

The CHOSEN

Jesus Loves the Little Children

Episode 3

Key Bible Verses

Some people brought children to Jesus so that he would place his hands on them and pray. But the disciples scolded them. "Allow the children to come to me," Jesus said. "Don't forbid them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people like these children." Then he blessed the children and went away from there.

~Matthew 19:13-15

This episode is unique in that Jesus only interacts with a group of children and no other characters.



The main characters among the children are named Abigail and Joshua. Although we do not see these children named in Scripture, they represent the many children Jesus would have interacted with throughout the course of His ministry. Jesus' love for and protection of children is clear in the Bible. Within three chapters of Matthew, Jesus is shown to be around children on three different occasions.

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Then he called a little child over to sit among the disciples, and said, "I assure you that if you don't turn your lives around and become like this little child, you will definitely not enter the kingdom of heaven. Those who humble themselves like this little child will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. ~ Matthew 18:1-5

People who were blind and lame came to Jesus in the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and legal experts saw the amazing things he was doing and the children shouting in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were angry. They said to Jesus, "Do you hear what these children are saying?" "Yes," he answered. "Haven't you ever read, From the mouths of babies and infants you've arranged praise for yourself? Then he left them and went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there. ~ Matthew 21:14-17

Is that true? (clarifying artistic imagination)

Did Jesus spend time with kids?

We have no record of Jesus encountering children early in his ministry, but based on Matthew 18:1-6, 19:13-15, and 21:14-17, such situations would not be surprising.

Did Jesus travel on his own and camp out?

We have no record of Jesus setting up a camp like the one in this episode, but He does say “the Son of Man has no place to lay his head” (Luke 9:58). We know Jesus traveled to many towns and communities so it would not be unusual for him to camp outside these places. He stayed in homes of others later in his ministry, but we do not know of his situation early on.

What is the “Shema” that the children recited?

The “Shema” is Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and is considered a confession of faith for the Jews. “Shema” is the word “Hear” that begins Deuteronomy 6:4. The Shema is recited twice daily by Jews and also includes Deut. 11:13-21 & Num 15:37-41. In modern day, Jews have a mezuzah (small container) nailed to their door posts, which contains the Shema. Every time you enter or leave, the mezuzah reminds you that you have a covenant with God.

Did Jesus pray with such anguish to the Father?

There is no record of such anguish early in his ministry, though he certainly toils in prayer on the night of his arrest (Matthew 26:36-46). And he often withdraws from crowds in Scripture to be alone with the Father (Mark 1:35). So, this depiction is not inconsistent with the pattern in the gospels.

Was Jesus a carpenter?

Jesus and his father Joseph are described as “tektons” in the New Testament, which translates as “carpenter” in English. It is not known if they were wood workers or stone masons. Tekton can be used for both professions.

Growth Questions

1. Do you talk to Jesus as carefree as the children did in the episode? Why or why not? Do you feel Jesus is as receiving toward you as He was the children?
2. Jesus said in the episode, “Everyone has a much larger job than just their trade.” Do you see yourself as having a “larger job” in this life? What does that look like in your day-to-day life?
3. Jesus’ gift reminded Abigail that He did not come only for the wealthy. How does that make you feel about Jesus? What does that mean about how we as His disciples treat people?
4. In this episode, Jesus is seen praying routinely (mealtimes, bedtime) and passionately. Why did Jesus pray? What does this teach us about the value of prayer?
5. Jesus says we must “change and become like little children” in order to enter heaven. What do you think he means by that?
6. How can we continue to nurture a childlike faith and wonder in Jesus even when we mature in our walk with Him?
7. How can you be more attentive and affectionate toward the children in your home, church, and neighborhood, like Jesus?
8. In what areas of your life is it easy to trust Jesus with a childlike faith? In what areas is it more difficult?
 1. In those areas where it is difficult what needs to change for you to be more trusting?
9. What else did you learn about Jesus from this episode? Are there any ways in which your impression or understanding of Jesus was sharpened, challenged, or changed?