

# Jesus Blesses Children

Grades  
**3-4**

**BELONG • LECTIONARY 27 • YEAR B**

**MARK 10:2-16**



27

## What's happening in this story?

While the lectionary reading begins with the Pharisees asking Jesus about divorce, today's lesson focuses on verses 13-16 with Jesus' thoughts on children. Jesus is first quizzed by the Pharisees about divorce. Jesus upholds the law because it is given by God and promotes strong families. Second, Jesus welcomes the children and holds them up as models of discipleship.

## What does this mean for kids?

Jesus wanted to make sure people knew that women and children were important and loved completely and totally by God. While both of these groups were often mistreated or ignored in the society of Jesus' day, he wanted people to know these groups were valued members of the church. Kids can demonstrate Jesus' message today by welcoming and valuing all people in their church, school, and community.

## What is the lectionary connection?

Marriage is a big deal, both in the Bible and elsewhere. Immediately after creating the first human being, God proclaims that it's not good for a man to be alone. Humans are made to live in community, and the most important building block of community is the family. God's will is that children experience belonging in loving families, as well as in loving communities of faith. Celebrate with kids that families and communities come in all shapes and sizes.

## AGE LEVEL TIP

Kids this age are often more aware of the complexities of relationships than we assume. Help kids see that Jesus saw relationships and family as vital bonds. Kids also know that ideals and reality often do not match.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- White paper
- Scissors
- Crayons (green)
- Glue sticks

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- Whirl Song CD
- CD player
- Star stickers (several colors)
- Chenille stems (2 per kid)
- Magazines with images of children/families

**WHIRL SUPPLIES**

**• WHIRL NRSV BIBLES**

**• DVD**

**• WALL CHART**

**• LEAFLETS**

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

On a large piece of paper, write: "Welcome to the Wacky Dance Family. Every move belongs." Invite kids to think of wacky dance moves to teach others. Play music from the Whirl Song CD as kids share their moves.

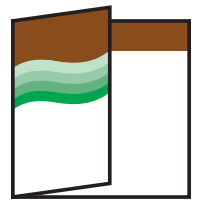
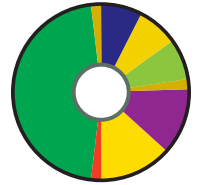
## Invite kids to look at the Wall Chart.

Point out today's date, church season, color, and icon. Pass out star stickers. **Choose a color you like.** Invite kids to stick the stars on the wall chart. **In the Season after Pentecost, we journey together with God.**

**Stand in a circle and hold out your hands, palms up.** As the leader, take the hand of the kid beside you and say: **(Name) belongs.** Invite that kid to do the same. Continue until the circle is complete. **With God, we all belong.**

## Pass out leaflets and chenille stems.

God holds us in God's own hands. Jesus made a point to tell his disciples that with God, we always belong. He showed them that kids belong in God's reign as well. Twist two chenille stems into something that represents you. Place it in the center of God's hands on your leaflet. Jesus cares about relationships. Jesus cares for each of us. You belong here!



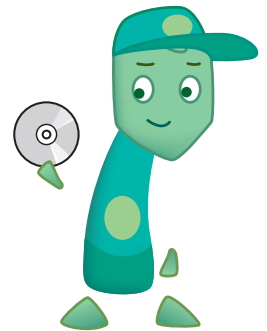
## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Are there times when you think adults don't understand you or listen to what you say? How about when you think you have a good idea, but no one will listen? How do you feel? Watch to see who that happens to in today's video.

View Episode 4, "Youthful Nuisance," on the Whirl Year B Fall Grades 3–6 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- What were Gabe and Ruby trying to do?
- How were the planners interrupted?
- What kept them from listening to the younger kids?
- What might have been different if they had listened to the younger kids?
- Talk about times when it's important for kids to listen to adults and for adults to listen to kids.



## Pass out Whirl NRSV Bibles and help kids find Mark 10:2-16.

Do the Lectionary 27 Preview Activity together on page 1170 and compare responses.

Read Mark 10:2-16 in this creative way together: As a leader, you may find the first part of today's text, where Jesus talks about divorce, difficult. Consider sharing the following information to help kids with the passage. **God wants families to stay together. In Jesus' time, women and children relied on men to provide them with food, shelter, and money to live on. If a woman was divorced, she and her kids would face many challenges—maybe even homelessness. So when Jesus warned against divorce, he was looking out for women and kids who didn't have a way to provide for themselves. Follow along while I read what Jesus said.** Read Mark 10:2-12.



Then Jesus started to talk about how important kids are. The disciples weren't expecting to hear *that!* Ask for volunteers to read Mark 10:13-16.

### Ask these questions after you read the story:

- How does it feel to know that Jesus cares about you?
- Why do you think Jesus cares about women and kids so much?
- I wonder why the disciples tried to keep the children away from Jesus.
- Jesus blessed the children. How do you bless others by just being a kid?
- What does it mean to *belong*?

### BIBLE BIT

- Jesus shows what it means to have a "childlike" faith.
- Children see the world anew and accept grace easily.
- When adults forget the wonder of the gospel, they forget its center.

### WATCH IT AGAIN

- Have the kids shout, "No! Listen to the kids!" when the older kids reject the younger ones' ideas.

### OUR CHURCH

- Invite kids to think of how they participate in worship now. What else could kids do?

**TODAY'S READINGS** Job 1:1; 2:1-10 🌐 • Genesis 2:18-24 📖 • Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12  
**Mark 10:2-16**

# RESPOND 10

## Open leaflets and pass out magazines, scissors, and glue sticks.

Tear off leaflet square.

1. Name some of the groups you belong to.
2. Look at the places named on your square. Why is it important that kids are a part of—belong to—these places?
3. Look through the magazines. Work in small groups to find, cut out, and glue images of people or things that belong in each place.
4. As kids work, encourage them to talk about how each place is made better by the people or things they choose.
5. When kids finish, ask them to read the title together: **“In God’s kingdom, we all belong!”**

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

**Jesus could not have been clearer: Children are important, valued people in God’s kingdom. God’s people belong together in the community of their church. If you see someone at school or on the playground who seems to feel like they don’t belong, what can you do to make them feel welcome?**

Take time to hear kids’ responses.

## Return to the leaflet panels and pass out green crayons.

**A green light tells us to “go.” Change this light to green by coloring in the bottom light. Place the chenille stem representation of yourself you made earlier next to the green light. Inside the street sign, write a place you can go to—a place where you know you belong.**

## Send kids out.

**Stand in a circle and hold out your hands, palms up.** As the leader, take the hand of the kid beside you and say: **(Name) belongs.** Invite that kid to do the same. Continue until the circle is complete. **With God, we all belong.**

**Pray together: Jesus, thank you for reminding grown-ups that children belong and are blessed. Help us bless and welcome others. Amen.**

Thank kids for telling and showing adults what the kingdom of God is like! Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.