

INTO THE MARGINS THE PARABLES OF LUKE

Jesus Blesses Children Luke 18:15-17 | Pastor Alf Halvorson

It is hard to believe that this is the fourteenth parable in our Fall Series on the Parables from Luke. But my hope is that we are beginning to really grasp how Jesus taught during His earthly ministry, and even on His way to Jerusalem and the Cross. And, that we are beginning to anticipate how Jesus might approach a subject or react to a situation, which is a beautiful and powerful thing. To have Jesus in your ear helps you to know more fully how to walk out your faith in your daily life.

Some of the parables we have studied only appear in Luke. However, today's parable, which is really an illustration right after the Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector, is also found in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.

1. *Read Matt. 19:13-15, Luke 18:15-17, and Mark 10:13-16.* What is the same in each story, and how is each telling different?
2. *Now read Luke 18:9-14 & then review Luke 18:15-17.* How might verses 15-17 particularly illustrate verse 14? What do you think Jesus is trying to get at here?
3. In verse 15, the disciples tried to prevent parents from bringing their children to Jesus so that He could bless them. There might be many reasons for this. I shared some in my sermon. What are the most likely reasons in your mind? Explain and defend.
4. In my message, I talked about how Jesus really revolutionized our view of children. In the Greco-Roman World, children were not viewed the way they are today. What positive contribution did Christ's teaching and actions have on how we treat children today? How might this broaden to other groups of people that Jesus associated with on the margins—like Samaritans, women, tax collectors, prostitutes, etc.? How might this impact your forays “into the margins?”
5. In verses 16 and 17, Jesus associates certain attitudes or attributes of children to those who gain the Kingdom of God. What attributes of children might help us enter the Kingdom? What attributes would not help us enter the Kingdom?
6. In Mark 10:16, Jesus “took them up (the children) in His arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.” How might you literally and symbolically do the same in your life and relationships this week?



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Dan Aikins

Assistant Pastor, Alpha Hub Director

Clay Brown

Equipping Pastor

Beth Case

Caring Ministries Pastor

Mauricio Chacón

Spanish Language Pastor

Almir Dias

Portuguese Language Pastor

Alf Halvorson

Senior Pastor

Brett Hurst

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MDPC App

For a quick download link for Apple and

Android, text "APP" to 832-742-1832.

Congregational Updates:

Bob Draper passed away November 24, 2019 (Memorial on 12/5 at 10:30 AM).

MDPC Worship

8:30 AM • 9:45 AM • 11:15 AM (English & Spanish) • 6:00 PM (Portuguese Language)

Sunday, December 8, 2019



INTO THE MARGINS

THE PARABLES OF LUKE

Jesus Blesses Children
Luke 18:15-17 • Alf Halvorson preaching

Jesus Blesses Children: Luke 18:15-17

People were bringing even infants to Him (Jesus) that He might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. But Jesus called for them and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT: LOVE

Call to Worship with Chuck and Sharon Fox, and daughter Jenny

BAPTISMS IN TODAY'S SERVICES

9:45 Service	William Stephen Aikins	Son of Daniel Aikins & Lauren Aikins
	Hadley Ceman Hunt	Daughter of Adam Ross Hunt & Ashley Woolie Hunt
11:15 Service	Lucas Isaiah Lundgren	Son of Matthew Isaiah Lundgren
	Christina Diane Schofield	

SCRIPTURE READERS

8:30 Service: Joshua Scimemi **9:45 Service:** Westy Bennett **11:15 Service:** Reagan Johnson

8:30 AM BLENDED & 9:45 AM CONTEMPORARY

PRaise & WORSHIP • CONFESSION • BAPTISM • MESSAGE • OFFERING

Musicians in these services: Ayelen Martinez and Michael Middleton, worship leaders
Asher Pudlo, drums • Daniel Martinez, keys • Daniel Amaya, bass • George Heathco, guitar

