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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
A childlike faith unlocks the door to the kingdom of heaven

TRUTH FOR THE WEEK:
God, give me the faith of a little child Who trusts so implicitly,
Who simply and gladly believes Thy Word, And never would question Thee. —Showerman

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it
(Luke 18:17 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", May 9, 2009)

Series: The Gift of Faith

UNIT: Tests of Faith

NEXT WEEK

Struggling Faith
(Mark 14:26-31, 66-72)

Simple Faith Mark 10:17-31

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson confirms that through **Simple Faith** we can believe that nothing is impossible for God to accomplish. The **study's aim** is to recognize that God is able to do something on our behalf that looks impossible. The **study's application** is to apply the truth of God's ability to our trying or difficult situations we face.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

Today's text comes at a point where at least two key themes in the story of Jesus come together in Mark's Gospel. One such theme is the attention that Jesus gave to the weak and marginalized of his culture. From his first public actions in Mark, Jesus deliberately acted on behalf of those who did not belong to the upper levels of society. He acted on behalf of "all the sick and demon-possessed" (Mark 1:32). He had fellowship with despised "tax collectors and sinners" (2:15). He criticized and warned those in power (7:6-8; etc.). In doing all this, Jesus turned upside down the cultural mores of his day, putting the lowly in the highest place and reducing those at the top to be at the very bottom. A second theme in today's passage is the implication that Jesus intends His followers to be like children as He addresses them that way (Mark 10:24). In the section of text immediately preceding the one for this lesson, Jesus rebuked his disciples for forbidding children to come to him for blessing. Instead, he said that anyone who wanted to belong to God's kingdom had to become "like a little child" (Mark 10:15). Taken together, these two themes speak against the idea of self-reliance when it comes to being part of the kingdom of God. Today's text adds to our understanding in this regard. (Matthew 19:16-30 and Luke 18:18-30 are parallels.)

Do you remember as a child longing to do things for yourself? When we were very young, we depended on adults to do almost everything for us. Adults dressed us, washed us, fed us, transported us—they took care of us in every way. But children are intent on doing things themselves. They want to learn to tie their own shoes, drive the car, and live life independently in every way. After we have established our independence as adults, we take pride in having done something on our own. We value our independence, and we like to express it. But none of us is truly independent. We depend on others all the time. Most of what we have, what we use, and what we do depends on what others have done to make those things and actions possible in the first place. As we approach the end of life, we often struggle against becoming more and more dependent on others. We desire to be independent not only of other people but of God as well. At the core of what the Bible calls sin is the human desire to become like God by becoming king of our own lives (Genesis 3:5). Sin is more than breaking God's rules; it is declaring our independence from God. Today's text deals with this universal human desire. As the story develops, it lays bare our most stubborn illusion: the false belief that we can live life on our own. It draws us back to depend on God's ever-sufficient grace and mercy.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

SIMPLE FAITH AND GOODNESS (MARK 10:17-18)

What can man do toward goodness (17)

No man is truly good (Rom 3:10-12)

No one born of a woman is good (Job 15:14)

Only Jesus was good to die for us (Rom 5:7)

The goodness of God (18)

God's goodness is great (Ps 31:19)

God is good because He supplies us with everything good (James 1:17)

God is good therefore the least we can do is praise Him and be obedient to His Word (Ps 116:12-14)

SIMPLE FAITH AND THE LAW (MARK 10:19-22)

Self-evaluation is not the final judgment of the Law (19-20)

Just because we don't know of our sins doesn't mean we are righteous (1 Cor 4:2-4)

Man cannot discern his own errors all the time (Ps 19:12-13)

Man's ways seem right to him, but God knows the true judgment (Prov 21:2)

The Law can be broken by breaking even one commandment (21)

Stumbling on one point of the law means guilt of the whole (James 2:10)

Teaching and disobedience means being least in or missing the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt 5:18-20)

Trying to observe the law is alienating grace (Gal 5:3-6)

Don't let worldly lusts keep us from God (22)

No payment or worldly wealth is enough payment for one's life or soul (Ps 49:5-8)

Fellowship with the world is hatred toward God (James 4:4)

The world and its desires pass away, but the one who does the will of God lives forever (1 John 2:15-17)

SIMPLE FAITH AND WEALTH (MARK 10:23-25)

Lust of wealth causes many to fall (23)

Fall because of trying to serve two masters (Matt 6:24)

Fall because of yielding to the temptation of "fast" money (1 Tim 6:9-10)

Fall because of the exploitation of others (James 2:6)

What it takes to enter the Kingdom of God (24)

To enter the Kingdom of God, one must become like a little child (Matt 18:3)

To enter the Kingdom of God, one must be born of water and Spirit (John 3:5)

To enter the Kingdom of God, one must go through many hardships (Acts 14:22)

Value of soul versus wealth (25)

Wealth is worthless at the day of judgment (Prov 11:4)

In the end, the gaining of wealth and possessions are meaningless (Eccl 2:22-23)

We should consider everything a loss for the sake of knowing and following Jesus (Phil 3:7-8)

SIMPLE FAITH RECOGNIZED (MARK 10:26-31)

Recognize man's limited knowledge and power (26)

Man cannot even direct his own steps because they are directed by God (Prov 20:24)

Man does not know the future and neither can he control nature, but God can (Eccl 8:7-8)

Man is only competent in God (2 Cor 3:5)

Recognize that with God nothing is impossible (27)

God can do all things and His plans cannot be thwarted (Job 42:2)

God is the creator and therefore nothing is too hard for Him (Jer 32:17)

Nothing is impossible for God (Luke 1:37)

Recognize that God is and has the only answer (28-29)

There is no other God but God Himself (Isa 45:5)

God is the only way, truth and life (John 14:6)

God is the only way of salvation (Acts 4:12)

Recognize that the true treasure is eternal life (30)

Eternal life given through grace (Rom 5:21)

Eternal life given as a gift of God (Rom 6:23)

Eternal life given through mercy (Jude 1:21)