

0 (4s):

Well, good morning, everyone. I'm so glad that you guys are here. My name's Matt Wolf. If I haven't had a chance to meet you, I want to, I'd love to hear your story. That's why you need to fill out one of those forms. The new forms that arise in Broadcom slash connect. I'm glad you guys are here. Today is all about kids. We love kids here in our church and we have a great kids ministry, but we're also going to do child dedication and our message is about kids and what Jesus thought about kids. It's going to be a really great message. If you're like, I have kids. It's perfect for you. If you're like, I don't have kids. This message is perfect for you as well as you'll learn in this message. If you are here, you guys, if you're a part of our church, you may have gotten an email letter from me this week about kind of some things going on our church in particular about our roof. You know, I felt very grateful. That's a weird word to say a couple of weeks ago when there's the condo that fell in Miami, because they had gotten a report from a structural engineer saying, you've got to fix this.

0 (51s):

Well, we got an almost identical report a couple of years ago from a structural engineer saying, you've got to fix your roof on this historic building, where else it could be a big deal. So we acted immediately, which we're very, that's what I'm grateful for that we acted on it. And we didn't have all the money at first, but we were like, we've got to fix this. So it doesn't collapse and kill anyone. Right? And we're glad we did. It's completely fixed, but we still owe about \$27,000 on it, which isn't very much considering it was a quarter million dollar project, what it ended up being. But what I'm saying is I'm asking you guys to give maybe a one-time gift right now. If you go to [rise, denver.com/give](https://denver.com/give) and hit the raise, the roof button. That's what we're calling this fund raiser. The, can everybody do this with me? Just raise the roof. Yeah. And just give a one-time gift right now. And let's knock this out.

0 (1m 31s):

Our fiscal year starts on October 1st. So we're trying to pay this all off over the next couple months. And I think we can do it right. Let's pay it out, get out of debt, you know, and move on to the next fiscal year in good financial health. Can you guys do that? I think we can. Thank you guys for your generosity. Okay. So today we are talking about kids. We're going to have child dedication at the end of the service. In the first service, we had two families and dedicated four kids between the two families. We have two families and three kids, this service, I believe that we're dedicating. We're excited about that. We love kids. We have a lot of kids and there were like two families that couldn't make it to today's service to dedicate. So we got more dedications coming up because we love kids here. Right?

0 (2m 11s):

We got a lot of kids. Keep get kids, keep getting born here. And it's, that's a great thing. We love it here with, with the kids. And I wanted to tell you, I wanted to show you a couple of video clips to tell you a little bit about my experience with kids, because I remember these two moments that like drastically changed my life when it came to kids. So here's the first one. And this is after five years of trying to get pregnant IVF, all the money that came with that and the trial that came with that. And then finally, I remember this day,

1 (2m 51s):

It's not really bad yet, but instead of so early,

0 (2m 57s):

I will never forget that. Not only hearing the, of our daughter McKinley, but also the look on my wife's face, right? I am so glad I caught that because just seeing those tears of joy on her face were just so powerful to know that you're having a child in your child. It's, it's just a powerful moment. Those of you guys who have experienced it changes your life forever. So that was the first moment. And the second one was a few years later. The, I think this is meaning a 2019 about their spring 2019. I don't have the heartbeats from this the second time, but I do have this video when we found out what the genders were of our

2 (3m 33s):

1, 2, 3,

0 (3m 48s):

That was when we found out that we were having a boy and a girl. We, it was amazing. And once again, I'll not only remember that moment, but looking at my wife as she's so excited that we're going to have two girls and a boy. And of course we do have those three kids here. They're the ones who are running around everywhere. Those are my kids. If you see a kid running around, blame it on me, but that's okay because we love kids here. And that's how we should approach kids. And that's what we're going to talk about today. So whether you have kids at your own, you have grandkids, you have maybe have nieces or nephews or you're, you're like, I don't have any kids or any action they're here in our church. So meaning we all need to learn how Jesus approached kids. And that's what we're gonna learn from just three verses today that are so important from the gospel of Luke, as Luke describes this encounter, Jesus has what's with a bunch of little kids.

