God’s Big Story: Who’s the Greatest?

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| scripture focus |
| Matthew 18:1-5; 19:13-15; Mark 19:13-16; Luke 18:15-17; Luke 10:29-37 |

big picture

This week’s stories portray Jesus continuing to flip the values of the world on their head, redefining what it means to be important and great in the kingdom of God. As his disciples squabble about who’s best, Jesus focuses on a child, an “unseen” person who wasn’t yet important enough to notice. “Children like this are the ones you need to be learn from and imitate,” Jesus says. There’s something that children can do that we grown-ups have trouble with, and we need them to show us what it looks like to to come to Jesus without inhibition. Jesus valued and celebrated those that the world tended to overlook and marginalize, including children. He had time for them. This week, think about and celebrate what you’ve learned from your children. Let them teach you to receive what you didn’t earn. And make sure that you have time for them and for other surprises that disrupt your normal routine. Ask for eyes to see what is really important in the world, and respond to what you see.

|  | storybooks | bible readings |
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| read aloud | *Jesus Storybook Bible:* “The Friend of Little Children”, p.256-263  *Favorite Parables:* “The Good Stranger” p.162-187 | Matthew 18:1-5; 19:13-15; Mark 19:13-16; Luke 18:15-17  Luke 10:29-37 |
| discuss/ ask | List some people that you think of as important. What makes them important?  Who does Jesus say is important in his kingdom? Why? Are they different from the people on your list?  What are you good at doing? What makes you special? Do you think you would be just as special if you weren’t as good at doing that? Why or why not? Have you ever been made to feel like you aren’t important? Tell the story.  What does Jesus say you need to do in order to be special or loved by him? Why does Jesus say that children are important – what can children do that grown-ups have trouble doing?  (Question for grown up): What is one thing you’ve learned from a child?  Do you believe that Jesus loves you just as you are, without you having to do anything? Why or why not?  If you had been one of the children with Jesus, what would you have wanted to do with him or tell him? | |
| do together | Think about people who are often unseen or unappreciated, who aren’t “important” in the eyes of the world (such as grocery store workers, restaurant servers, people who pick up your trash or deliver your mail, people in a nursing home). Think of something nice you can do for one of those people, to show that they are important and loved and special. Do it together. Remember, by welcoming little children and the unseen and marginalized in Jesus’ name, you are welcoming Jesus. | |