Section I
Language of the Text

Write an essay response to the following exegetical question. This response must focus on the biblical text. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section I.

First Required Response

In your study of this passage, you find two different translations of the phrase ἵνα αὐτῶν ἅψηται (Mark 10:13):

“so that he would bless them” (CEB)

“in order that he might touch them” (NRSV)

Parse, define, and identify the root of ἅψηται.

List and discuss the use of this root in three other passages from the gospel of Mark.

Choose one of the translations from above, or supply one of your own, for the phrase ἵνα αὐτῶν ἅψηται. Justify your choice of translation.

Explain how your discussion and choice of translation inform your understanding of Mark 10:13-27. Limit your response to 600 words.
The Greek word *hapsetai* comes from the root word *haptow*. The most common meaning of the root, and the one which Mark uses most, is "to make close contact" (Danker, *BDAG*, 126). The word *hapsetai* in the context of Mark 10:13 is a verb in the first aorist tense, middle voice, subjunctive mood, in the 3rd person singular. In verse 13, the verb is referring to an action that the identified subject, Jesus, might do. The "might" wording comes from the verb's subjunctive mood.

The BDAG lists the use of *hapsetai* in Mark 10:13 under the following definition: "to make close contact, frequently of touching as a means of conveying a blessing (divine working by a touch of the hand...)" (Danker, *BDAG*, 126). The root, *haptow*, is used nine other times within Mark's Gospel. In each case Jesus is the healer and excepting 10:13, healing is occurring because of the contact made. Looking at Mark 1:41, we see Jesus' interactions with a leper who desires to be made clean. The root *haptow* is used here in the verb form *haypsato* which is a first aorist tense, middle voice, indicative mood, third person singular. This translates into a past tense action, in this case, Jesus "touched" the leper and the leper was healed. The BDAG places this use of the root under the definition "frequently of touching as means of convey a blessing (divine working by a touch of the hand)" and specifies "generally of touching persons who are ill" (Danker, *BDAG*, 126).

Mark 5:27 refers to the woman with a flow of blood touching Jesus' cloak. This form is the same as that in 1:41, that is, *haypsato*. Here, Jesus' clothes are touched by the woman. In the BDAG this use is listed under "frequently of touching as a means of touching up a blessing... of those who are ill, touching the healer" (Danker, *BDAG*, 126).

Mark 8:22 is identified by BDAG as using the root *haptomai* or *haptow* in the same way as 1:41, that is, for Jesus to heal through touching the man. Mark 8:22 is the same verb form, *hapsetai*, as is found in 10:13. Here, a blind man is brought to Jesus so that he might touch the man. Jesus does so, and the man sees clearly again.

Intriguingly, verse 10:13 is the only time the verb is used outside of the context of healing. It seems that "the belief was current in the cultural contexts of Mark that some quality of a charismatic person could be transferred by touch" (Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 471). It seems reasonable to say then that healing and blessing were seen in a similar lens, that of a "divine working by a touch of the hand" (Danker, *BDAG*, 126). Thus it seems that the NRSV translation intends to keep close to the initial meaning of the word "to touch" while the CEB takes into account the broader usage of the word in order to convey what it would mean for Jesus "to touch" the children - they would be "blessed." In an academic study, I would choose the NRSV for word accuracy. For the ministry context outlined, I would choose the CEB translation as it illumines a clearer cultural context likely behind the author's writing, and would be easier for today's hearers to understand.

If Jesus' touching the children blesses them, then children are to be blessed and welcomed into the kingdom as Jesus suggests. Here, Jesus invites children, offering them the same opportunity as an adult would have, to be a part of the kingdom, suggesting they will inherit the kingdom. They are an example for adults to imitate, and are not to be ignored or sent away.

**Reader Responses**

The essay correctly parses and defines the Greek *hapsetai*. Three additional uses of the root word in Mark's gospel are identified and their meanings in their particular contexts are discussed. The justification is clear for choosing one translation (NRSV) for its closeness to the meaning of the Greek and another (CEB) for use in the particular scenario from the examination. These findings are used in explaining an understanding of Mark 10:13-27.