0 (4m 29s):

It's not just kids, little kids that Jesus has the interaction with how he approaches them. So we're going to learn something important today. And we're going to learn to lead kids to Jesus and follow their lead. Kind of two parts to this idea. We're going to learn today to lead kids, to Jesus and follow their lead because there's something powerful that happens when kids can get around Jesus and be with him and learn from him. It's transformative. And also we can watch the kids and learn something really powerful from them as well. So I hope that you guys are all ready for this. If you have your Bible, go ahead and get with me to Luke chapter 18, verses 15 through 17, just three little verses. If you have a smartphone or a tablet, you can use that as well.

0 (5m 10s):

You can go to, if you use the YouVersion Bible app, there's a little event there for rice church, Denver. You

can find it, find the scripture, take notes right in your app and save them. And we're going to look at these three verses together as Jesus interacts with these kids. So, so look with me at Luke 18, 15 verse 15, Luke, this historian describes what happens. He says, people were also bringing babies to Jesus. See that we're babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them for 16. But Jesus called the children to him and said, let the little children come to me and do not hinder them for the kingdom of God, belongs to such as these here's this powerful moment that people are bringing their babies.

0 (6m 5s):

Yes. Babies to Jesus, for him to put his hands on them. This would be a sign of blessing to put his hand on them, to pray for them and a prayer of blessing. This would have been especially important in those days that 30 to 40% of all infants died before they made it to being five, seven years old. So they would ask for protection from God and they want Jesus, this, this great man of God. They, even if they didn't know too much about them, they're like, we want Jesus to pray over our kids to bless them. And this is really important. So people are bringing these kids to Jesus and the disciples rebuke them. The disciples, the followers of Jesus who were learning from him. They were like, Jesus, you're in the middle of a great sermon. And these kids are just distracting. Everyone. They're loud, they're running around.

0 (6m 47s):

They're running up to Jesus. Them with their little sticky fingers are going to get it all over your robe. Jesus, they're going to be pulling on your head. They're like, let's let's okay. This is important moment. We want people to hear what you have to say, Jesus, we got, gotta get the kids out of here. So it's not like the disciples were, were evil like that. They hated kids. They were just like, this is more important, right? But Jesus is like, no, no, no, no, nothing is more important than these kids because Jesus loves kids. He loves him. And you see, when Jesus says, let the little children come to me, they came to him. Meaning that Jesus might have been, must've been pretty awesome because you might've seen when, when you came in today, if I was holding my kids, they might not have smiled at you.

0 (7m 28s):

Especially our toddlers there, you know, 19 months right now, they're a little nervous around new people. Right. But, but these are babies. These are infants. These are toddlers probably. And they run up to Jesus. Meaning that Jesus must've been pretty awesome. He is a fun guy. And he's like, come on up, kids. He's picking them up. They were like, oh, I want to turn. I want to turn. This is what the kids were doing. They love him because he loves them and he's playing with them. Now, this is a really big, important image for us to see, because maybe if you have seen this, you saw it like on the old flannel graph, you know? And there was Jesus with his nice blonde hair. And maybe he had like a little kid like this, okay. For one Jesus was in blonde.

0 (8m 8s):

Sorry to burst your bubble bubble. But he was a middle Eastern Jew. Okay. So let's move on from that, get

that image out of your mind. But these kids are probably running and jumping on him and they're climbing all like I was in the back with our kids during worship. Did anybody look back there? Some of you in the back, Megan, you're like, yes, I saw. Cause they're all over the place. Right? They're running around. They're there. I say Evie or our daughter is like wrestling an eel trying to hold her. Right. So bendy and just go everywhere. That's what these kids are coming up to Jesus. And he loves it. He doesn't see it as a distraction from the most important thing, because this is the most important thing. The kids coming to him so he can love them and care about them. And this is an important attitude for us because kids are important to God.

0 (8m 51s):

Kids are very important to God. And Jesus like stands among religious figures. If you study other religious figures from the world, none of them, I cared about kids. They don't talk to kids. They don't teach, gets, they're not playing with the kids. Loving the kids will come up. But Jesus does out of the busy-ness of everything he's doing, he was like, please bring the kids. I want more of them. Bring the babies. I want hold them. I want to touch them. I want to bless them because they're awesome. So, so Jesus just stands alone here. And he also stood apart from the culture of his day. In that day, kids were like supposed to be neither seen nor heard, you know what I'm talking about. Okay. You know, once they're older, then they can learn. And then they have to be like much older before they can talk to us adults.

