**Study on Mark 10:13-16**

* **Some people brought children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples scolded the people** *(Lit. “rebuked them”).* **When Jesus noticed this, he was angry** *(Lit. “indignant****”),* and said to his disciples, “Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these”** *(Lit. “for of such of these is the Kingdom of God”).* **I assure you that whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it”. Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them, and blessed them** *(Mark 10:13-16).*
* **“So then,** **anyone who hears these words of mine and does them is like a like a wise man** **who built his house on rock.** **The rain poured down, the rivers overflowed, and the wind blew hard against that house.  But it did not fall, because it was built on rock.**

**But anyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.**  **The rain poured down, the rivers overflowed, the wind blew hard against that house, and it fell. And what a terrible fall that was!”** *(Matt. 7:24-27).*

DVD Spot: **Growing Young: Helping young people**

**discover and love the Church**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=il1KMMwPDpI>

\*From 10:45 – 29:36

**Discussion Questions**:

1. Have you been missing worshipping together at Glynde? Why, or why not?

If a visitor came to worship with us, what would he or she notice at the second service? Would the number and variety of children stand out? What generations are missing in worship at Glynde? Discuss.

1. Do you like the account of Jesus and the children?

What do you like about it? Do you think that Jesus loved and valued children? Should we love and value children?

How could this show itself in action here at Glynde?

1. What aspects of “children” do you think Jesus is highlighting when he says with regard to the “children”:

* **“The Kingdom of God belongs to such as these”**
* **“Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it”?**

Discuss.

1. In this study, we are focussing on two of the six core commitments of churches “growing young”, namely: taking Jesus message seriously, and prioritising young people *and families* everywhere.

Discuss how these core commitments relate to our Bible reading for today, and what they mean for our Christian community here at Glynde.

1. What are we doing well with regard to the young people in our midweek and Sunday ministries? What can we do better? Brainstorm ideas for ways in which we can grow the faith of the little ones, the young people, and the emerging adults in our extended community.

**Quotes:**

The following are quotes from Sunday’s message on the theme: “Jesus blesses the little children”, *which is subtitled: Growing Young: Blessing the young”*

* **If a visitor were to come to worship with us in the past, what do you think he or she would particularly notice?** Well, at the 10.30 a.m. service, it would be the number of children present: children gathered together at the back drawing and reading and playing, children racing up to Children’s Time, and children running out to Lighthouse ministry….

**And this is how, I believe, Jesus wants it to be…. As we can see from our Bible reading, Jesus encouraged people bringing their children to him to be blessed by him, enjoyed being in the company of children, and promoted children as examples to us of what life in God’s Kingdom involves.**

* William Barclay in his commentary on our passage for today emphasises that our Bible passage tells us quite about Jesus. He writes:

**Incidentally, this tells us a great deal about Jesus. It tells us that he was the kind of person who cared for children and for whom children cared. He could not have been a stern and gloomy and joyless person. There must have been a kindly sunshine on him. He must have smiled easily and laughed joyously.**

**Somewhere George MacDonald says that he does not believe in a *person’s* Christianity if the children are never found playing around his door. This little, precious incident throws a flood of light on the human kind of person Jesus was** *(Mark, p. 241-242).*

* **What is it about “little children” that Jesus is wanting us to notice and uphold? Surely, it is their humility and their willing to trust.** These are essential aspects of living in God’s Kingdom, *of being a child of God:* being humble before God, and trusting in what He provides… *(cf. Luke 18:9-14).*

In fact, with regard to that earlier instance in Mark’s gospel where Jesus took a child in his arms, Matthew tells us that Jesus said:

**“The greatest in the Kingdom of heaven is the one who humbles himself and becomes like this child”** *(Matthew 18:4).*

* **When you take Jesus’ message seriously, you listen to him as your Lord, and you do what he wants you to do…. And what is one thing that Jesus very much wants us to do: to love and value little ones and young people everywhere, and to prioritise young people *and families* everywhere.**
* **Listen to some of the things that the writers of the book *Growing Young* have to say about these two core commitments:**
* **In churches growing young, Jesus reigns over poor theology, and his words ring true for young sojourners hungry for life-giving direction** *(p. 129).*
* Nearly everyone we interviewed – young and old – repeated, **“People are our heart; Jesus is our message”** *(p. 129).*
* **“Pursuing Jesus…is the heart of churches growing young”** *(p. 130).*
* **Regardless of your context, our research has us convinced that the hinge point separating churches that grow old from those that grow young is priority.** We call this a hinge point because…if *churches* fail to prioritise young people everywhere and help them to live as good neighbours in the world, over time the congregation will age out *(cf. Growing Old arrow at the junction between warmth and priority on the diagram, p. 200).*
* **How do churches that grow young make *little ones,* youth, and emerging adults a greater priority? When they think about budget strategy, worship planning, programming, community life, theology, and all other aspects of church life, they think about young people. They intentionally pay attention** *(p. 202).*