11:15 AM TRADITIONAL MUSIC

PRELUDE	<i>Fantasy on Greensleeves</i>	arr. Brian Henkelmann (b. 1950)
*HYMN OF PRAISE #9	<i>O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, (Verses 1 & 3)</i>	VENI EMMANUEL
*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #23	<i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i>	Verse 1; GLORIA
ANTHEM	Selections from <i>Messiah</i>	G. F. Handel (1685-1759)
	<i>Every Valley Shall Be Exalted • And the Glory of the Lord</i>	
OFFERTORY	<i>The Yearning</i>	Craig Courtney (b. 1948)/arr. White
*HYMN OF RESPONSE #8	<i>Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates</i>	Verse 1 & 3; TRURO
POSTLUDE	<i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i>	arr. Richard Warner

Musicians in this service:

Brian Yeakley, soloist • Miriam Belyatsky & Rasa Kalesnykaite, violin • Sanctuary Choir
Kathryn White, piano/organ • Charles Hausmann, conductor

* Please stand if able.

CCLI # 182374

MDPC Food Service Ministries

Treats For Your Feast!

Order by Sunday, December 15:
treats.mdpc.org

Chocolate Chip Cookies
Christmas Cookies
Pumpkin Pie • Pecan Pie
Cranberry Bread

WEEKLY MINISTRY PARTNER PRAYER FOCUS

Vita-Living Life-long services and support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Vita-Living maintains homes with trained staff and specialists, also offering in-home care. It is best known for its success with those who have a dual diagnosis of mental retardation and mental illness, and those with behavioral challenges. vitaliving.org

Raise Up Families Westside Homeless Prevention is a two-stage housing initiative in Spring Branch for homeless families with children, or families in imminent danger of becoming homeless. Through financial support and comprehensive services, clients receive education and counseling needed to achieve self-sufficiency and permanent housing. raiseupfamilies.org

Free Wheelchair Mission Free Wheelchair Mission (FWM) takes wheelchairs to places around the world where the impoverished disabled lack mobility. FWM ministers to each recipient and shares the good news of Christ's call - that we are free in Him! Pray that lives would be transformed with each chair given and that communities would see God is good as He meets needs in tangible ways.

freewheelchairmission.org

Generosity Matters. On **Sunday, November 3**, we made our 2020 financial pledges to God. If you've not yet pledged, you can still do so online at pledge.mdpc.org, or by using the Covenant Cards found in the pews. Also, please keep year-end giving in mind as we strive to meet our 2019 budget obligations. **Online giving is available at giving.mdpc.org.**

During the month of December, the **2019 financial updates** will be shown on the screen in services.



MDPC Loving God. Proclaiming Christ. Living Generously. Engaging All.
11612 Memorial Drive | Houston, Texas 77024 | mdpc.org | 713-782-1710

This Evening at MDPC: Kick off the Christmas season with joy! Look to the inside of the bulletin for details on today's Family Christmas Festival (4:30 PM) and the MDPC Christmas Concert (6:00 PM).



FAMILY CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Sunday, December 8 | 4:30-6:30 PM

Dinner*, Bingo, and a Christmas Amazing Race!
Booths for Face Painting, a Hot Chocolate Bar, Family Dress-Up Contest, a Service Project, and more!

*RSVP for dinner at festival.mdpc.org (\$8/adult • \$4/child)

Please bring a gently-used children's book to donate



Jubilate Deo

by Dan Forrest

MDPC Concert Series
2019-2020

Sunday, December 8
6:00 PM
MDPC Sanctuary

Mission Market

Sundays, December 1, 8, 15, & 22
Chapel and Sanctuary Lobbies

Give the gift of hope for Christmas this year when you purchase cards in honor of friends and loved ones. The money goes directly to an MDPC ministry partner to fund life-saving surgeries, safe and loving homes for children, life-transforming education, wheelchairs, and so much more. Shop Mission Market on weekdays in the Front Office.




MERRY AND BRIGHT

Join us for a celebration of art and music!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

This FREE art-filled event will feature works from students of the REACH art classes and seasonal music by MDPC's Contemporary Music team with a special live art demo by Bridget Wolk.