0 (9m 33s):

That's how people treated it. And he was even worse in Roman society. Kids were like, maybe when they're eight years old, this is what the science side got made. When there's eight years old, they can go out and work in the fields and be worth something people didn't love or value kids. And she'd stay. In fact, the Roman society, it was legal. Get this. It was legal to take babies who were born that you didn't want and take them and put them in the trash and the dump and leave him. This happened all the time for kids that were born with physical or mental disabilities. And it happened a lot with baby because the society didn't value babies. It's very common in those days. And actually years after Jesus, because Christians learned from Jesus that Jesus loves kids.

0 (10m 16s):

What they would do is Christians would go and go into the trash heaps and they would take those kids and take them home and adopt them and raise them and love them. And it was actually so transformative that the Roman empire went from pagan, Jesus hating Christian killing empire to a Christian empire within 300 years because the Christian so radically loved kids. It was one of the biggest things that changed that society. Interesting, right? Because Jesus loved kids. So therefore we, as followers of Jesus must love kids as well. And if you're thinking, wow, those Romans were awful. Think about our own society. There's two out of five.

0 (10m 57s):

Children are killed before they're even born in our society. 205, almost 800,000 kids are killed every year in our country through abortion. It's really fascinating about this word, baby. That's used here. Very specific. It uses the word baby. In this passage, Luke uses it. He uses it for other times in the gospel of Luke, two of them refer to a baby still in the womb. Maybe you remember this from Luke chapter one. It was Elizabeth. She's pregnant with John, the Baptist Jesus, his cousin. And it says about the baby and Elizabeth's womb leaped for joy and was filled with the spirit in the womb.

0 (11m 38s):

So it's, it's possible. We don't know the details. It's possible that pregnant women were coming to Jesus and Jesus wanted, they wanted Jesus to put their hands and pray because Jesus loves babies. He loves kids, even if it is different than the rest of society do hear what I'm saying here so that we, as followers of Jesus, must love kids as well. Especially the unborn children that our society cast out. Doesn't like, we love kids. We must follow Jesus and love kids as well. And I think we need to do that in our society. And we need to push back because like the Christians in the first century, in a society that hated kids, they were a shining light that transformed the society for the better, in the same way, we can do the same thing in our society to love kids.

0 (12m 23s):

Love the unborn, love the fatherless. We have people in our church that have adopted kids. We have one family right now that has three kids of their own and is fostering three other kids. We love that family. If you guys are watching at home, we love you guys. We want to support you. Anything you need. We're here for you guys because we, as followers of Jesus, love children. In fact, as we talked about a few weeks ago, this was like the trifecta of justice to care for the widows, the orphans and the immigrants. Do you remember this? We talked about specifically talking about the widows a few weeks ago because these are the people with the least power in society and God, again and again and again, and again, talked about those three care about them. So we too must care for the widows, the orphans and the foreigners, the immigrants.

0 (13m 5s):

We need to care for the kids and love the kids just like Jesus did. And here's the thing because kids are a blessing from God. Kids are a blessing from God. I want you to see this verse in Psalm 127, verse three. It says that children are a gift from the Lord. They are a reward from him. Children born to a young man noticed that are like arrows in a Warrior's hands. How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them? Children are a blessing is like having your quiver full, going out to war. Okay? You don't want to have an empty quiver going to war saying, this is a blessing. This is a good thing from God. And in particular, this passage says young, man, I think in that day, as well as our own, this is important for men to hear.

0 (13m 48s):

I'm a man, all you men here, young men, teenagers, young boys to listen to this. We need to love kids and cherish them. Hear me. We need to love children. And we need to take the lead in loving kids because

Jesus was a single dude. Wasn't married. And yet he's the one playing with the kids and loving them. A lot of single dudes are like, I'm going to do anything I can to play video games, not get a real job. Definitely not get married till maybe I'm 40 something. Okay. But, but young, a young man, Jesus is there playing with the kids, loving them, bring them to me. I can't, I love these kids. So we need to follow Jesus lead. Especially those of you who are young men.

