

"Two kinds of comers"

Matthew 19 vv.13-15.

Mark 10 vv.13-16.

Luke 18 vv.15-17.

"No, go away! Go away with your children! Our Master has other things to attend to. He is much too busy to be troubled with the little ones. Whatever next?"

With looks of resentment the disciples are trying to send away a few women.

What did the women want then? ...

The Lord Jesus had again~~e~~ been preaching, and probably also working miracles.

Now, some Jewish mothers want the great Prophet of Nazareth to bless their young children. They want Jesus to lay His hands upon them and pronounce a blessing. They do this because they have deep respect in their hearts for this Prophet.

They are pressing forward and want to place their dear children at the feet of the Lord Jesus.

The disciples notice this and are annoyed about it. No, this cannot be allowed. It is nothing to do with these mothers. They should stay at home with their children. The little ones cannot understand anything in any case.

The Lord Jesus had just been engaged in a long argument with some Pharisees, who were trying to catch His words, and now this. ...

"No, off you go with your children!"

They try to keep the women~~s~~ at a distance and look cross and unfriendly. Their faces show a look of annoyance.

Evidently the women show signs of disappointment. They were so hopeful that Jesus would bless their children, but they cannot even get near Jesus because these angry disciples are preventing them.

The Lord Jesus sees this however and He shows indignation. "He was much displeased," we read in Mark 10. Should the little ones be sent away? ... Have they then no right to come? ...

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me," says He to His disciples in rebuke, "and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Ashamed, the disciples step to one side and with pleasure the mothers come closer. They lay their children at the feet of Jesus or else bear them to Him in their arms.

And what does the Saviour do then? ... O, just look, He puts His arms

round the innocent little ones and takes them up (Mark 10). No, the great Saviour does not thrust them away, rather He welcomes them. Then He puts His hands upon them and blesses them.

He turns next to the grown-ups and says: "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

For you too there is a lesson in this story, girls and boys.

Through baptism you are separated from the children of unbelievers. You live under the sound of God's Word. God's servants point Sunday after Sunday to the necessity of repentance. There is a way of salvation, and that way is not yet closed for you.

O, grown-ups become often so hard, so cold, so unfeeling! A child is still able to be impressed. A child often has a deeper impression of death and eternity than an older person. Often older people have become so used to solemn preaching.

That is why the Lord Jesus says: "OF SUCH is the kingdom of heaven."

A child cannot help itself, it must be helped. A child does not look after itself, it must be cared for. A child relies completely upon its mother. A child trusts its Mother entirely. A child is happy so long as it is by mother. A child feels safe by its mother.

And what about you? ... Do you need God in everything? Do you look for everything from the Lord? ... Are you unable to save yourself, and must the Lord alone save you? ... Do you need the Lord, just as a child needs its mother?

Yes, so indeed it should be, but it is not so usually. By nature, alas, we feel no need of God. By nature there is enmity in every heart towards God.

O, ask the Lord in mercy to teach you to seek Him. How happy you would be ~~next to~~ if you could but find Him.

You need not think: "I am still too young. The Lord Jesus will not hear me anyway." No, that is not true. That is a suggestion of the devil.

Does not the Lord Himself say: "Suffer the little children to come unto me."...

You are allowed to pray for mercy. However small, however young you may be, ask the Lord for a new heart. The Lord calls you to come unto Him, for He only is the Mighty One, who can make your dead heart to live. Nobody else can do that, none but God!

And ... remember ... most people are called by God's grace in their youth. O, do not wait until later, for you know not whether that "later" shall ever come, and if it comes, then often the heart becomes hardened.

He does not say: "Suffer the grown-ups to come unto Me," but "Suffer the little children to come unto Me!" Certainly, older people are converted, but very few!

Matthew 19 vv.16-26.

Mark 10 vv.17-27.

Luke 18 vv.18-27.

The mothers have left with their children. The Lord Jesus too has departed from that place and is walking on with His disciples.

But look, a young man now comes to Him. When he gets close enough to Jesus he falls on his knees before Him.

Now, why does he do this? Is there someone at home who is very ill, and does he plead with the Lord to go with him? Is he in some way afflicted, and does he seek urgently for healing?

O no, he does not do it for these reasons.

"What does he want then? ...

Listen to what he says. "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

What does the young man mean by this? ... Well, he wants to earn salvation and heaven for himself. He thinks that he is capable of so doing! And now he comes to Jesus. Why?

Does he believe that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God, the Saviour? No indeed! He sees in the Messiah nothing more than a man! Oh yes, he thinks the Lord is a prophet, a teacher, but nothing more!

