

Matthew 19:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

Analysis

And he laid his hands on them (ἐπέθηκεν τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῖς, epethēken tas cheiras autois)—This physical touch conveys blessing, identification, and spiritual impartation. The laying on of hands appears throughout Scripture in contexts of ordination, healing, and blessing (Gen. 48:14, Acts 6:6, 1 Tim. 4:14). Jesus's deliberate touch contradicted rabbinic protocol that minimized contact with children and women.

The phrase **and departed thence** marks a transition after Jesus's emphatic defense of children's spiritual value. Having rebuked the disciples for hindering the children (v. 14), Jesus now demonstrates the Kingdom's accessibility to those deemed insignificant by religious gatekeepers. His touch dignified those society marginalized, enacting the Kingdom reversal He proclaimed.

Historical Context

In first-century Palestinian culture, children had little social status until reaching maturity. Rabbinic tradition focused religious instruction on adult males. Jesus's insistence on receiving children and His physical blessing of them was countercultural, elevating children's worth and accessibility to God's grace—a revolutionary Kingdom ethic.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's physical touch of the children model incarnational ministry in contrast to purely intellectual or distant approaches to spiritual blessing?
2. What modern equivalents exist to the disciples' attempt to keep children from Jesus, and how should the church respond?
3. How does this verse inform our theology of children's relationship to God and their place in the covenant community?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐπιθεὶς	αὐτοῖς	τὰς	χεῖρας	ἐπορεύθη	ἐκεῖθεν
And	he laid	them	G3588	his hands	and departed	thence
G2532	G2007	G846		G5495	G4198	G1564
