

“Embrace” Sermon for October 7, 2018

World Communion Sunday, Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:10-12

Mark 10:13-16

Mark 10:14b-16 (NTE-New Testament for Everyone)

Jesus Blesses the Children

^{14b} He said to them, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn’t embrace the Kingdom of God like a child, will never be embraced by it.” ¹⁶ Then he took the children in his arms and placed his hands on their heads and blessed them.

God cares for you and me. God cares for us. God has not only forgiven us, God has *embraced us*.

Through that embrace we may anticipate, benefit from, live in accordance with and actually participate in a mutual embrace with God.

Through Jesus Christ, God has called us to the kingdom, a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness is the rule, faith is the means and love is the goal.

A few weeks ago a young girl waited all day outside Denzel Washington’s home. When he and his family were approaching their car, she began to recite a

poem in celebration of his commitment to the uplift of the community. Washington, a devout Christian, understood this as a prophetic utterance from God encouraging him to continue to embrace the cause of God's kingdom in the world, just as God in Christ had embraced him. He stood there as she held him, his family and his entourage a captive audience.

Unless you embrace God's kingdom as does this child, you shall not be embraced by it.

Unless we, as a part of the global community of faith in Christ, can act in faithful obedience to God's expectations, we will not grasp it, be grabbed by God's embrace. We will miss it. The epistle asks:

(Hebrews 2:6) "What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them?"

God is the God of compassionate embrace. He has embraced us and has sent us into the world to embrace others, to feed others, to rescue others, to

inspire others, to encourage others, to heal other, to offer refuge to the worlds forgotten and outcasts in the name of Jesus Christ. As God has embraced us, so we are called to embrace the most simple-minded, the least likely, the most un-promising. In so doing, we receive the privilege of being more fully and securely embraced by God's love, God's power, God's care and God's embrace of the world.

For God so loved the world-not the church, not our clan, not our race or tribe, not our culture or nation or ontology. God has loved the world, and demonstrated that love by embracing us in Jesus Christ, and so too, must we embrace the world that God longs to transform into his righteous kingdom. In the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.