Now he comes to ask counsel! He thinks that Jesus is a sort of Pharisee and hopes that Jesus will mention a few commandments, which he must merely perform. That is why he asks this question.

Look at him there on his knees before Jesus, waiting for an answer.

Then the solemn voice of the Saviour is heard: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God."

The young man thought that Jesus was an extraordinarily good man. He saw nothing more in Jesus. And there he was mistaken, for the Lord is God as well as Man! That is why Jesus speaks thus.

Probably the young man was taken aback by Jesus' answer. He had not expected such a reply.

Calmly, the Lord Jesus continues: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

It is as though the Lord Jesus says: "Do all that God has commanded in His law."

At once the young man asks: "Which?" He means: "Which commandments must I keep then?"

Then the Lord mentions a few commandments: "Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

The young man listens carefully to what the teacher says. When the Lord Jesus stops speaking, there is a happy, self-satisfied smile on the young man's face. All those things which Jesus has mentioned he has carried out.

He is no murderer; he is not a wicked boy; he is no thief; he is no blasphemer nor liar; he loves his parents and he has some love to spare for others.

So he answers at once: "All these things have I kept from my youth up." Yes, not just for a few weeks, or a few months, but for years - from his youth up.

And ... indeed, boys and girls this young man was an example to others. That was indeed why he, though still so young, was a ruler. He lived uprightly and did no wrong or wicked things.

Most of you would not be able to say that, would you?

"Lord," asks the young man, "what lack I yet?"

The Lord Jesus looks for a moment at this young man earnestly. Read what Mark writes: "Then Jesus beholding him, ~~ix~~ loved him." That means that the Lord had respect for him.

As a person this young man lived irreproachably. Yet he forgot one thing. He forgot, that with all his piety, he was still a sinner before God, for there is none that can live without sin. And Jesus is about to make him realise this.

The young man looks at Him in expectation, and then Jesus replies: "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up thy cross, and follow me."

And what then? ... Does the young man do so? Does he hasten to fulfil the commandment?

O no. Just look. ... He becomes sorrowful. His face has a mournful look. Why is that then? ... Well, this young man was rich, very rich!

What! ... Must he sell everything and live henceforth in poverty? ... No, no, he cannot do that, he will not do that. O, why should the Lord Jesus demand that of all things? That requirement was too much for him. He was more fond of his money than of the Lord Jesus.

Look, with bowed head, he turns and walks away. We do not read anywhere that he ever came back again. No, apparently he leaves the Lord Jesus for good.

The Lord then says to His disciples: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" He means "The rich do not want to lose their riches. Their money is worth more to them than God." But ... would the Lord really have demanded that the young man should sell all his possessions? ..

Perhaps not, but Jesus wanted to prove him. Jesus wanted to see whether he really loved God above all his worldly wealth.

Can you still remember that God commanded Abraham to offer up his son Isaac? Yes, I am sure you remember. ... Well now, Abraham obeyed. Abraham set forth on the road. Abraham bound his only son to the altar, he took the knife and he would indeed have slain Isaac. In his heart he had already done it it remained only for his hand to perform it. So Abraham did it in (spirit) (effect).

Why was that? ... Because Abraham had been given a new heart. Because Abraham loved God more than anything else. God's favour was worth more to him than his own child.

This young man did not do it. Why not? ... Because this young man lacked grace. With all his good works he still possessed his sinful heart. He wanted to earn heaven by himself. He had no need of a Saviour.

Abraham believed that God was able even to raise Isaac from the dead.

This young man lacked that true saving faith. He was, and he remained an unconverted young man, and that is why he went away sorrowful.

This young man thought that he possessed everything necessary for eternity. And now it was the Lord's intention to make him feel that he still lacked everything. This young man had yet to learn to plead for mercy. He thought that he was rich, yet with all his money he was still unspeakably poor,

spiritually poor. He had yet to feel a need of a Saviour who would make him rich in God.

~~XXXXXXXX~~ That he lived uprightly was GOOD. That he should think that thereby he could earn heaven was WRONG.

O children, it is your DUTY to obey the Lord's commandments. It is your DUTY to live as the young man lived. But ... it is NOT enough for eternity. We can never earn heaven. Yet ... mercifully... it is not necessary to do so. Jesus suffered death. He has offered up his body on the cursed tree, He has suffered the pains of hell in His soul, He has borne God's wrath against sin in order to redeem His people from eternal ruin. He has earned salvation for every one of His people.

Is He your Saviour also? What a wonderful mercy if that is so.
