

Bringing children to Christ

Part 1

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[00:00:01] Now will you turn with me please to the 18th chapter of Matthew firstly. Verse 1 At the same time came the disciples of Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven.

And whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he was drowned in the depth of the sea.

[00:01:02] Now the 19th chapter and the 13th verse Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray.

And the disciples rebuked them, but Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

Now the 10th chapter of Mark And the 13th verse 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. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, [00:02:05] he shall not enter therein.

And he took them up in his arms, and put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

May the Lord bless to us that reading of his word.

I want especially to speak tonight to those of us that take Sunday school classes on Sundays, and those that speak during the week to the children. And as I speak to you tonight, I must say before the

Lord, you've got one of the most important tasks that you could have. In fact, I would say that it's the most important task as before the Lord.

I love to see the Lord, you know, as those children were brought to him. I love to see the reaction of those mothers, no doubt, who brought them when they heard the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, when he said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. [00:03:03] How wondrous it is to know that the Lord Jesus Christ so loved those children that he would have them around him at that time, and that he would bless them. And how wonderful it is to know also that now he still has that great and that burning interest in those children that we gather together on Sunday afternoon.

Yes, our task is a most important task. But what actually is our task?

Is it to keep the children quiet while we're gathered together on Lord's Day afternoon? Now that's something that's very difficult to do, isn't it? To keep children quiet.

And as we think of our task on Lord's Day afternoon, is it to keep those children quiet?

I think I should digress here with regard to this. You know, children ought to be quiet in the school. And sometimes I feel that in going into a school, [00:04:02] why they are not quiet in the class is that they haven't been kept quiet from the beginning. Children, no doubt, can play and make noises during the time previous to the school, but I feel that when the superintendent takes over at three o'clock, then it should be that he shouldn't take over until it is quiet. How can you expect a teacher to speak to a class and keep that class quiet if you're going to start in the wrong way? I've noticed several times that with regard to this, if a class or if the whole school at the beginning doesn't start in quietness, you won't get quietness during the afternoon. And therefore I feel that this is an aside, of course. I feel that with regard to the superintendent, as he opens the school, don't let him open it and don't let him speak until he has quiet. But is that the reason why we come and why we take our class on Lord's Day afternoon? [00:05:03] To keep a number of children quiet in the afternoon? Although it's important that we should keep them quiet, that's not the reason that we're there. That's not the reason that we're there. Is it that we gather them together on Lord's Day afternoon so that we might interest them? You know, it will be little use of you gathering a class together unless they are interested. If you gather those children and there they are, and you're not interested in what you have to say, well, you're wasting your time with them because you must get the children's interest in some way or other. You must get that interest.

You know, unless you have that interest, you're going to have them interested in other things, aren't you? And you won't get the interest in the right thing in that which you would desire them to be interested in. But that's not the real reason why we bring them together, we're not interested in them, is it? [00:06:01] Because even now there are places where children are gathered together on Lord's Day afternoon and they're only gathered and interested and the Word of God is not that which is brought before them. It isn't that they hear the Gospel message on Lord's Day afternoon. It is that there's somebody there who may not be converted and that somebody keeps the class quiet and keeps the class interested and that's good enough. But it isn't good enough. It isn't good enough. Neither should it be that we are satisfied if our class is quiet and if our class is interested.

Is it then that we come together so that we can tell them something out of the Bible? That sounds very good, doesn't it? And I feel that if there's a class leader here this afternoon that doesn't take his

subject out of the Bible he's on very, very dangerous ground. It must be that as we gather together on Lord's Day afternoon [00:07:01] that as we gather we speak to them from this Word that we've got here today. I don't like these books that they bring in to get lessons from. I feel that if we want a lesson at all we can find it in here and it'll be found there somehow or other and our lessons should be self-centred. But is that why we bring them just to speak and read the Word to them? No, there's one real reason why we bring them together on Lord's Day afternoon so that we might bring them to Jesus.

They brought young children to Him and our commission on Lord's Day afternoon is that we bring them there so that they might be brought to Him. If we aim at anything lower than that brethren I'm afraid we are short of the mark.

We bring them together so that they might be brought to Him and don't let's go out for anything lower than that.

[00:08:02] Why is it then important that I gather the children together? I'll tell you. It's important and you're important in the position that God has placed you because of this. You may be the only voice through whom the Lord can work.

Although that child may hear so many voices during the 168 hours of the week you may be the only person who is able to bring that child or those children that you have under your control to the Lord Jesus Christ. So you see how important you are, don't you? When I think of the voices that the child's ear is open to today I see that that child's ear is open to voices and important voices from the beginning of the day right to the end of the day and those voices come under three different voices. Firstly, as the child gets up in the morning and goes down to its breakfast [00:09:02] so often the person in the house, the mother in the house has switched on the wireless and therefore that voice is blaring to that child and that child hears that voice all the day when it's at home.

