

Mark 10:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

After Jesus' teaching about divorce, disciples asked privately (v. 10), and Jesus 'said unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her' (λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ὁς ἀν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ γαμήσῃ ἄλλην μοιχᾶται ἐπ' αὐτήν). [Note: This is duplicate of v. 11 analysis, so continuing with v. 16 about Jesus blessing children] Jesus was 'much displeased' (ἡγανάκτησεν) at disciples rebuking those bringing children. This is strong language—Jesus expressed indignation, anger at their action. He commanded: 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God' (Ἄφετε τὰ παιδία ἔρχεσθαι πρός με, μὴ κωλύετε αὐτά· τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων ἔστιν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ). Jesus welcomed children and declared they exemplify kingdom citizens. Children's humble dependence, receptivity, and powerlessness model kingdom entrance.

Historical Context

Jesus' displeasure at hindering children from coming to Him became foundational for Christian practice of welcoming children in worship and ministry. The phrase 'forbid them not' (μὴ κολυτε, μὴ κωλύετε) is strong prohibition—don't prevent, hinder, or obstruct. Early church baptized infants (evidenced by second-century practice, likely apostolic origin), viewing Jesus' command as mandate to include children in covenant community. Reformation debates over infant versus believer's baptism centered partly on this text. Both traditions affirmed children's value and place in church, differing on baptismal theology. The principle transcends

denominational debates: children belong in God's kingdom and must not be hindered from Jesus.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus' strong displeasure at hindering children teach about God's heart for welcoming the young and vulnerable?
2. How should Jesus' command 'forbid them not' shape church practices regarding children's inclusion in worship and ministry?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐναγκαλισάμενος	αὐτὰ,	τιθεὶς	τὰς	χεῖρας	ἐπ'	
And	he took		them	put	G3588	his hands	upon
G2532	G1723		G846	G5087		G5495	G1909
αὐτὰ,	ηὐλόγει	αὐτὰ,					
them	and blessed	them					
G846	G2127	G846					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 40:11 (Parallel theme): He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Mark 9:36 (Parallel theme): And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

