

"BECOME LIKE A CHILD"

READ FOR YOURSELF: Luke 19:1-10 and Matthew 19:13-15

The religious leaders in Jerusalem send men to Jesus to hear him out. It can't be that he is only good. They want to catch him on something so they can accuse him...

Jesus associates with people who have a bad reputation. Like whores. And tax collectors, who work for the Romans...

The messiah has come to save those who are lost.



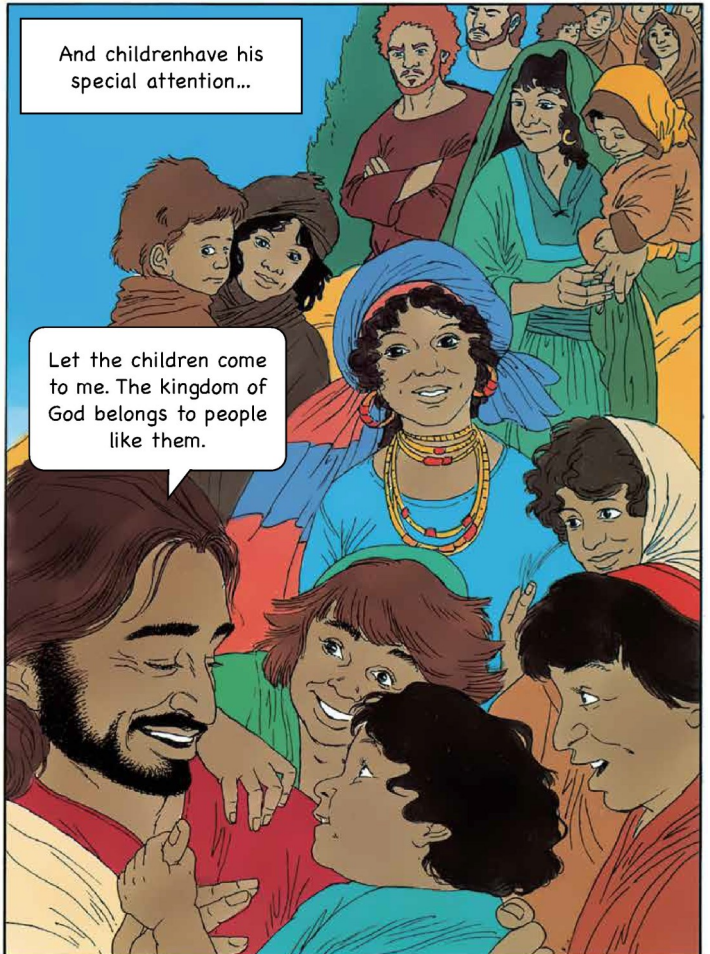
Jesus heals the sick on the sabbath when actually no one is allowed to work...

Be healed!



And children have his special attention...

Let the children come to me. The kingdom of God belongs to people like them.





"BECOME LIKE A CHILD"

How amazing that the Lord Jesus is so often misunderstood. By the religious leaders who slowly but surely become His most dangerous opponents. But also by His own followers, who so badly want to be important.

The Jewish leaders have problems with Jesus, because He does things which according to their laws are not allowed. And what makes it even worse: He associates with people who in their eyes are not at all acceptable. Jesus' followers have problems with Him when He also pays attention to children: Children couldn't be as important as they are, are they?

But Jesus is interested in the small and the weak. Sinners and sick people and children have a special place in his heart. Because He knows how badly they need Him. He knows how happy He can make all of them.

People who think they know everything so well do not feel they need Jesus. But the people who simply want to believe what He says are the ones who do. "It is the humble people to whom God gives grace" (James 4:6). People who want to become like children, may enter God's kingdom. God's Father Heart also wants to include children in His plans. Children can trust deeply in God the Father. They can be very fine tuned to the Holy Spirit and be used by Him.

MEMORY VERSE

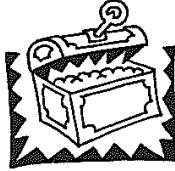
*"The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."
(Luke 19:10)*

WHO IS JESUS?

Friend of bad people

*'Look at this man! He is a glutton and a drinker, a friend of tax collectors and other outcasts!'
(Matthew 11:19).*

Is Jesus, a friend of bad people? These names are meant as slander, because the opponents of the Lord Jesus think of Him in that way. But really this is a title of honour for Jesus. It is true. He has come to search for all those who are lost and to rescue them. He doesn't condemn anyone, because He is full of grace!



DARE TO BE VULNERABLE

God is the best Father there is. No one loves His children as much as He does. He also loves you. That is why you never need to be afraid of Him. Not even when you have done or thought something wrong. He loves you so much that He gave Jesus for you. And Jesus took all your mistakes upon Himself, all your sins. That is why you are always welcome by God.

*"There is no fear in love; perfect love drives out all fear."
(1 John 4:18)*

Do you doubt God's love at times? Then look at Jesus. On the cross He has proven how much He loves you!

OLD TREASURES

*"O Lord, our Lord, your greatness is seen in all the world! Your praise reaches up to the heavens; it is sung by children and babies. You are safe and secure from all your enemies; you stop anyone who opposes you."
(Psalm 8:1-2).*

God's purpose is that children are also part of His plans. Children can trust deeply in God the Father. Because of that they can be very finely tuned to the Holy Spirit and be used by Him. From the Old Testament we know Joseph, Samuel, David and the child-king Josiah, all of whom were being used by God when they were still children or teenagers.



EXTRA INFORMATION

Training a child

In the time of the New Testament the Jews have a simple and effective way to train their children from the Bible. The directions for training come from Proverbs 22:6:
"Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives."

Children are a gift of God. That demands special care and attention of the parents. Children are expected to have respect for their parents. They have to honour their father and mother.

From their third year children get daily lessons in the synagogue. Only in the mornings, so that there is enough time left over for playing, or when they are older to learn a trade. When a Jewish boy turns 13 years old, he may take part in the life of adults.

God promises that His Spirit, thanks to Jesus, will also be upon children (Isaiah 59:21; Joel 2:28). The Spirit also tells the children, how God wants us to live.



DO YOU KNOW...?

1. Why do the Jewish leaders have problems with Jesus?

2. Why do the disciples have problems with Jesus?

3. What does Jesus do if you happen to wander from the right way (Luke 15:4-7)?

4. Why is 'Friend of bad people' a title of honour for Jesus:

- a) Because He looks for bad people and saves them
- b) Because He thinks that bad people are really good.
- c) Because He is no different than they

5. At what age does a Jewish child begin to take part in the life of adults?

6. Why do you have to become like a child in order to be big in God's kingdom (Matthew 18:4):

- a) Because your faith needs to become more simple and trusting.
- b) Because you first still have to learn a lot before you can go further.
- c) Because you need to let your parents go before you.

7. What does 'Abba' mean (read Romans 8:15 NIV)?

BIBLE READING

Sun	Luke 19:1-10
Mon	Mark 7:1-8
Tue	Matthew 11:16-19
Wed	Matthew 18:1-5
Thu	Matthew 19:13-15
Fri	Romans 8:13-19
Sat	Psalm 8



ACTION POINT!

Have you sinned? Then do not stay away from God. That is the last thing you should do, because He desires to help you.

Say about sin what God says about sin. Sin is wrong, but it is forgiven (1 John 1:9).

Say also what God says about you. You do stupid things at times, but you are still his child (1 John 3:1).

Jesus has made all that possible, and He will help you to change and to stop sinning. So, when you have made mistakes, say: "In spite of the mistakes, God is still my Father and I am His child, because Jesus has made it alright for me. That's why I want to do it right next time."