0 (14m 29s):

Thank you, Kenton. We love kids here. So I'm going to challenge men to step up. I have a great quote from the theologian, Don Corleone, a man who doesn't spend time with his family can never be a real man. Thank you, godfather. I think you're right. Real man loved kids. They're there for their kids. They support their kids. They're there at events at graduations at games. They're there to bring kids up on their lap to hug them, to play with them even when you're so exhausted at the end of a hard day. And it keeps saying more, more, more, I'm speaking from personal experience here, right? We love the kids.

0 (15m 10s):

And man, we've got to take the lead on that to love our kids. Wouldn't it be great. If our society had young men stepping up to love their kids and to love all the kids in our country. Have you ever noticed that all the problems in our society are like young men being stupid, right? What if young men stepped up to love and lead our kids and lead them to Jesus? So that's my challenge. And I'm seeing that in particular today because we have great kids ministries here and we're trying to reopen all of them because people are coming back for service. The parking lot was full. Like it was, it was packing here again, which is awesome. We love it. We have too many kids and we don't have enough people serving to have all of our kids' classrooms open yet.

0 (15m 51s):

I think it's a major problem. I think it's a major problem. And that, that means that some of you guys need to step up and serve in particular men. I gave this challenge a couple of months ago and we had some great men step up with VBS. We had men like Kenny Taylor Dennington who is still serving. And I'm trying to, I know there's some other men that I'm missing Andre Hoddeson was serving like these men are like, yeah, I'll be there. So I want to challenge you guys. Men, step up, love the kids. Jesus was there. And here's a little F this is, this is a bonus point for you. Young men. There's nothing more attractive to a woman than a man who loves kids. Okay. Who cares about like swipe and ride on some stupid app, just go serve in the nursery.

0 (16m 31s):

Okay. My main it, and you heard Sawyer, like if you're like, I don't know about little kids, babies, like, I don't know, like, well, we need people serving in our turbulence teen ministry, right. Or our student ministry. And, and if you do love teenagers, God bless you. Okay. But we need men, especially to serve. Everybody should step up, but men in particular. So if you're thinking, wow, I want to help in the classroom. I want to serve, or I can't serve on Sundays, but I can serve in the week. Well, we need some prep work done too. So we could

always use your help. There. There's always a spot for you in kids ministry. I want you to go to rise, denver.com/serve. If you have your phone, you can pull it out right now. You're allowed to pull out your phone in the service. When I tell you to, you can take a picture of this, you follow the QR code and serve in our kids ministry.

0 (17m 14s):

We are already seeing more and more people come back. But we anticipate August, September, October to be like bursting at the seams again, because people are coming back and new people are engaging because they're spiritually hungry. So we need people to step up and serve in our kids. In student ministries, we lead kids to Jesus here. We love kids like Jesus did. So, so let's do that. I don't see enough phones out today. If you're online, you can QR code that too, or go to a rice interrupt com slash there, fill out that, serve somewhere for them. And even if it's just to find out more information, we would love for you to serve the kids in our church.

0 (17m 54s):

We love kids. We love kids here. So if we're gonna lead kids to Jesus, I want to give you guys three practical things that we need to do. Cause cause look at verse 16, it says, let the little children come to me and do not hinder them for the kingdom of God and blocks as such as these. So there's two things. We lead the kids to Jesus. And part of it is that kids like Jesus, these kids are running to Jesus with my own young kids. They want to hear about Jesus McKinley. She loves to hear the Bible stories and talk about it. Kids are interested in, in Jesus. I think it's a lot of time us that get in the way. And that's why she says just don't hinder him. Okay? Just don't get in the way. Cause too often, Christians get in the way of kids coming to Jesus.

0 (18m 35s):

Get out of the way almost. So here's three practical ways that we can get out of the way and lead kids to Jesus. The first one is through our example through our exam. Well, now this is particularly important for parents, but this goes for all of us because kids are watching them, every single person in the church. So why this is a message for everybody. They're watching all the people. And, and when they see people go to church, raise their hand, singing, hallelujah, talking a big talk and then going outside of church and not walking the walk. It is a really big problem. It hinders kids from coming to Jesus. I remember talking with a man in Nebraska. So I was a pastor in Nebraska for five years before coming back here to Denver and archers was really old.

