

Children's Day | Preparing, Celebrating, Discipling

I. Why Celebrate Children's Day?

- **God deserves our worship on the second Sunday in June.**
 - There is no nanosecond of our existence that God does not deserve preeminence. Everything we believe, think, desire, feel, say, and do should be an act of worship to Him.
 - It's a very hard goal — one we will not do perfectly until we reach glory — but since God is infinitely worth it, His followers — of course — want to do their dead-level best here and now. Not only that, but true disciples of Christ always want to grow in their worship of God.
 - That means that all born again Christians should worship God on the second Sunday in June regardless of whether or not they observe Children's Day.
- **Children's Day helps us worship God in a unique way.**
 - John Calvin believed that those of us who are in Christ should be celebrating Christ's godhead, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and lordship every day of the year. And I agree with our good friend, John, on that point. But there's value in emphasizing certain attributes of God during different parts of the year.
 - Practically — since God is infinite — we can't adore all that He is every day. It's impossible because there isn't enough time, and it's impossible because we're finite beings.
 - The Celebration of God is patterned after God's own plan for worship.
 - Imagine Calvin trying to convince the Jews that Passover was an *unnecessary* holiday because they should all be celebrating the Exodus from Egypt *every* day of the year.
 - Not only would that be contemptible to the Jews, but we must realize that part of the reason such a suggestion would be contemptible is that God Himself ordained the Passover observance. It was God Who said, I want you to focus on certain of My divine attributes and miraculous deeds during different times of the year.
 - That means that each of the holidays within The Celebration of God give us a unique opportunity to focus on another very important attribute or accomplishment of God.
- **God has so many expectations for adults when it comes to how they interact with children.**
 - In the same way that Pentecost helps me remember and refocus on the gift of the church and my responsibilities as a citizen of God's Kingdom, and in the same way that Creation Week helps me remember and rededicate to fulfilling the Creation Mandate, and in the same way all of the holidays should reignite in my mind the importance of the Christian life on which I happen to be focusing, Children's Day is an extremely important day to remind me about God's expectations for how I live amongst and minister to the children in my life.
 - This includes children who are related to me and those who aren't.

II. Preparing

- The best way to prepare our hearts to worship God well is to meditate on His Word and talk with Him in prayer.
- As you meditate on those passages you will hopefully be able to better appreciate why God chose to have mankind progress from child to adult. You should also discover important realities concerning how the Lord would have you minister to the children in your lives. And you should also appreciate how much we have to learn from children.
- Therefore, take time to prepare your heart, your spaces, and your disciples by dedicating careful study to the value God puts on children.
- Take stock of the children in your life.

III. Celebrating

- Spend time reading, talking about, and learning from God's Word.
- We should also dedicate time to thanking God for the family, thanking Him for the gift of children, and thanking Him for giving us the child/adult dynamic which is designed to mirror God's relationship with us.
- In addition to private and public reading of God's Word and prayer, here are some fun ways you can celebrate Children's Day, and — guess what — they all involve children. This is why it's important to take stock of who these kids will be.
 - On International Children's Day, you could put together a special treat for the kids in your class, church, or small group. It may be edible, it may be a trinket, it may be a craft, or — better yet — it may be a token that teaches them about God and draws their minds to worship Him.
 - You could also throw a party and invite the children and parents in your life to attend. At that party you could explain why you're doing it. You could tell them about God and how much He loves children and how honored you are to have them in your life. And then you could play games and have a great time.
 - That would be a wonderful community event for a church. Imagine setting up some outdoor games and events and providing everyone who comes a gift bag which contains — among other things — Gospel tracts and information about the church's children's programs. A special time could also be scheduled to share the Gospel from Matthew 18 where Jesus says, *"At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, 'Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' 2 And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, 3 and said, 'Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me.'*"
 - Whatever you do — if you truly want to glorify God on Children's Day, you need to make it about Him. This isn't just an excuse to play and eat so that I can consume more sugar and fun for my own pleasure. We need to be intentional to give the glory to God and help the children better know, love, and serve Him.

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IV. Discipling

- If our celebration is truly going to glorify God on Children's Day, it's going to involve investing in other people. This discipleship relationship can definitely be with the children to whom you're ministering, but it can also be other people who too should be investing in the kids.
- Maybe there's an eighteen year old who doesn't like little kids because he finds them annoying. Take him under your wing and help him understand God's expectations for his life.
- Maybe you can coordinate a group of young singles to host the church's Children's Day event, and help them realize that they have far more opportunities than they realized to serve the next generation.
- There are so many possibilities, and the second greatest command is that God's people love each other . . . that we do what's in God's best interest for their lives. And it's in God's best interest for me to obey Him by discipling them and being disciplined by them.