

Summary

This sermon explores the concept of blessing through the story of Jesus blessing the children in Mark 10. The pastor begins with a personal story about blessing his six-year-old son Durham, illustrating our universal desire for blessing. The message centers on Jesus' teaching that the kingdom of God belongs to 'such as these' - referring to children who come with no achievements or credentials, only need and dependence. The key truth is that we don't achieve our way into God's kingdom or blessing; we receive it like children. This challenges our performance-driven culture and works-based religion, emphasizing that salvation is a gift to be received, not earned through good deeds or religious performance.

The sermon connects this to God's promise to Abraham about being blessed to be a blessing, showing that God's strategy is for blessed people to bless others. Jesus demonstrates the five components of biblical blessing: meaningful touch, verbal affirmation, communicating high value, envisioning a special future, and genuine commitment. The message concludes with three invitations: for those who have never received salvation, for believers who have been trying to earn blessing elsewhere, and for those who have received blessing to share it with others.

Intro Prayer

Father, we come before You today with open hearts, ready to receive what You have for us. We ask that You would help us set aside our preconceptions and performance mindsets, and instead approach You like little children - with wonder, dependence, and trust. Open our minds to understand Your heart toward us and Your desire to bless us. Help us to be receptive to what You want to teach us through Your Word today, and give us the courage to receive and share the blessing You have for us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What's one of your favorite childhood memories that made you feel especially loved or valued?

Key Verses

Mark 10:13-16

Genesis 12:1-3

Romans 3:23

Romans 6:23

Questions

1. Why do you think the disciples tried to turn the children away from Jesus, and how might we sometimes do the same thing today?
2. What does it mean to 'receive the kingdom of God like a little child'? What childlike qualities does Jesus want us to have?

3. The pastor mentioned we live in a performance-driven culture. How does this affect our relationship with God and our understanding of His blessing?
4. What's the difference between achieving blessing and receiving blessing? Why is this distinction so important?
5. How does the story of God's promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) connect to Jesus blessing the children?
6. The five components of biblical blessing are: meaningful touch, verbal affirmation, communicating high value, envisioning a special future, and genuine commitment. Which of these do you most need to receive or give?
7. Jesus was 'indignant' when the disciples hindered the children. What does this reveal about God's heart toward those who are vulnerable or marginalized?
8. How can we be people who bring others to Jesus for blessing rather than hindering them from coming to Him?

Life Application

This week, identify someone in your life who needs to experience God's blessing - perhaps a child, a struggling friend, or someone who feels distant from God. Look for an opportunity to either pray for them, speak words of affirmation and value over them, or invite them to experience Jesus' love in a tangible way. Practice being a conduit of God's blessing rather than just a consumer of it.

Key Takeaways

- We all have a deep desire for blessing - to know we have value, we matter, and someone believes in our future
- The kingdom of God is received like a child receives - with empty hands, complete dependence, and trust, not through achievements or performance
- Salvation is a gift to be received, not a wage to be earned through good works or religious performance
- God's blessing strategy is that blessed people become a blessing to others - we receive in order to give
- Jesus demonstrates God's heart toward the vulnerable and marginalized, showing indignation when they are hindered from coming to Him

Ending Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the reminder that Your kingdom belongs to those who come like little children - with open hands and hearts, ready to receive Your gift of grace. Help us to rest in Your love rather than striving to earn it. For those who have never received Your blessing of salvation, we pray they would have the courage to open their hearts to You today. For those who have been trying to earn what You've already given, help them find rest in Your finished work. And for all of us, make us conduits of Your blessing to others, especially to the next generation. May we be people who bring others to You rather than hinder them. Thank You for loving us unconditionally and for the blessing of life with You. In Jesus' name, Amen.