Three Things That Upset Jesus

# Mark 10:13-16 (New American Standard Bible)

***13****And they were bringing children to Him so that He would touch them; but the disciples rebuked them.****14****But when Jesus saw this,* ***He was indignant*** *and said to them, “Allow the children to come to Me; do not forbid them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.****15****Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.”****16****And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them.*

# Introduction

#  Bible Trivia: True or False? Q 1. *The Lord our God never gets angry with His children.* Answer: False. Read the Old Testament. Idolatry always provoked Him to anger. Q 2. *Although the Lord Jesus Christ is kind, loving, and compassionate with us, He can get upset with us in certain occasions.* Answer: True. Remember Jesus’ cleansing the Temple (John 2:15)?

# If anyone teaches you that God in Heaven or Jesus are always kind and loving, therefore, they never get grieved with us no matter what we do and say, do not believe that teacher. Such teaching is a heresy that will derail your heaven bound train. Why do I say so? Because, in the Scriptures we see the LORD our God angered by His people’s idol worship or injustice, and we see Jesus too upset with people’s attitude and actions.

#  Sure, God is slow to anger and His loving kindness endures forever with us. However, we’d better pay attention to certain occasions where God was provoked to anger so that we won’t make the same mistakes. So, what are those occasions to avoid? Besides the idol worship in the Old Testament, I have discovered at least three occasions in the New Testament where Jesus was upset: with people’s stubborn heart, with hypocrisy, and with blocking children from coming to Him. Please pay attention to my sermon. May the Lord help us that we never make our Lord indignant with us.

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**Stubborn Heart (Mark 3:5):** it is expressed in the Bible as*stiffened neck, uncircumcised heart and ears, stubborn heart, hardness of heart,* and *unrepentant heart*. They all mean the same and they all go together. E.g., One Sabbath day, Jesus entered a synagogue where He saw a man with withered hand. He wanted to heal the man and set him free from his physical bondage. The congregation was watching Jesus “*closely to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. 3He \*said to the man with the withered hand, “Get up and come forward!” 4And He \*said to them, “Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath or to do harm, to save a life or to kill?” But they kept silent. 5After looking around at them with* ***anger****, grieved* ***at their hardness of heart****, He \*said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored* (Mark 3:2-5)*.* To the congregation, Jesus said, *“What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out?* (Matthew 12:11).The Pharisees were upset with Jesus’ healing and they *“went out and immediately beganconspiring… against Him, as to how they might put Him to death*” (Mark 3:6).

I want you to notice here that everyone in the synagogue was silent not giving an answer to Jesus’ question. None of them wanted to offend the Pharisees their religious teachers. But I wonder, why not even one soul dared to say, *Yes, Lord, go ahead and heal the man?!* You see, that’s what got Jesus. He was grieved at their ‘hardness of heart.’ I bet if I were the man with withered hand, I would love Jesus to heal me, whether it was a Sabbath day or not. Wouldn’t you?! In my opinion, the congregation failed to put themselves in the man’s shoes.

I see the same trouble in today’s world: *apathy.* Some people don’t care whatever trouble happens to others. Our hearts become more and more calloused are desensitized to another’s trouble. E.g., Mass shooting. War casualties. Like a calloused hand won’t feel much, so does the hardened heart toward neighbor’s trouble. That’s what Jesus is upset with. May God save us from the hardened heart.

**Hypocrisy:** Jesus can smell hypocrisy from miles away. Like oil and water, He and hypocrites never get along with each other. Who are the hypocrites? Well, although we all carry and suffer from a little bit of hypocrisy in us (who doesn’t except Christ?), Jesus strongly denounces people’s hypocrisy such as: first, *the desire and love of man’s recognition, praise, glory and reward* in good deeds such as almsgiving, prayer, and fasting (Matthew 6:2---*So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the****hypocrites****do in the synagogues and on the streets, so that they will be praised by people. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full*).

Next, Jesus calls ‘hypocrites’ *those who are critical of other’s weaknesses and faults* (Luke 6:42--- *How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You****hypocrite****, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother’s eye*).

Thirdly, some hypocrites showed malice toward Jesus, not interested in knowing the truth, but only trapping Him (Matthew 22:18---*But Jesus perceived their malice, and said, “Why are you testing Me, you****hypocrites****?).*

Jesus identifies three more types of hypocrites:

Those who *honor the Lord with lips only, but their heart is far away from Him* (Mark 7:6---*But He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy about you****hypocrites****, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me*). Hypocrites are those who break God’s commandment for the sake of human tradition (Matthew 15:3).

*Those who are good at analyzing the natural phenomena but ignorant of the signs of end times* (Luke 12:56---*You****hypocrites****! You know how to analyze the appearance of the earth and the sky, but how is it that you do not know how to analyze this present time?).*

*Lastly, those who are apathetic toward people’s sufferings such as physical weakness*. E.g.,It was another Sabbath day. Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. There was “*a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent over double, and could not straighten up at all.****12****When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, “Woman, you are freed from your sickness.”****13****And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she stood up straight again, and began glorifying God.****14****But the synagogue leader, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, began saying to the crowd in response, “There are six days during which work should be done; so come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day.”****15****But the Lord answered him and said, “You* ***hypocrites,****does each of you on the Sabbath not untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it away to water it?****16****And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this restraint on the Sabbath day?”*(Luke 13:10-16).

 **Word Study**: The words such as ‘hypocrite, hypocrites, or hypocrisy’ appear less than 30 times in the entire Bible**.**  However, when it does, it gets the strongest condemnation from Jesus our Lord. For instance, against the religious leaders with hypocrisy, Jesus uttered ‘woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites’ eight times! (Matthew 23). Hell is the place for hypocrites, Jesus declares (Matthew 24:51---*and he will cut him in two and assign him a place with the****hypocrites****; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*). You know why I want you to pay attention to my sermon. Hypocrisy not only angers, grieves our Lord but also endangers us from entering Heaven. Beware of hypocrisy.

 **Blocking children from coming to Jesus (Mark 10:13-16).**

The last thing we need to beware of is ‘blocking children from coming to Jesus.’ Listen to today’s text one more time: One day people were bringing children to Jesus so that He would touch and bless them. But His disciples shooed them away rebuking them, both people and children. When Jesus saw that, ***“He was indignant*** *and said to them, “Allow the children to come to Me; do not forbid them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.****15****Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.”****16****And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them.*

E.g., A recent article in NYT: it is time that parents stopped teaching their children about God. Another example in China. The government forbids parents from taking them to church.

 May we ever pay attention to what Jesus says here: do not hinder children from coming to Me. The kingdom of God belongs to such as children. Unless you receive the kingdom of God like a child, you will not enter it at all. Be innocent like children. Trust in the Lord without wavering.

**Conclusion**

 This is my prayer and hope for all of us. May we never get on the wrong side with Jesus. May the Lord set us free from hardened heart and apathy. May the Lord circumcise our hearts (Romans 2:29) and our ears (Acts 7:51) by the Holy Spirit.

May the Lord help us to rid *ourselves* of all malice and all deceit, **hypocrisy**, envy and all slander from our hearts (1 Peter 2:1). May the Lord help us ever bring children to the Lord and love His Word (1 Peter 2:2) and accept His kingdom like them. Amen.