

**J.R. Miller:**

"He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, He said to them, "Whoever welcomes one of these little children in My name welcomes Me" Mark 9:36-37

This saying of Christ is rich enough to be studied long and deeply. To receive a child in a certain way "is to receive Christ Himself. How must a child be received? "In Christ's name" that is, out of love to Him, for His sake, just as we would receive Christ Himself if He actually came in person. So it is not enough simply to love children, to care for orphans or those who are destitute. It must be for the sake of Christ that we do these things. Thus in every child do we see Christ stand before us, and we may have the honor of receiving Him.

The Christmas legends are full of illustrations of this truth. One of the most beautiful of these tells how on a Christmas eve a poor man, coming homeward through the forest, heard a cry, and found a little child, cold and hungry. The good man stopped and sought the little one, and took him with him to his house. His children gladly welcomed the stranger, and shared their evening meal with him. Then, while he sat there at the table, suddenly a change came over the child's appearance, and lo! it was the Christ-child whom unconsciously the family had received in this needy, suffering little one.

Christ is ever coming to our doors "in the person of some poor or suffering one; and the reception we give to the one He sends we give to Him. This ought to make us careful how we treat those who need sympathy or help lest we slam the door in the face of Jesus!

These words of Christ have their precious suggestion for parents. The child that comes to them comes in Christ's name, comes in His stead. It brings blessings to them and to their home "if they receive it in the right way. But they must receive it in Christ's name, with love, with thankfulness, with reverence. Suppose they do not receive it with welcome, as from God; it is as if they rejected Christ Himself.