0 (19m 18s):

We were celebrating our hundred and 25th anniversary at the time. And we had this big celebration and there was this guy in our church who was kind of like the like resident historian of our church. And I remember at the celebration, he says, Matt, you've got to meet this guy. This guy came in, you've got to meet this guy because he is the grandson of one of the founders of our church. I was like, wow, that's cool. I'm like doing the math. I'm like 1,892. You know, like that's a long time. This guy is the grandson of this

founder. And I'm like, oh, tell me about stuff. Well, it turns out he lives in the town, in our town. I'm like our town. Isn't that big. Are you going to church where I know, I don't know you or anyone in your family, even though your grandpa father help build this church, like what is going on? And you live here and then as he's talking and he's like, oh yeah, my great, my grandfather did some great stuff.

0 (20m 3s):

He would go up to the wood river and he would go in the Creek and he take the mud out and he'd build bricks. Can you imagine this making bricks? And then he put it in a wood cart and he'd carry it down across the bridge into town so that they could build this old building. And it was the old building because the new building was built in the sixties. Okay. And there's this old building. Like he helped build that. I'm like, wow. And then this man was like, yeah, but then he came home and abused his wife and kids. He was a terrible man at church. He was respected. He was a leader. Everybody looked up to him. But at home he was awful. Nobody could stand him. And I said, oh, now it makes sense. Why no one in your entire family goes to church anymore because there's nothing worse than someone who's not living out their faith.

0 (20m 46s):

A bad example to hinder kids from coming to Jesus. They see it. They want to make sure it matches up. Now that's the bad example. Now it's good example, as it comes, there's a great book called revolutionary parenting. That's studied. What do good parents do that are Christians to have kids that grow up that have strong faith that are resilient. And the number one thing that parents do when they have successful kids is that they actually walk the walk. Okay. They don't have to be perfect. Yeah. They probably apologize and ask for forgiveness more than anybody else from their kids. But they walked the walk. And if they live a godly example at home matching their words on Sundays, it has a profound impact on the spiritual vitality of kids.

0 (21m 32s):

So that's why our example is the first thing that I'm going to say. If we want to lead kids to Jesus, your example, second thing is our every day. So if the first thing is your example, the second thing is your every day is Jesus in your everyday life. And this is very simple things like, oh, isn't that a great sunrise man. God's awesome. I'm glad God created that simple things like that. Is it part of your everyday life? Some easy ways to do this are to pray at meals. You bring it up Jesus in your everyday into food or at nighttime. This is a great time. Parents are you bringing Jesus and your nighttime routine. I want to tell you what I'm doing right now with McKinley.

0 (22m 13s):

She's four and a half, and this is just what we're doing right now. I used to be like intimidated because like I thought, oh, you got to do like these crazy devotionals and pull out a hymnal and like sing along every night to him. And I'm like, man, I don't know some of your, like, that's terrifying. Okay. It just brings Jesus into your nighttime routine. So this is what we do at night. We have a whole bunch of different kids Bibles. The one we're on right now is called my awesome God I'll hold that up for the camera. It's pretty awesome. It's like

comic book like pictures and we just go through it and it's okay if the kid doesn't understand everything, okay. We try to talk about some things. So we'll read a story every night with McKinley and then we have this book that we're going through right now. It's called what every child should know about prayer.

0 (22m 55s):

It's a simple little book and it's great. And it talks about prayer and then we pray together every night. So that's, that's another simple book that we're just reading. And it's just one page guys. Don't don't think I'm like reading chapters. It's old chapter one page. And then I just got this one, two weeks ago. I'm really excited about this one. And so is McKinley. It's called courageous world changers. 50 true stories of daring women of God. I was like, this'll be good. And last night we, we started late. So we only got through the first two books and she was like, what about the courageous women? Dad? I was like tomorrow. Okay. But so we're not perfect. I'm telling you guys this, we miss some nights. I'm not, I'm not perfect. Sometimes we get busy. We're tired, but I, but I try to just bring Jesus into everyday life.

0 (23m 36s):

And this book is so cool because it talks about great Christian women that have done amazing things for our world. I'm like, that's what I want McKinley to do. And he Evie, after it has women like Corrie 10, boom has women like Susan B, Anthony who are Christians and put their faith into practice, Sojourner truth. Even one of the ones we did the other night was I can find it. I don't know where it is now. Give me a minute. Gabby Douglas. Yeah. I thought this was interesting. Gabby Douglas, Gabby Douglas as a Christian was competing in the games. And so we watched her 2012, you know, floor routine together on my phone, which is pretty cool and talked about her faith in the book and how that led her to practice and get better.

