

## What Saith the Scripture?

<http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/>

### **Suffer the Little Children to Come Unto Me**

Or, Of Such is the Kingdom of Heaven

"And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them: and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God"

(Mark 10:13-14).

by Katie Stewart

#### **Preface**

I am a Christian mother. Our children are all grown-up, and I'm just so grateful to our Sweet LORD Jesus to be able to say, "Our children love the LORD".

Small children are saved the same way adults are-- by grace through faith. God's grace, or help, works faith in them. But how soon is too soon?

You don't have to know about a doctrine of sin nature to sin. The flesh can teach sin with no more knowledge than knowing right from wrong. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). A little child can be, and should be, taught to obey at a very young age. By young, I mean when they learn the MEANING of "yes" and "no". When they can understand that "yes" pleases you, and "no" displeases you, then they are beginning to climb up on that foundation of moral obligation. When your child knows that he/she is SUPPOSED TO DO the good and right thing, and does not-- then your child has sinned.

A child should be introduced to the goodness of God and the sweetness of His Person **before** they actually know the difference between right and wrong. That way, your child has the opportunity, from you, to know Jesus before knowing sin. Isn't that a beautiful goal for a parent to have for their child? Children need to know who Jesus is, and what He did for them when He obeyed His Father, and that He wants them to obey their parents, also. "Children, obey your parents in the LORD: for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1). For those children who already know this, to disobey, is for them-- sin.

But how soon is too soon? As for myself, our first child was 2 years old when my daughter and I had our first formal Bible lesson together. But even before that, I was teaching her about Jesus. "And thou shalt teach Them [His Commands] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou SITTEST in thine house, and when thou WALKEST by the way, and when thou LIEST down, and when thou RISEST up" (Deuteronomy 6:7). She began to equate being "a good girl" with "making Jesus happy". Of course, with the daily habit of reminding her, she gradually understood that being "a bad girl" would make Jesus "so sad". By 2 years old, our daughter knew the difference between simple right and wrong. But more importantly, she LOVED Jesus, and didn't want to make Him "so sad". Rev. Charles G. Finney, an evangelist from the 1800's, who had a great love for the Word of God, said, "Willingness to obey Christ is to be a Christian". When a child obeys Jesus because they "Love Jesus!"-- mark it down-- that child is a Christian. They may not know more than that-- yet-- but

that's all it takes to get started! Even a little child can understand the basics of "God is love" (1John 4:8). "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein" (Luke 18:17). "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Proverbs 20:11). "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16).

What a profound verse: "God is love" (1John 4:8)! This is the first verse our daughter learned. Since His very essence is love, since there is no other definition of love, and since His sacrifice was the perfect picture of love, then KNOWING Jesus is knowing love. And loving Jesus is obeying Him. These concepts are foundational, and basic to any relationship with Jesus. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His Commandments" (1John 5:3). "If ye keep My Commandments, ye shall abide in My love" (John 15:10). And a GREAT PROMISE, especially for a parent, "He that hath My Commandments, and keepeth Them, he it is that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will MANIFEST Myself to him" (John 14:21). Notice these passages are all spoken by John the Beloved, who constantly told His "Little Children" to "love one another" (John 13:34; John 15:12,17; 1John 3:11,23; 4:7,11,12; and 2John 1:5).

Once a child learns to love Jesus, loving His Word is the natural next step. "And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2Timothy 3:15). "Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures" (Luke 24:45). Knowing what Jesus did for them on the Cross begins their love for Him-- but then continue to grow love with their understanding of the things of God. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, LORD of Heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast REVEALED them unto babes" (Matthew 11:25). "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby" (1Peter 2:2). As newborns desire milk, so should our children be taught to desire Jesus' Word. Then they can grow in His likeness. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2Peter 3:18). "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the LORD" (Ephesians 6:4).

We should not hinder our children from coming to God, because they surely will, if we will only guide them to Him. And the earlier it is, the easier it is. "A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Proverbs 29:15). The following is from "[Children Brought to Christ](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com)" -- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com>

/Fellowship/Spurgeon/Sermons.of.C.H.Spurgeon.2.html#Children Brought to Christ --, a sermon excerpt by Rev. Charles H.

Spurgeon:

"And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them: and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God' (Mark 10:13-14). Did they imagine that these little children could not receive the blessing? Perhaps so, for they thought them too young. Now, brethren, that was a wrong ground to go upon, for these children could receive the blessing and they did receive it, for Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them. If I keep back a child from coming to Christ on the ground that he is too young, I do it in the face of facts; because there have been children brought to Christ at an extremely early period. You who are acquainted with Janeway's 'Tokens for Children,' have noticed very many beautiful instances of early conversion. Our dear friend, Mrs. Rogers, in that book of hers, 'The Folded Lamb,' gave a very sweet picture of a little son of

