



Why Children?

By Jennifer Toledo

The Biblical Mandate

God has always demonstrated a special place in his heart for children. All throughout scripture God refers to children as a “gift”, a “blessing”, a “reward” etc. Jesus Christ himself came to the earth as a baby and even in his child-state fully embodied the Kingdom of God. In the same way, in their sanctified nature children are capable of embodying the kingdom of God. They are spiritual beings and receive the same impartation of the Holy Spirit as adults do. God does not show partiality and gives of himself freely to all mankind in pursuit of him regardless of age. In fact, Christ’s mandate was clear when he said,

“Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” (Mt. 19:14)

It is the very desire of Jesus that children have unfettered access to Him, for they have been predestined to inherit his kingdom. God in his great wisdom has positioned mankind so that in fact, it is only together with children that we can gain a more clear understanding of the Kingdom.

“Mt.11:25-26) “Jesus said, ‘I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure”

(Mt.18:3-4) “I tell you the truth unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven”

Children are an integral part of the body of Christ, and a gift from God in revealing his kingdom here on earth. Children are to be loved, valued, and welcomed in the body of Christ. (Mt.18:5)

Having Kingdom Values

We are living in such a unique juncture of time in human history and never before has it been so vital that we possess kingdom values in relation to children. Children make up a large percentage of the population today, and the earth is yielding the greatest harvest field ever before in time (over 6 billion people). God is setting up the playing field for the greatest revival of youth and children the world has ever seen. As believers, we must begin to reassess our priorities and values and get them lined up with God’s. God is calling us to overcome old wineskin mindsets towards children and to contend for the new thing that

God wants to do in them and through them. Most churches are not prepared for the harvest because we don't yet value children spiritually as we should. As believers we must seek to have Kingdom values and we need to begin to advocate for others to pursue the same—so that our hearts, resources, structures, etc. are in line with what God is doing with children.

Becoming a True Intergenerational Church

In John 17 Jesus expresses his desire for us to become one with the Father and one with each other. We believe a huge part of the unity that Christ desires is for intergenerational unity—the whole body, or family of God, working together to glorify Christ. Children are an integral part of the body of Christ and must be trained and equipped to function within the body. The word of God confirms that children are not exempt in ministry,

(Joel 2:28) “I will pour out my spirit on all people, Your sons and daughters will prophesy,..”

(Ps. 8:2) “From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger”

(Ps. 127:3-5) “Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.”

Children are the church of today, and are filled with God-given purpose for this hour. Children should be trained up in the deep things of God and equipped in the undiluted Gospel of the Kingdom. Adults and children must learn to work together in unity so that the promises of John 17 (“so the world may believe”) will be released. God is restoring our understanding of family, both in the natural and in the spirit. It is the desire of God that his entire family work interdependently, valuing what each member carries. Children have much to offer and we must take them seriously. It is vital that we disciple them intentionally and include them in real, tangible ways. We need to posture ourselves, our ministries, and our structures in the spirit of true intergenerational unity. God is shaking our old mindsets and structures of how we view the church, and is bringing us to a place of wholeness---the whole church, the whole bride, being made ready.