0 (24m 27s):

The point is, are you bringing Jesus in your everyday life? You, you could use these books. They're great. Amazon. You could probably give me some money for plugging those, but wherever you're going to be like any books, just bring Jesus into your everyday life. And that's just a simple way that you can do it every night. And then after that it went because Melissa's with the twins, rocking them, getting them ready. She'll come in and she'll pray with McKinney. And she seems worship songs to McKinley. If you don't have a great voice, don't worry. You don't have to do that. But Melissa does that and we'll sing prayers to McKinley. So we're just bringing Jesus into everyday life. So that's the second thing that I want you guys to do. Bring Jesus into your every day. The third thing, if we want to lead kids to Jesus is to bring Jesus into your every week. And by that, I mean worship weekly.

0 (25m 8s):

We mentioned it in the video. If you saw for the promo for the message series starting next week is that kids are in a mental health crisis. We talked about it in a message a few weeks ago, the chief medical officer for children's hospital here in Denver declared that we're in a child and teenager mental health crisis right now because of the pandemic. It's bad. They've never seen it. Worse here. Things are bad here. And people are

like, wondering why what's what's going on? And they were like, well, it's because of what's happening before this because what do you need to get through a crisis? You need faith and you need a strong faith. And even then it's hard. And here's the fascinating I have to show you this because I didn't think you'd believe me back in 2019, there was this article and it was an opinion piece in the wall street journal written by an atheist who said, don't believe in God, lie to your children.

0 (25m 56s):

Did you guys hear me? You can see this, right? This was in their 2019. Don't believe in God, lie to your children. The alternative is to tell them they're simply going to die and turn to dust. No, no, no wonder why so many kids are depressed seriously. In the article, she cites a study because this is an atheist. By the way, as atheist therapist, who's like telling parents what to do. Just bring your kids to church. She specifically says bring them to church because kids, if they go to church once a week or better bring them to turbulence here on Wednesday nights, do all your other stuff too. But if they go once a week on average, they will have better psychological wellbeing. They report much higher cases. So that's their health and their happiness and much less chance of having mental health problems.

0 (26m 42s):

Church. Once a week in atheist said this, you guys hear me. You guys are very quiet today. Thank you, Ben. The point is your kids need Jesus. Even if you don't believe. So, I'm saying that you need to make this part of your routine. Some of you have gotten so far out of the habit. You haven't been a weekly church goer in years. This whole last 17 months has been terrible for you. Some of you are still watching online. Your kids haven't come back, bring them back. I mean it bring them back. They need to be here to hear a lesson about Jesus and see other Christians worshiping, see other people living out their faith, that they know they rubbed shoulders with. It's even the interactions.

0 (27m 23s):

It's not just like in here or, or in their kid's class. It's the interactions that are going on all over the place. They build friendships. They meet meet mentors and role models. Kids need to be here weekly. And it has a transformative impact on even their mental health, let alone their eternal salvation, which is a pretty big deal. You guys tracking with me on this, make this part of your weekly habit to worship weekly. This is just for kids that helps adults too, by the way. And I think what happens, I think what happens is you're like one week, oh, we're going camping next weekend. Oh, that's fine. Right? And we're just a little vacation. And then the week after some friends are in town, let's go out to brunch and then it's another kid's birthday party.

0 (28m 4s):

And then we signed them up for sports in the competitions on Sunday, right? And then all of a sudden it's months and you haven't been in a church at all, this is what happens. I don't think it's on purpose, but we fall out of the habit. And then we wonder why our kids struggling so much. I'm telling you why an atheist can tell you why they need to build resilient. Faith here, Vodi Bochum. I think gets this right? I have this quote from

Vodi Bach. I'm a pastor. He says, if I teach my son to keep his eye on the ball, but fail to teach him to keep his eyes on Christ, I have failed as a father. Right. Get to you. Right? So that's my challenge to you guys make this part of your weekly routine, your weekly habit, build everything else around that, your weekly habit.