Doors open at 6:15 PM for an art viewing and light appetizers, followed by the Christmas concert in the Chapel at 7:00 PM, then a dessert reception in the Parlor.

merry.mdpc.org

Theology Matters

Additional resource materials and outside study required. For details, links, and registration: theology.mdpc.org

The Trinity

In this second course, we'll dive deeper into what Christianity professes about the Trinity, how we may understand it more clearly, and why this crucial doctrine makes a difference in daily Christian living. **Classes will be taught by Dr. Clay Brown, Equipping Pastor.**

Wednesdays, January 8, 15, 22, & 29
6:30-8:00 PM • Ministry Center Room 122

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES AT MDPC

Ushers are needed for our Christmas Eve Services (4:00, 5:30, 7:00, & 8:30 PM).
Sign up: xmasushers.mdpc.org

Purchase Poinsettias for Christmas

The Christmas Poinsettias for the MDPC Chapel and Sanctuary may be purchased in honor or memory of loved ones. Visit flowers.mdpc.org, or pick up an order envelope at the Front Office or Connection Center.
Sign up through December 13 (\$8)
flowers.mdpc.org

Christmas Mythbusters

Let's discuss some common Christmas "myths." Is Christmas truly a Christian holiday? Do we really believe in a virgin birth? Those and other ideas will be explored by our panel made up equally of Christians and atheists. Open to 20s & 30s.
Tuesday, December 10 • 7:00-9:00 PM
Kindred, Montrose (2515 Waugh, 77006)
\$5 Admission • Free craft beer & food
Sarah Stone: ssstone@mdpc.org

Married Life Prep Classes

Couples are invited to join us for this four-week course, taught by Brett and Kellie Hurst of Home Encouragement. Program is open to all engaged and newly married couples, and combines Biblical teaching with the best current marriage research.
Sundays, January 5, 12, 19, 26
10:00 AM-12:00 PM • Room 171/172
mlp.mdpc.org

Youth Confirmation

Our yearly program for all students currently in 8th grade or above, to focus on what it means to follow Jesus.
Sundays, January 12-March 1
11:00 AM-12:15 PM
Confirmation Sunday: March 8, 2020
Register: confirmation.mdpc.org
\$125 fee covers retreat expenses.

Read the Bible in 90 Days

You'll have plenty of support as you gain fresh insight into God's character, His plan

of salvation, and His love for each individual person. In this 14-week course, you'll read twelve Bible pages a day, and meet once a week for support and encouragement. Led by Hobert Plunkett
Sundays, January 12-April 19
11:15 AM-12:15 PM
Pastor's Conference Room
Pre-register at B90.mdpc.org

Walking the Mourner's Path

Does it seem like you should be over your grief? Join us for this Christ-centered grief program designed to help those dealing with the loss of a loved one. Trained facilitators guide the group.
Thursdays, January 16-March 5
3:30-5:00 PM • Ministry Center Room 116
Fee: \$30 for materials
grief.mdpc.org or contact Beverly Fluke: bfluke@mdpc.org or 713-490-9542

Winter 2020 Alpha

Invite a friend from any faith or non-faith to try Alpha together. It's a no-pressure way to explore Jesus, with no question, belief, or idea off-limits. It's a place to talk about difficult seasons like having doubts or fears or being dissatisfied with life (feels we all sometimes feel). It's a place to simply meet new people or share what you believe. Alpha is for Christians, too, and can help rekindle faith that has cooled.
Tuesdays, Jan. 21-Mar. 10 | 6:30-8:15 PM
Free dinner, free childcare
Info and RSVP: alpha.mdpc.org

Girls' Getaway: Spring Is Coming!

Join us for a time of refreshment, laughter, and fun. Bring a friend, neighbor, mother, or sister to enjoy a five-star retreat complete with an outdoor movie, teaching time, and free time to walk the property or just relax. All adult women welcome.
Friday-Sunday, April 3-5
Jordan Ranch in Schulenburg
Register getaway.mdpc.org
Contact Amanda Grace Caldwell: acaldwell@mdpc.org or 713-490-0931

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES AT MDPC

Walking Through Luke

Stand-alone lessons, taught by MDPC theologians, follow the "Transformed by Hope" study. Choose 9:45 or 11:15 AM, Amphitheater.
Today: Brett Hurst, Relationships Pastor, Luke 10:25-11:13

The Winsome Witness Challenge • Join us in a Winsome Witness Challenge, where we suggest simple and practical ideas for building deeper relationships and sharing your faith with those in your sphere. **This week, get to know your "bleacher" neighbors. When kids' activities become your life, branch out and meet a new family this week.**