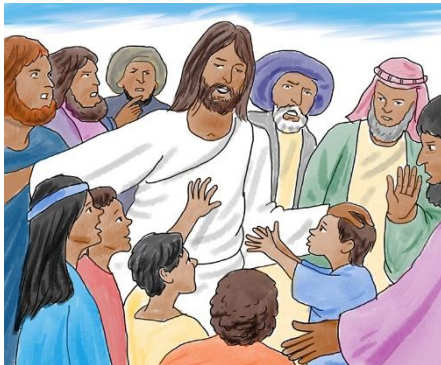


## Read Mark 10.13-16

*You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.*

Have you ever been at the back of a large group of people unable to see what is going on at the front – perhaps at a football match or a play in the theatre? It is so frustrating, isn't it, when you can't be part of what is happening?

This is how the children must have felt in today's reading from the gospel of St Mark. They wanted to see Jesus, they wanted to be near to him. I suppose that most of them were too small to see past the crowd of people who were there. Perhaps some of them tried to creep forwards between people's legs so that they could get near to Jesus. The disciples were not happy about this and they tried to turn the children away. Imagine that you were one of those children. How would you have felt about this?



In Jesus' time children were not considered to be important members of society. The disciples thought that it was a waste of Jesus' time to be speaking to the children rather than to the adults. But Jesus was cross with the disciples and told them to let the children come and meet him. He then told everyone that they should be more like children because the kingdom of God is made up of people who are like the children. What do you think he meant? What are the characteristics of children that make them so special to God?

This Bible reading tells us that we each matter to God. Jesus emphasised the value of women and children in a society where they were often pushed to the edge. Jesus was showing us that everyone is important to God. How do you know that you matter to God? How can you show others that they matter to God?

### Activity

- Have you got any old family photo albums of previous generations? Grandparents may have some old photos. Before the days of camera phones, some families only had photos that were taken at a studio, with painted backgrounds, showing a 'perfect' family. Do the styles and settings of your old pictures say anything about how the role of children in family and society has changed?
- For young people – are there things that you would like to do in church that you have been unable to do so far e.g. reading the lesson, leading prayers, welcoming people? Ask one of the adults in church if you could be involved in one of these activities.

### Prayer

Lord God, thank you for loving each one of us, just as we are.  
We pray that you will take away all our stuffiness and self-importance,  
so that we will be able to approach you with a childlike spirit,  
and rejoice in your goodness and love. Amen.