0 (28m 49s):

So how do we lead kids to Jesus through our example through our every day and every week. But there's a second part to my big idea. From this passage, we lead kids to Jesus and follow their lead. We follow their lead. So there's something important that we learn from kids as well. And I want you guys to see this from the very last verse in our passage, verse 17, Jesus says, truly, I tell you anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God, like a little child will never enter it. This whole series is about unexpected examples. He's pointed at a widow learned to persist in prayer. You know, persistent prayer pays off from this widow from a sinner, learn from the cylinder, imitate him that you need to humble yourselves in order to be exalted, exalted and hear from the kids were supposed to learn from their example of faith.

0 (29m 39s):

Perhaps you've heard this, that we need to have childlike faith. I've heard messages on this. People talk about it and people say, oh, it could mean this. It could mean that. And there's all sorts of different things. So I was really trying to figure out, well, what does it mean if we want to enter the kingdom of God? That sounds great. I would love to be a part of the kingdom of God. What does it mean? Well, we need to receive the kingdom. Now. That is a bizarre phrase to me that Jesus said, if you want to enter the kingdom of God, you must receive it like a child. He doesn't say enter it like a child. Does he receive it like a little child? And as he's pointing at the babies, you know, he's using this object lesson so that you see the kids here be like them follow their example. So what does that mean? It seems bizarre to say, receive something to enter it.

0 (30m 20s):

And whenever you find something bizarre in the Bible, it's probably the key to understanding what it means. So I thought about it and think about this. What does it, what does a little kid do? How do they receive something? Well, they receive everything. Let me tell you about bringing our kids to Chick-fil-A on Wednesday night. If you work there, I'm sorry. When we went to Chick-fil-A, what did my kids need me to do? They needed me to strap them into their car seats, to drive them over there, to get out and McKinley can kind of pick out her food, but the twins can it all. So we have to order for them, right? We have to get their food. We have to cut it up into small bites for them, with the twins. Melissa's got one, I've got the other, we're trying to get it. We're trying to get it in their mouse.

0 (31m 0s):

We'd get their milk, ready, put the straw in it and try to hold it so they don't spill it. But of course they spill it, sorry. And we have to clean it up. Right. And then they're getting milk everywhere. And then trying to open up the catch-up for them because they have to receive that me opening up this catch-up and Canaan

actually did really well. No, catch up on me, milk all over me. Right? Here's the thing that I've learned is as a dad, I can not go through an entire day with clean pants. I'm serious. I don't have clean pants today. Cause somebody grabbing me, okay. This is my life. You know, they poop on you. They puke on you. They grab you a sticky hands. She catch up everywhere. I don't know this is what kids do. Right? Because they need you to do everything. And then at the end we got them ice cream. Cause they got great ice cream at Chick-fil-A somebody somebodies like, Ooh, that sounds good. Sorry. They're not open to Sunday, but we are there and I got ice cream and then I have to spoon it in the mouth, but he doesn't want me to spin it in the mouth.

0 (31m 48s):

And once we get it in the spoon, so then he can grab a spoon and put it in his own mouth. Right. But everything, I'm doing everything for Canaan that night. That's what you do for a little kid. They receive everything. When it's time to go, what do they do? Daddy, lift me up. We'll be back in the car seat and take me home exhausted. Cause it was a crazy night. Had too much sugar. Okay. You've got to do everything for little kids, right. Everything. And he's awesome by the way. Crazy and awesome. And you never have enough energy, but you love it. Okay. That's what kids are like. And if we're supposed to be like the little kids, so Jesus points that those kids receive the kingdom like them receive, receive, receive. They receive everything.

0 (32m 29s):

They bring nothing to the table. Sorry. Maybe their cuteness. Sometimes that wears off sometimes. Right? You receive everything. You've got to do everything for me. So in the same way in our faith, we need to reach our hands to our father in heaven and say help me. I need you because we receive everything. We bring nothing to the table. In our salvation. We talked about that last week. It's completely reliant on our father in heaven. You do everything. You forgive me. You saved me. You give me gifts of the holy spirit. You give me the power to serve the money that I'm giving you actually gave to me. First, what we do is receive, receive, receive. And that's actually the type of faith we're supposed to have completely reliant on Jesus.

