

A LIVING FAITH Lesson on KINDNESS

Theme: Kindness - "Jesus loves the little children"

Object: A Welcome Mat

Scripture: Luke 9:46-48 (RSV or KJV)

"And an argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest. But when Jesus perceived the thought of their hearts, he took a child and put him by his side, and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me; for he who is least among you all is the one who is great."



Paree Looy's!

Have you ever seen one of these? (*Hold up the Welcome Mat.*) Do you know what it's called? It's called a welcome mat. We often place a welcome mat outside the front door to our house. What is the real purpose of a welcome mat? I think that sometimes it means, "Please wipe your feet before you come into my house," but the word welcome really means to greet someone in a **kind** and friendly way. When someone comes to our house, do we really make them feel welcome? What if it is someone whose skin is a different color from our own? What if it is someone who doesn't dress as nicely as we do? Are we **kind** to everyone?

Sometimes I wonder if people feel welcome when they come to our church. Does the homeless person feel welcome in our church? Do people from different races feel welcome in our church? Here is a question you might want to answer. Are children made to feel welcome in our church? What if they don't know how they are expected to act in the worship service? What if they whisper and pass notes to their friends? What if they wiggle and squirm and disturb our worship?

This is nothing new. Even in the day in which Christ lived some people were not made to feel welcome. Even Christ's own Disciples sometimes didn't understand that everyone was welcome in the Kingdom of God. One day our Lord was teaching and people were bringing little children to have Him bless them. The Disciples criticized the parents and told them to quit bringing their children to Jesus Christ and disturb Him. When Christ heard what His Disciples were saying, he was very upset. "Let the children come to me and don't stop them!" Jesus said. "The Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. Anyone who doesn't come like a little child will never enter." Then the Lord took the children in His arms and blessed them.

Wow! Jesus Christ sure knew how to make a child feel welcome, didn't He? Can you imagine how those children must have felt when the Lord took them up in His arms and blessed them? Shouldn't you and I make everyone feel welcome like Jesus Christ did?

Dear Father, we want to learn the lesson that Jesus Christ taught us. Help us to make everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, feel welcome in our homes, in our church, in our schools, and in our circle of friends. Amen.