

Mark 10:13-16

A PLAN FOR FOLLOWING

¹³ People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

In golf it is a rule that you "play it where it lies." Of course the "it" in that statement is the golf ball, but the saying is often quoted when one speaks of having to deal with the challenges that life throws up at us. We can have all sorts of contingency plans and develop any number of coping skills, yet our experience is that we cannot anticipate every situation we will face.

One trait that differentiates a mature individual from one who is immature, or an adult from a child, is that of thinking ahead. Adults talk about rules of engagement, social cues, etiquette and preparedness. In contrast, children seem to be content to live for the moment and almost appear to "make it up" as they go along. The playground is a great place to witness true childhood attitudes in this regard. In the absence of adult "guidance," children's games are characterized by the wonderful chaos of rule-making and rule-breaking. There is no over riding agenda, the objective is to play.

It is with the same lack of personal, pre-formed agenda that children manifest in their approach to life. Jesus favorably compared their approach to him to the agenda-laden approach of the disciples. He instructs us that we are to have an agenda-free approach to God if we want to come into the kingdom. We must absolutely trust God and come to him on his terms and not according to our well thought out protocols.

Save me Lord from the danger of basing my relationship with you on how well you fit into my expectations and agenda. Help me to trust you for who you have revealed yourself to be, and to look to the kingdom that is your kingdom and not the construct of my desire-fed imagination. Amen.