0 (33m 9s):

That's what receiving the kingdom. Your child means means complete reliance on Jesus. So Jesus says, yes, love the kids. Lead them to me and now watch them and follow their lead. As they come to me and receive and receive and receive. That's a good thing because we are the children of God. Amen. And we must be born again, like a little child. You guys caught that before. Jesus said that to nicotine as a grown man, if you want to enter the kingdom of heaven, you must be born again, same idea. There become like a child and receive everything. Knowing that you bring nothing to the table. That's what true faith is. And I think one of the reasons why Jesus was like this as, as a single dude, loving the kids, leading them, teaching us through their example was because Jesus himself was a kid.

0 (34m 3s):

If you thought about this, Luke uses the word baby. In this passage, five times in his gospel, two of them we talked about were with the unborn John, the Baptist, two of them were about a baby that was lying in a manger. Do you know what that baby was? Jesus. So Jesus was a baby. If you ever thought about this, he was an infant who cried, who drooled, who had sticky fingers, pooped. Somebody had to clean it up and they didn't have disposable diapers in those days. Yeah, that was, that was Jesus. The God of the universe. This is bizarre. No other faith practice something. I guess that the God of the universe would empty himself, lower himself to be a baby, completely reliant on his parents.

0 (34m 46s):

And there Mary was taking care of him and his adoptive father, Joseph who took care of him and loved him and raised him. And we're told in Luke chapter two, that Jesus grew. He was a child. He had to learn everything. He grew in wisdom and stature. It says, and he grew in favor with God. And with man, Jesus grew, he learned faith. He studied the Bible and he grew all those things. And he grew into the man who we know and love. So I think when he's saying, let the little babies come to me, but the kids come to me because I was a baby. I was a kid. I know what it's like. And kids are what it's about. They're so important. I love them. And, and I love that when Jesus went on the cross, you know, one of the very last things he said when he was dying for us, do you know what he said, father daddy into your hands.

0 (35m 31s):

I commit my spirit completely reliant on his father in heaven. That's Jesus, that's our gospel. And that's why we need to learn to lead kids to Jesus. So they can know that Jesus and follow their lead and have a childlike faith. Would you pray with me, Lord God, I know that this message has been challenging to some of us. We, we stand before you as imperfect parents, as imperfect men and women and children. We have not always had a great example for our kids. We've said things that we shouldn't have, we've lived in a way that we shouldn't have, but Lord God, would you forgive us? And would you help us today to step up to lead the kids around us, to you, to the savior.

0 (36m 15s):

We're not the savior. We need to lead them to you. And we need to get out of the way sometimes to not hinder them. I pray that with our example, our every day and with our every week, we would lead kids again and again to you so that they would find eternal life in you, that they too would receive the kingdom of God and enter into it. And Lord God, I pray for all, everyone in here for the parents, especially, and for the young men that they would learn to have a heart that loves kids. I know some in here are hearing this and they're like mad. I don't love kids. I'm annoyed by them. I find them disgusting and frustrating. Lord God, would you change their hearts? Would you change my heart so that we would love our kids more and more the kids around us in church, that we would step up to love them and lead them to you in all that we do now with eyes closed right now, there are some of you in here who have never put your faith in Jesus Christ, Jesus, isn't your Lord and savior.

0 (37m 10s):

And that means that you are not a child of God. You do not have eternal life and you are not in the kingdom of heaven. But the simple solution is to receive the kingdom like a little child in faith. You need to cry out. I need your help. Forgive me of my sin. Give me eternal life I receive. So what we do here is for those who are ready to make that step of faith, we have a prayer that you can repeat after me. And if you're already a believer, we ask that, you'd say this prayer to you to give courage to someone who needs to pray it for the first time. So would you please repeat this prayer after me, dear God have mercy on me, a sinner. I need a savior. Save me. Forgive me in faith.

0 (37m 51s):

I declare Jesus is king. My receive your spirit. Help me to follow you for the rest of my life. Now with eyes still closed. If you said that prayer for the first time, if Jesus is your Lord and savior today, for the first time, slip your hand into the air, sip your hand in the air. If you're online, go to rise.denver.com/follow fill out that form. We would love to encourage you. Get you connected with someone who could just challenge you, encourage you on this new journey of faith and Lord God, we come every single one of us before you, our father in heaven. And we pray that you pour out blessings on us and on our children and on generations to come Jesus name.

0 (38m 34s):

Amen. Would you please stand in his worship and we're going to worship for a little bit, and then we're going to do our child dedications.