hers, soon folded in the Saviour's bosom above, who, as early as two or three years of age, rejoiced and knew the Saviour. I do not doubt at all, I cannot doubt it, because one has seen such cases, that children of two or three years of age may have precocity of knowledge, and of grace... Truly we can say with the apostle Paul, 'I have no greater joy than this, that my children walk in the truth.' We continue, therefore, to bring them to Christ by daily, constant, earnest prayer on their behalf. So soon as they become of years capable of understanding the things of God, we endeavour to bring them to Christ by teaching them the truth. Hence our Sabbath-schools, hence the use of the Bible and family prayer, and catechizing at home. Any person who shall forbid us to pray for our children, will incur Christ's high displeasure; and any who shall say, 'Do not teach your children; they will be converted in God's own time if it be his purpose, therefore leave them to run wild in the streets,' will certainly both 'sin against the child' and the Lord Jesus. We might as well say, 'If that piece of ground is to grow a harvest, it will do so if it be God's good pleasure; therefore leave it, and let the weeds spring up and cover it; do not endeavour for a moment to kill the weeds, or to sow the good seed.' Why, such reasoning as this would be not only cruel to our children, but grievously displeasing to Christ. Parents! I do hope you are all endeavouring to bring your children to Christ by teaching them the things of God. Let them not be strangers to the plan of salvation. Never let it be said that a child of yours reached years in which his conscience could act, and he could judge between good and evil, without knowing the doctrine of the atonement, without understanding the great substitutionary work of Christ. Set before your child life and death, hell and heaven, judgment and mercy, his own sin, and Christ's most precious blood; and as you set these before him, labour with him, persuade him, as the apostle did his congregation, with tears and weeping, to turn unto the Lord; and your prayers and supplications shall be heard so that the Spirit of God shall bring them to Jesus."

Rev. Charles G. Finney, in "[Finney's Systematic Theology](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.5.html#LECTURE%2041)" -- [http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.5.html#LECTURE%2041)

[/Systematic.Theology.5.html#LECTURE 41](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Voice/Systematic.Theology.5.html#LECTURE%2041) --, helps us understand this idea even more [note: Dear Mr. Finney was a lawyer before he came to Christ, and therefore his speech, at times, still sounds much like a lawyer's speech would]:

"We are unable to say precisely at what age infants become moral agents, and of course how early they become sinners. Doubtless there is much difference among children in this respect. Reason is developed in one earlier than in another, according to the constitution and circumstances... A thorough consideration of the subject, will doubtless lead to the conviction, that children become moral agents [or, knowing right from wrong] much earlier than is generally supposed... The child knows that happiness is good, and seeks it in the form of self-gratification, long before the terms that designate this state of mind [or, the reasonableness of it] are at all understood. It [the child] knows that its own enjoyment is worth seeking, and doubtless very early has the idea, that the enjoyment of others is worth seeking, and affirms to itself, not in words, but in idea, that it [the child] ought to please its parents and those around it. It [the child] knows, in fact, though language is as yet unknown, that it [the child] loves to be gratified, and to be happy, that it loves and seeks enjoyment for itself, and doubtless has the idea that it ought not to displease and distress those around it, but that it ought to endeavor to please and gratify them. This is probably among the first ideas, if not the very first idea, of the pure reason that is developed... the next must be that of oughtness, or of moral obligation, or of right and wrong, etc. I say again, these ideas are, and must be developed, BEFORE the signs or

words that express them are at all understood, and THE WORDS WOULD NEVER BE UNDERSTOOD EXCEPT THE IDEA WERE FIRST DEVELOPED. WE ALWAYS FIND, AT THE EARLIEST PERIOD AT WHICH CHILDREN CAN UNDERSTAND WORDS, THAT THEY HAVE THE IDEA OF OBLIGATION, OF RIGHT AND WRONG. As soon as these words are understood by them, they recognize them as expressing ideas already in their own minds, and which ideas they have had further back than they can remember... They may and do affirm obligation to obey their parents, BEFORE they can express in language, and before they would understand, a statement of the ground of their obligation."

And finally, as a Christian parent, you have the wonderful privilege, and responsibility, to claim the LORD's Word, His Promises, for the conversion of your children:

- "Whereby are given unto us Exceeding Great and Precious Promises: that by these ye might be PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2Peter 1:4).
- "For the Promise is unto you, and TO YOUR CHILDREN, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).
- "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the LORD Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, AND THY HOUSE" (Acts 16:30-31).
- "Train up a child in the way he should go: and [even] when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).
- "Except ye be converted, and BECOME AS LITTLE CHILDREN, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 18:3 ).

If little children can't be saved, then how can any of us expect to be?

also

[Our Children in the LORD](http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Promises/Promises.Our.Children.html)

-- <http://WhatSaithTheScripture.com/Promises/Promises.Our.Children.html> --

compiled by Katie Stewart  
in our "Promises" section

- "For the Promise is unto you, and **to your children**, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call." (Acts 2:39)
- "And **the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed**, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deuteronomy 30:6)
- "And all thy children shall be **taught of the LORD**; and **great shall be the peace of thy children**. In Righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee." (Isaiah 54:13,14)

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