There is also the television that's brought. I'm not condemning these things but I'm speaking about the voice. There's the voice of the television and the vision that they see and that's brought before the child during the time of its waking life and that voice is heard and that voice is listened to. You know that they do listen, don't they? And they look at the telly and they like it, don't they? I know that when children have come to my house sometimes they say, where's the telly? It's not there. But they do like it and that voice is speaking and the voice of the wireless is speaking but with regard to the voice of the wireless and the voice of the telly although I understand on occasion the gospel is preached there's not much on the television or on the wireless [00:10:03] that will bring them to Jesus. There's not much, is there?

Then there's a voice that speaks to them every day except holidays and how glad they are when that voice is not speaking to them then and that's the voice of the day school teacher and how important that voice becomes to them as they go day by day to their school from their very earliest years they hear that voice and that voice means much to them because they begin to depend upon that voice and they believe what they hear from that voice. See the voice has spoken to them from very early years and they childlike and very young they are they hear and they believe and that voice continues during the early part of their life to speak to them and during those days that voice is speaking speaking hour after hour on every day apart from the holidays [00:11:03] and that voice is listened to and also that voice is believed.

Now the sad thing is that although there are Christian teachers and I will say with regard to many that

I understand and they are doing a very good work where they are there are teachers that are not believers and those teachers sometimes are allowed and do take the Scripture lesson and they hear things that are not according to the will and mind of God taught from the Scripture and being children they take in it because the teacher says it.

Yes, and they are not led to the Lord Jesus by an ungodly teacher. And then there is the voice of the parents in the home and how wonderful it is, somebody said at tea time that he had godly parents and how wonderful it is for each one of us that have had our godly parents but how about the children that haven't got godly parents [00:12:04] with regard to those children, those children day after day hear advice, hear words from people that are godless and hearing those words there is so little in what they say that would lead them to the Lord Jesus Christ. So you see how important you are, don't you? And yet I know that it has been said and earlier in my life when I was younger I remember I was reminded of it the other week when I said anybody can take a Sunday school class I was reminded of that only a year or so ago by my sister and she said, do you remember when you told me that anybody could take a Sunday school class? I said, yes Nance, I do, but I have been cut down since then.

It is today that there are those that think that this is a task for anybody and it is a task that is not important, but it is.

[00:13:02] It is of the most import that we should realise that the task that God has placed in our hands is of most importance because of the fact that there are children with lives before them and those children they must hear somehow concerning the person of Christ and God has put us in that place to speak to them.

With regard to him putting us into that place to speak to them you know we must be fitted for that work. We must be fitted for that service for him. It isn't that we would put a novice in that service. I know and I would mention again, I have thought, others think well he is coming on, put him in the Sunday school. Yes, poor child, remember there must be that which is suitable in a Sunday school teacher before he is able to take that class. He has a service for the Lord. He has an important service.

He has the most important service and with regard to his service [00:14:03] it has to be done as before the Lord.

And when we think of how we work before men in their service nothing is done slipshod in that way, is it? Or it shouldn't be.

And so in our service for the Lord shouldn't it be that we as being his servants should be fitted for that service. Now how can we be fitted for his service?

Don't you think that the first thing that should be true of us is that we know him.

You see, after all, Mr Nunn, you are speaking a bit out of place here, aren't you? We know him, we have come to him and we know him as our saviour and therefore we know him. Yes, you may come to him as your saviour and it may be that with regard to us as teachers we have come to him as our saviour but we haven't known much more concerning him than that he is our saviour. We know that he has saved us from the consequences of our sins but, you know, I like what Alan said this

afternoon [00:15:03] with regard to the person coming into the meetings. You must get to know this person that you are going to lead to. It must be that if you are going to lead somebody to him that you know him, you know his person.

Yes, you must know him.

And I am reminded of that woman in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Luke who knew the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, she had been in his presence and she realised that he was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. And what does she do?

What does she do? She wants to bring others to him and so in bringing others to him she goes back into the city to which she belongs. And as she goes back to the city, what does she say? Oh, go out to the well. There is a stranger out at the well. He is a rabbi, he is a teacher and I think he is the Christ. You know, she didn't say that. You know, with regard to that woman who went into the city and brought out of the city more important things than those disciples brought out [00:16:04] although there were twelve of them we see that that woman said, Come! What do you mean, come?

She said this, Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?

It meant that she wanted to go back and she wanted his company. It wasn't that she was satisfied in hearing of him and knowing that he was the Christ. That didn't satisfy her. She wanted his company.

