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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for September 29, 2024

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year B

Scripture: [Mark 9:38-50](#) [**Summary:** *No Stumbling Blocks*]

Supplies Needed: No supplies needed.

ASK (a.k.a. *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- Anyone here remember what it was like when you were learning how to walk? ...no?
- Even if you can't remember, do you think you got it right the first time? (Probably not!)
- Do you think you fell down a few times – at *least* a few times, right?
- Don't feel bad about falling down – you fell down because learning to walk is very difficult.
- Which is why parents help us with it. This is why they hold our hands and steady us by keeping a hand on our back or a hand under our elbow while we learn.
- This is very helpful of them. But can you imagine if they had done just the opposite? Can you imagine if they had just kept pushing you down while you were learning to walk – that every time you tried to take a step, they just pushed you over?
- If that had happened, you may have stopped trying to walk ... and you'd still be crawling around today!
- That'd be a pretty mean thing to have happen, don't you think?

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- In today's scripture story, Jesus is telling his disciples that learning to pay attention to God is very difficult – maybe even as difficult as learning to walk!
- And, by no means, should the disciples do anything to others or themselves that makes paying attention to God even harder to learn and do.
- Jesus calls those things that people do to make learning about God more difficult, “stumbling blocks” – and that we shouldn't put them in front of other people.

- Basically, what Jesus is saying in today's story is this:
 - If you see someone helping someone else pay attention to God, don't stop them.
 - If you know someone that is learning to pay attention to God, don't make it harder for them.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- Jesus was really good at inviting us to learn from him how to pay attention to God.
- He knew that there were things that could make paying attention to God an even harder thing to do.
- So, just like your parents didn't push you down when you were learning to walk, Jesus taught his disciples not to make it harder for others to pay attention to God.
- The same is true for us.
- We are not meant to argue or force people into paying attention to God in the way we think they should do so.
- But, we can *invite* others to join us in how we learn about and worship God, here, at [*name of your church*].
- When we invite others to join us in paying attention to God, then we're doing just like Jesus was instructing his disciples to do in today's story.
- That's the good news for today. Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who invites us to learn from him...

...who invites us to learn from him...

...how to pay attention to you.

...how to pay attention to you.

Help us to accept his invitation...

Help us to accept his invitation...

...and share it with others.

...and share it with others.

Thank you and Amen