

Parish of Ferndown
Study sheet for week commencing 6th July 2008
“Be like children” – Mark 10: 13-16

Here are some discussion points for small groups or individual consideration this week. You probably need to pick and choose a bit, and some questions are best left as challenges rather than for discussion in group.

1. Jesus tells us to “receive the kingdom like a little child”. What aspects of being like a child are positive and which are negative? Suggestions are dependence, wilfulness, innocence, adaptability, selfishness, disobedience and any others you think of!
2. Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10. Samuel **listened**, but he needed guidance on how to listen (“Go back and lie down...”), who to listen to and the response to make. How do you feel about listening to God? How do you think God speaks to you, and to others? Who do you take most notice of: God and others who build you up, or those who put you down? Do you try to encourage others, especially children, to realise that God loves them and they are special to Him? And how do you do this in practise?
3. Read 2 Kings 5:1-3. A captive girl **spoke out** to point her captor to God. Try to put yourself in her place. How would you feel towards your captor? Would you have spoken up or left him to suffer? When you feel you have something to say, do you find it hard or easy to get people to listen? Does anyone have advice on how to get people to listen to you in a positive frame of mind (whatever the subject)? How specifically can we get people to listen when we talk about God?
4. Read John 6:1-13. Here is a boy who had listened to Jesus all day, and then **gave all he had** (normally a boy and his food are not easily parted). What would it take for you to offer all that you have to Jesus? (Just in case you are wondering, the writer of these notes hasn’t succeeded yet!) Would you find it easier to share everything if you had less than you do now?

Please turn over...

5. Read Luke 1:26-38. A girl is **obedient**. What would it have cost Mary to be obedient to God but then to have to live within her society? (Remember what the Law says about sex outside marriage). Could you be obedient in the way Mary was?
6. Jesus had (and thus God has) a special place for children in his heart. There are hundreds of verses in the Old Testament about taking care of the fatherless, the poor and the oppressed. Try reading Isaiah 1:10-17 to see how strongly God feels.
7. So, how can we at St Mary’s look after our children, those who already come to church and those in Ferndown who don’t? How can we as individuals support and encourage them? Could you offer Mary or Debbie and Larry help with the children’s or youth work?
8. How can we as a church, as small groups and as individuals obey God by taking care of the children in the world who are in poverty or in slavery? What are you going to do this week about it?

Notes: