



## #homedevos 14.1

### A COMMUNITY AFTER GOD'S HEART

#### Peeping through some Windows

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##### **Introduction:**

Uncle Marius, Uncle Len, Uncle Wynand and others shared on Sunday about what is happening at CCA:

- We heard that we are not going to have Sunday morning services at church as we used to have all the years before Lockdown. We will only start such gatherings in January 2021, depending on the guidelines given by the government in the light of Lockdown.
- We also heard that we are now going to gather in small Community Groups like the early church we have seen in Acts 2 to become a community where Jesus is truly King.
- This means that there will be no Children's Church as we have known it for a long time.
- The question arises then: What about the children?  
To answer this question – as many others in life – we need to go to the Bible. The Lord always teaches us and shows us the right way, His way, through His Word.

So, let us have a quick peep through some open windows in the Gospels and learn more about where children fit in in Jesus' time. Paint the pictures in your mind as we listen.



### Window #1: When Jesus was a child (Luke 2:41-52)

Joseph and Mary, Jesus' parents, loved God and they went faithfully year after year to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. When Jesus was 12 years old, we read, He went them to Jerusalem as they used to do.

After the feast all the people returned to their homes all over the country. They didn't drive back to their towns in cars like we do. They walked, families and friends, all together. Jesus was not walking with His parents, but they were not worried. They thought He was walking with family or friends.

*Can you picture this?*

At the end of the first day's walk, Joseph and Mary looked for their son, and couldn't find Him anywhere, not with anybody, nowhere. Can you imagine how worried they were? They went straight back to Jerusalem and searched for Him everywhere for three days. Eventually they found Jesus in the temple sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions.

*Can you picture Jesus sitting there?*



#### Questions:

Do you think Jesus was welcome to be part of the Passover and to sit in the temple with the teachers as a young boy?

Do you think He was the only boy there among the adults?

We learn from scholars\* that a young Jewish boy was allowed to attend his first Passover in Jerusalem and that in that time school at a synagogue where a teacher (called "rabbi") would teach the children. So, yes, Jesus (and all the other twelve year old and older boys) was welcome at the Passover and in the synagogue to learn from the teachers.

\*<https://www.thatttheworldmayknow.com/rabbi-and-talmidim>

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question



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talk



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## Window #2: A little boy's lunch pack (Matthew 14:15-21, John 6:1-15)

*(Remember to paint the picture in your mind as I am talking.)*

Jesus and His disciples were in a remote area (far away from towns and shops) on a mountain. Many, many people followed Jesus to listen to Him and see what He did and healing the sick. They were in awe. At the end of the day, all being tired and hungry, Jesus, true to His caring nature, asked one of His disciples where they are going to get bread for all the people. Phillip, the practical man, said a whole lot of money won't be enough to buy bread that everyone to have a small piece. (One denarius was a day's wage, Phillip said: "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little"). There was a little boy close by and who heard this conversation, he went to Andrew and offered his lunch pack, five loaves and two small fish. Andrew took him to Jesus and said: "Here is a little boy who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many people?"

Can you see the little boy standing there, listening to Andrew and Jesus with his lunch pack in his hands?

Then all the people had to sit down on the grass – just the men were 5000, let alone the women and children! Jesus took the little boy's bread and fish, thanked God and gave the disciples each a piece. The disciples then broke pieces off and gave to the people. As they were handing out pieces of bread and fish, Jesus miraculously multiplied the food and everyone there had more than enough to eat. In actual fact, He multiplied it so much that the disciples afterwards picked up twelve baskets full of leftover pieces. What a miracle!



### Questions:

What stands out for you in this picture?

Do you think there was just one child in that big crowd?

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### Window #3: The greatest in the Kingdom of God (Matthew 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-36; Luke 9:46-48)

One day as Jesus walked to Capernaum and many people accompanied Him. He overheard the disciples had a big discussion about who would be the greatest in the kingdom. When they were in a house together Jesus asked them what that discussion was all about even though He knew what it was. They kept quiet. Jesus looked around in the crowd and called a little child to Him, put him on His lap, put His arms around him and said to them that if they want to be first and great, they need to be humble like this little child.



#### Questions:

How important do you think are children to Jesus?

Do you think this little child was the only child in that group? We can only guess.



### Window #4: Children counts for Jesus (Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 15-17)

We read in Mark 10:13-15(TPT): *"The parents kept bringing their little children to Jesus that He would lay His hands on them and bless them. But the disciples kept rebuking and scolding the people for doing it. When Jesus saw what was happening, He became indignant with His disciples and said to them, 'Let all the little children come to Me and never hinder them! Don't you know that God's kingdom realm exists for such as these? Listen to the truth I speak: Whoever does not open their arms to receive God's kingdom like a little teachable child will never enter it.'* Then He embraced each child, and laying His hands on them, He lovingly blessed each one."

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### Questions:

Why was Jesus so upset with His disciples?

Do you think children, little children, are as important to Him as adults?



### Window #5: Listen to what Jesus said! (Matthew 18:10-14)

*"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven."* Then He asked, if a man has a hundred sheep and one get lost, will he not leave the ninety-nine and search for that one lost sheep? Certainly, he will and be so glad when he finds it. Jesus then said, listen well: *"So is it not the will of My Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."*



### Window #6: Children in the temple (Matthew 21:14-17):

This is that last window we're peeping through. (Remember to paint the picture in your mind.) The blind and lame people came to Jesus in the temple and He healed them. The children were singing out loud praises to Jesus: *"Hosanna to the Son of David!"* when they saw what He did. But the chief priests and clever people who studied the Old Testament were very upset, because of the children. Jesus answered and reminded them what was written in the Psalms: *"Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies You (God) have perfected praise."*

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### Questions:

Were the children allowed in the temple where the community gathered together to worship God?

Could they be part of what was happening, and did they have the freedom to sing praises to God?

We asked the question: "Where do children fit in a community after God's heart? What did you discover where children fit in in Jesus time?"

### Conclusion:

Children are as important to Jesus as the adults. They are welcome in His presence. He loves them and wants each one to be saved and be His child, part of His family, His church - where people gather to worship and pray together, where they come together to learn from the Word and encourage one another and helping and serving whoever a need is.



### Prayer:

- Ask God to place your family in the small community group in CCA where He wants you to be.
- Ask Jesus that He will build His church as He has said in Matthew 16:18, in CCA, in East London, in South Africa and the world.



### Activity:

Draw a picture of the window you peeped through that you liked the most.

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