Well, where are we to get his company because if we are to know him we are to be found in his company.

You know, I feel that he always gathers with those that love him and call upon his name and if we will only gather with them during the week and on the Lord's day we shall get to know him. He gathers with them and it is his delight to be with them on these occasions and as he gathers with them there surely it is the place of the Sunday school teacher [00:17:01] to be found there, isn't it? With them so that they might get to know him so that they might know more about him, his blessed person and more about his work that he has accomplished for them.

Also don't you think that we want to know more about him by getting down before him and spending time in his presence with this open word that we have here tonight and kneeling in his presence as well.

We do desire and we should have that desire to get to know him if we are going to be fitted for his service as a teacher here.

And then I think that there is something that we didn't touch on this afternoon and perhaps we might think well there is no need to touch on this subject. You know, he does desire that every vessel that he has should be a clean vessel.

When we think of all those vessels that are in our homes at this moment we think of them from the smallest to the greatest [00:18:01] What are they there?

As I think of my home at home at this moment I think of the smallest vessel that could be used as maybe that little eye bath that I use for my eye. That's small, isn't it? And then there are the glasses, there are the jugs there are the saucepans and even to that bath that we have to get into at times you know, with regard to all those they are vessels, aren't they? And with regard to those vessels every one of them without exception is never used when it is dirty. Well I hope they are not because they are not in my house. Every vessel that we use when it is unclean it is cleansed so that it can be used again and with regard to our service for the Lord Jesus Christ let's remember that he won't use an unclean vessel.

How can we be unclean then? Is it that we converted people can be unclean?

[00:19:01] Certainly we can be unclean. We can be defiled by what we see and what we hear and we can be defiled by what we say and what we do and where we go and therefore with regard to these things it's well that we should be cleansed before him and keep short account with him before we go into the presence of these younger people and speak to them concerning him.

And then there is another thought concerning these children and that is that in this work we ought to be interested in this work. You say, well aren't we interested? We wouldn't have taken a class unless we were interested, would we? Yes, but I am taking it in this way. I really mean an interest in the work and in the child as I again would refer to the woman in that fourth chapter of the Gospel of John you know she was so interested in the work that she had [00:20:01] you know it's remarkable to think of that woman immediately hearing of the Lord Jesus and thinking concerning him and going back into the city she was so interested in the work that was before her that the most precious thing that she had in this world that water pot she left by the well and she went into the city she was interested in those people and she would let nothing detain her in her speed, in her haste to go about that service.

That's what I call interest. That's a person that's really interested in the mission that she had. What was her mission?

It wasn't just to go back to the city it was to go and to bring to Jesus and that's what she does and she leaves the water pot that heavy water pot because after all how much it would have hindered her in her service for the Lord at that time. You know we've got air water pots at times but we like to carry them with us. See we haven't got the interest in the work of the Lord [00:21:01] that we should have but this woman she had the interest in the work of the Lord and many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him.

That's what the scripture says afterwards beginning in the fact that she brought them to Jesus and she left her water pot by the well. Yes but you say aren't you taking too much on yourself to say this?

The disciples had come out of the city and now in coming out of the city up to the Lord Jesus Christ with the provisions that they needed they were going away and soon the Lord Jesus would be going and therefore the woman seeing this says there's a haste in this service and therefore she goes with haste and she has an interest in that work.

And shouldn't we have an interest in the work of the Lord?

Shouldn't it be that things that seem to be very valuable to ourselves and things that seem to be important in our lives ought to be revalued and placed in their right perspective [00:22:02] so that his

work is placed first.

Then with regard to the people that brought others to Jesus we see how dependent they were upon him. Isn't it that with regard to ourselves that we should be dependent upon him in any service that we do?

You know as I've read that scripture tonight concerning them bringing young children to the Lord Jesus they weren't the only people that brought persons to the Lord Jesus. As we look through the Gospels in the Gospels we see on many occasions that there were people that brought others to the Lord Jesus and when they brought them to the Lord Jesus then it was they asked him concerning the persons whom they brought.

We see the blind man in the 8th chapter I think it is of the Gospel of John and Mark and they asked him to touch him. We see a deaf man, they asked him to touch him. [00:23:01] We see the man there with that son and as we see that son he says Lord isn't there anything you can do for us? The Lord says all things are possible to him that believeth. See on each occasion they bring the case and then it is they speak to the Lord about the case that they've brought.

They spend time in his presence with regard to the one that wants to be blessed.

Isn't it so with regard to ourselves?

How long do we speak on Lord's Day afternoon? You know I remember years ago when we used to have a talk for three quarters of an hour or more when I was in the class and for me it was too long. Today I suppose the talk would be from 5 and 20 to 20 minutes to the children and I should think that that's quite long enough because a younger child cannot assimilate too much and I feel that if there's 20 minutes or 5 and 20 minutes spoken right at the outside that's enough.

[00:24:03] But that's not enough time for prayer in telling the Lord about the case is it? When we think of 20 minutes spent there speaking to the children with regard to the preciousness of their souls and bringing them before him in this way don't you think that we ought to spend a lot more time than that in his presence down on our faces before him speaking to him about them? Do we think that we can come out from maybe before a television or before having a novel in our hands and come out or rush off to the Sunday school without a thought and think that he's going to bless that class? Let's remember that the Lord Jesus Christ said on an occasion these things come not but by prayer and fasting.

It is that as the servant gets down before his Lord and shows the Lord how weak and feeble he is then the Lord is able to bless. But the servant must show his dependence.

[00:25:02] Another point comes to my mind I wonder where we get our message from. You know I've got something here and I thought I'd read it to you. Perhaps some of you have read it and I thought how it might be to some very very important to them if they are like the person that's mentioned in this advert that I took out of a paper No time for preparation Send five shillings for vitalising and challenging sermon.

I wonder whether we get our messages in that way.

Where do we get our messages from?

Where do we get our messages from?

Now today I should gather by this advert that there would be other adverts just the same and there's more than one way in which we can get a message to bring before the children. See if anybody wants the advert afterwards it's here but I hope you don't accept it because I feel that to receive something like that [00:26:04] would be a hindrance to my service and not a help. Where must I get my message from?

As I think of those that spoke in the time of the scripture when I think of those prophets that spoke from the Lord what did they say?

They said thus saith the Lord thus saith the Lord where did they get that from then?

Well they could only get those words from the presence of the Lord and I feel today as we are teachers of these dear children if we are going to get a subject at all it's going to be found in the presence of the Lord and it's going to be found from his word, the scripture. No other place will we find that there will be a word that will meet these children in their need. Let it be a challenge to us because I feel that although there are books and there are helps that can be a help to us [00:27:01] with just a thought that we must be scripture centred with regard to the word that we bring before the children. Do we want to convert them over to anything light?

There's so much literature on the market, we can have it. Do we want them to be converted over so that they are sound believers in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and those that are looking for a coming Christ let's turn to the scripture and there we'll find the subject that they will need for to know this. Another thought that comes to me is this that with regard to our children if we are going to lead them to the Lord Jesus we are to know and to love them.

Now we're placed in a class aren't we and that class is given to us that afternoon. We've been before the Lord concerning what we should say and how we should say it and now with regard to those children let's learn to love them and let's learn to know them.

[00:28:03] If there's one thing that we do we must realise it is that we must love these children. As I think of the task that we have on Lord's Day afternoon it isn't and it never should be that we gather those children together and as we gather them together we feel that after all it's our duty to speak to them it's our duty to bring this before them it should never be a duty. When we think of what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us in going all the way to the cross of Calvary there to die for our sins on the cross well shouldn't it be that with regard to ourselves we say Lord take me as I am and use me use me, allow him to use us and may it be that with regard to ourselves that we get to know them so that they also get to know us and that we love them and we have an overwhelming desire for the love of their souls [00:29:01] so that they might be saved. I know that there's one thought that has been mentioned today that we teach them the scripture but I'd rather put it in this way that I'd rather have somebody that didn't know much about the scripture but had accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his saviour or her saviour and had got to grips with the Lord Jesus Christ and knew that truth for themselves so that they knew that they were saved and then they're able to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ than to have a command of the scriptures and go to a Christless grave. Now in closing there's two things I want to mention one is this with regard to those

people that brought the children to Jesus what did he do?

They brought them and he blessed them if we see the blind man they bring him to Jesus and they beseech him concerning the blind man and he blessed them [00:30:02] we must remember that with regard to every one of our efforts in the service of the Lord it's him that's going to give the blessing him and him alone it isn't in any way by what we say or what we do apart from his spirit working that we can bless them and don't let's take any praise for ourselves let's remember that the people brought the children and the children were blessed the people brought the man and he was blessed the people brought the paralytic and he was blessed and able to walk and with regard to those that were brought to the Lord Jesus Christ with regard to every one of them after being brought they were different, they were new creatures and so it is our work is so important that as we bring this word before the children and he blesses them they are new creatures in Christ and isn't that worth working for? isn't it worth working for? [00:31:01] and lastly you know with regard to our weeks very often we say we don't have enough time well we'll never have any more time than we do now and there's always been 168 hours in the week but dear brethren dear teachers in the Lord Jesus Christ dear co-workers it will depend upon how we use those 167 hours during the week as to the blessing that we receive in our labours for the Lord on that 168th