

We need to learn it as much as the disciples did. Jesus saw that these disciples wanted to go to the good kingdom, but they were in danger of getting started wrong, as the boy did who took the wrong train. Some little boy or girl here is in danger, too. So let us all listen while Jesus speaks.

WHAT JESUS DID.

Teacher, call the smallest child in the class forward. Tell that very likely this was Peter's little boy. Put your arms tenderly about the child. Tell that this is what Jesus did. He did it because he loved the little boy. He loves all little children just as truly now as he did then. Then, with his arms around the child, Jesus taught the right way into the kingdom of heaven.

Call for Golden Text. Teach that a good little child is not proud, is willing to be guided, does not want the best things and the best places, is obedient, is loving, etc. The child has the kind of spirit that all must have who want to find the way to the kingdom of heaven.

Use symbol. If we have pride, self-love, self-seeking in our hearts, we are on the wrong track, and will not find the kingdom of heaven in that way.

Tell what Jesus said about helping others to get into the kingdom, ver. 41. Teach that children may help others, if only they will let Jesus come into their hearts to teach them how.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

The Saviour has passed within that friendly door—so pleasant this seclusion, to receive the household's attention, to be honored by its hospitality and refreshed by its rest. But an unpleasant thought makes its shadow in his face, and he turns to his disciples thronging after him. They see that he has something to say. His eyes scorch them while his voice thrills them. He wishes to know what they were disputing about "by the way." A moment ago, their tongues may have been running freely, noisily. Now every tongue is hushed as if overtaken by palsy. It is not pleasant, also, to meet his eyes. Peter finds it agreeable to look at James. James turns to John. John has eyes for a window or the door, as if he wished he were outside. Such a dumb lot of disciples! Such unwilling listeners! Nobody wants to answer that question, "What was it that ye disputed?"

How ready then to talk! How eager their voices! How quickly they took sides! And all upon the question, "Who should be the greatest?" Disputing this in the service of one who was among the lowest in his self-abasement! No wonder that their ambitious tongues have the palsy!

They look so guilty, so ashamed!
They feel so mean!

Nobody yet has spoken.

But the Master has now sat down, and he summons them about him. He has something to say. They have not told him yet what the trouble was; and he will tell them. He only says, if one would be first, he must be last and a servant.

And then he rises and goes perhaps to the door.

"What is that for?" one of the dumb disciples may be wondering. Those children outside are so noisy. May he rebuke them!

No, he has brought a child into the midst of that group of disciples. Perhaps it is a boy with dark, questioning eyes, awed to be thus confronted by the twelve and their strange Master. Do not fear, child! Harm never yet came from those loving hands that one day will be wounded for thy salvation. Those hands are lifting the child. And now while he nestles in those gentle arms the Saviour teaches a lesson of humility.

Such a silent, rebuked group! A marvel—humanity without speech!

But John has found his tongue at last. Something has occurred to him. It is a matter not disagreeably reflecting on these disciples, as did the previous subject, but shows how faulty some other folks were. The scene which he witnessed comes back again. "Was when the disciples were out in the road. They saw a crowd around a man who was trying to drive a devil out of a poor tormented soul. They could see the contorted, angry features of the demoniac. They heard the would-be healer exorcising the devil in the name of Jesus!"

"Why, what is this man doing?" asked one of the disciples. "He is not one of us! To think of his using the name of Jesus!"

And the disciple cried aloud, vehemently rebuking, "You have no right to use the name of Jesus! We forbid you!"

The exorcist looked up and wondered. The demoniac scowled and denounced.

The disciples passed on.

To recall all this may be a relief to John. That other topic of conversation was disagreeable.

What does the Master think of the above impertinent use of his great name? Tell these disciples so vigilant for orthodoxy! Justify these rebukers of a heretic, of the man not "one of us!" The Saviour answers. O voice of charity, voice of justice! The Saviour would not shut him out who does not positively shut out the Saviour. Jesus, who sees the motive, has no word of praise for John condemning the act. Perhaps the disciple wishes he had not turned the conversation away from that first subject.

A. D. 30.]

LESSON XI. CHRIST'S LOVE TO THE YOUNG.

[March 17.]

Authorized Version.

Mark 10. 13-22. [Commit to memory verses 21, 22.]



13 And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

14 But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Revised Version.

13 And they brought unto him little children, that he should touch them: and the disciples rebuked them.

14 But when Jesus saw it, he was moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And he took them in his arms, and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.