

were brought to be touched or "blessed" by Christ.*

None of the ancient philosophers or teachers had anything to do with children. The disciples thought it beneath their Master's dignity, or that he was too busy to be troubled with them; they did not know him; "He was much displeased!" Mark x. 14. Nothing ever made him so angry.

Of such is the kingdom of heaven. Christ seems to mean that he had secured heaven to all such little ones who by their own sins do not reject it.

As a little child. With that simple earnest faith in God which a child exhibits towards his father.

II. The Young Ruler, ver. 18-21.

Good Master. Few ever sought Christ with so much respect or sought eternal life so earnestly. *What must I do?* He felt he had not yet done enough.

Jesus said. Christ "loved" this young man, and in his reply taught him, that in accepting the title *good*, he accepted the homage due to Divinity, and that obedience to God is the way of life.

Ver. 21. Probably the young ruler thought to have kept God's law. So Paul, Phil. iii. 6. He had been very strict and moral; yet he felt he lacked something.

III. The Danger of Riches, ver. 24-30.

Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful.—How Jesus pitied him! Evidently Christ meant that wealth so increased a man's temptations that it was most difficult to escape being ruined by them.

APPLICATION.

I. *Christ's love to Children.* He knows their souls are as valuable as those of the old. The love of a father, mother, brother, or sister, all combined, cannot equal Christ's, Mark iii. 35. David's love to Absalom, Jacob's to Joseph, Jonathan's to David, is not equal to Christ's, Isa. xl. 11; xlix. 15.

Christ's love far exceeds man's. The apostles were kind men, but they pushed back the little ones. Man, do not care for children. No minister, teacher, or parent, loves you like Christ.

2. *Seek Christ's blessing.* "Seek him early." All are "children of disobedience." None too young to die. Christ can make the youngest an heir of heaven. Abijah, 1 Kings xiv. 13. Samuel, 1 Sam. ii. 26. Josiah, 2 Kings xxii. 2. Timothy, 2 Tim. i. 5; iii. 15.

• Picture the scene:—Some grassy bank; Christ seated in the midst; the mothers pressing through the crowd with their little ones in their arms. Christ's kindness encourages them; the disciples frown; the children, frightened, cling to their mothers' breasts; the little ones first gaze with wonder, and then, with a timid smile, venture into his arms and are blessed.

3. *Parents and Teachers should bring their children to Christ.* By prayer. Is he so willing to receive them, and will we not take them to Him? By example; Let us go ourselves. Imitate Christ's winning manner. His manner drew the mothers near before he spoke; the children looked in his face and went into his arms. Seek his Spirit to teach us to love-like Him.

4. *Beware of preventing any from coming to Christ.* If by neglect, coldness, ignorance, or sin, a child is kept back or discouraged, Christ will be "much displeased," Matt. xviii. 6.

5. *How near you may come to Christ and yet lose Him.* The young ruler, 1. Came when he was young, and though he was rich; 2. Thought much of Christ; 3. Cared for his soul, and did much for it; 4. Was better than most people, yet wished to be better still; 5. Went to Christ to be taught; Christ loved him, and yet he was lost! You expect to go to heaven, and what have you done? Matt. vii. 14.

6. *If you love anything more than Christ, you are lost.* That which is best loved is your god. Christ will not be second in your heart, Matt. x. 37. This young man would have liked heaven and his money, too, Matt. vi. 24; 1 Kings xviii. 21. Would you leave all for Christ?

7. *If you wish eternal life obey Christ.*—"Believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another," 1 John iii. 23. There is no other way. You know what he bid you do.

8. *How foolish to come to Christ to be taught, and not to do what he bids you.*—Yet many do so; many Sabbath-school scholars do so, ver. 22. Christ knew the ruler was deceiving himself. He loved the world more than he loved God. He went away very sorrowful. He did not pretend to leave his riches as Judas, Demas, and Ananias did, but he was very rich, and could not give them up. He had better been beggar! How sad never to hear of his again!—*John. S. S. Lessons.*

VALUE OF LABOUR.—God is constantly teaching us that nothing valuable is ever obtained without labour; and that no labour can be honestly expended without our getting its value in return. He is not careful to make everything easy to man. The Bible itself is no light book; human duty no holiday engagement. The grammar of deep personal religion, and the grammar of real practical virtue, are not to be learned by any facile, Hamiltonian methods.—*Binney.*