of a king and his subjects. The king is God and hence the expression, "the kingdom of God." But God is in Christ and Christ in God, and hence the kingdom is the kingdom of Christ and of God. Christ spoke of it as belonging to Himself, "my kingdom," said He "is not of this world." Christ is thus the king—the king of kings. In the great economy of mercy He is the Father's vicegerent. "Behold," says Daniel, one like unto the son of man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him, his dominion is an everlasting dominion, it shall not pass away and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." It was doubtless to this kingdom John the Baptist referred when he cried "it is at hand," that is, the time is at hand when it shall be established. It is well called the kingdom of heaven. Its primary characteristic is heavenliness. Its origin is in heaven. Its end is in heaven. Its King is heavenly. Its subjects are heavenly in character and destiny. Its laws are heavenly. Its privileges are heavenly. Its institutions are heavenly. Its own culmination is in heaven, and is indeed heaven. Its institutions on earth are earnest of the glory of heaven. Thus, the kingdom on earth and the kingdom in heaven are one, the one kingdom of heaven. There is one side of it or one sphere as it were on earth, the under side or sphere; there is another side of it, another sphere in heaven, the upper side or sphere. This kingdom has had existence in essence throughout all past ages and dispensations. It underlay the whole Jewish economy, which in its forms was a hieroglyphic outcome or type of the heavenly reality. But when John the Baptist made his appearance in the wilderness it was about to be inaugurated in a purer and maturer phase by the personal appearance of the heavenly king. Hence the heraldic cry of this kingdom. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "My kingdom is not of this world." "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." "The kingdom of God is within you or among you." Of it, Paul said, "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." In its widest acceptation it comprehends the mediatorial economy. It is presented in various aspects and phases in the New Testament, and especially in the Gospels and by our Lord in his parables "*For of such is the kingdom of heaven,*" that is, to such the kingdom of heaven belongs. The kingdom of heaven is looked at for the moment, on the side of its privileges. The privileges, the blessings, the joys, the glories, the honours of the kingdom belong to such. Such, that is, such little children as these. As a recent and eminently learned and candid commentator, Rev. Dr. Morrison, of Glasgow, well remarks: This is certainly the most natural interpretation of the "*such.*" Some would interpret the such as referring to those who in voluntary character are like little children. But FIRST the word (τοιoutος) *such* does not naturally exclude a demonstrative reference to the children themselves. Jesus evidently means, "Yet of these is the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom belongs to little children. This will appear by comparing the following passages, viz.: Matthew ix. 8, "But when the multitude saw it they marvelled and glorified God which had given *such* power unto *him,*" (*this power*). Luke ix. 9, "And Herod said, John have I beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear *such* things" (*these things*). Luke xiii. 2, "And Jesus answered and