This response gives a complete and concise explanation of the significance of the Greek word choices, including the parsing and definitions, in the Mark 10:13-27 passage as well as in three other passages from Mark's gospel.

The response differentiates between a translation for academic study (NRSV) and one for ministry (CEB) with a clear explanation of the two options.

This response is well supported by citations of scholarly research.

The final discussion of the interpretation of the Mark 10:13-27 passage is clearly based on the understanding of how the Greek translation influences the understanding of the intent of the scripture.
Section I
Language of the Text

Write an essay response to the following exegetical question. This response must focus on the biblical text. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section I.

Second Required Response

Describe how Mark 10:13-27 characterizes those who may enter, receive, or belong to ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. Choose four texts from the Gospel of Mark (outside of Mark 10) that refer to ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ and discuss how these texts characterize ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. Explain how your findings inform your interpretation of Mark 10:13-27. Limit your response to 600 words.

Answer

Mark 10:13-27 characterizes those who may enter, receive, or belong to ῥαυ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ as those who "receive the kingdom of God as a little child" (Mark 10:15). In the context of first century CE Palestine, this alludes to the dependence of a little child on their father for life. The saying "must, therefore, refer to the radical dependence of the child on the father for any status, inheritance, or, in families where children might be abandoned, for life itself. It warns the disciples that they are radically dependent upon God's grace--they cannot set the conditions for entering the kingdom" (New Interpreter's Bible, 647). A child has no right to the status, inheritance, or life that the father may provide. It is only through the graciousness of the family's provisions for the child that the child survives. As "children have no accomplishments with which to earn God's favor, no status that makes them worthy," so too the same is said then about those who may enter, receive, or belong to ῥαυ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ.

The first instance in which the phrase ῥαυ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ is used in Mark is in Mark 1:15 where Jesus declares that "the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:15). This text, referring to the kingdom of God, refers to the nearness of the kingdom, and comes on the heels of Jesus' baptism, temptation, and John the Baptist's arrest, just as Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee. John the Baptist predicted Jesus' coming, and "the time is fulfilled" (v. 15a) indicates that Jesus' ministry will bring about the age of salvation anticipated by this prediction (New Interpreter's Bible, 536). ῥαυ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ is brought near by the arrival of Jesus, God's son.

It also appears that there is mystery surrounding the kingdom of God. In Mark 4:11, Jesus says that the mystery or secret of ταῖς βασιλείαις τοῦ Θεοῦ has been given to his disciples through parables (Mark 4:10-11). This mystery, time and time again, is taught by Jesus through various parables, and in fact "Jesus constantly shows himself willing to teach both the crowds and the disciples" (New Interpreter's Bible, 572). Though the parables are taught openly, and access to the kingdom is for those who understand, there is an acknowledgement in verse 12 of some who have hearts that are hardened, unable or unwilling to comprehend the teachings of Jesus regarding the kingdom.

In 4:26 and in 4:30 there is elaboration on ῥαυ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ in the form of two parables about seeds. In one the seed is scattered and grows on its own to be quickly harvested (4:26-29) and the other, a mustard seed, humble in its tiny beginnings yet full and large, providing shelter for the birds of the air, when grown (4:30-32). In 4:26, the sower scatters the seed, leaving it to grow on its own. It is possible that "the passivity of the sower" is a "comment on the certainty of growth" regarding the seed (New Interpreter's Bible, 576). In this case, the seed is the kingdom, sown with God's certainty that it will most certainly grow. Mark 4:30-32 speaks in regards to "the beginning, growth, [and] potency of the divine kingdom" (Strong's 932). The kingdom begins small, yet as it grows has the potency to be home for all who seek refuge in its metaphorical branches.

Ῥαυ βασιλεία του Θεου, the kingdom of God, is at hand with the beginning of Jesus' ministry. The invitation and provision of the kingdom is available through Christ, but only to those who hear and receive the kingdom through God's grace, laying down their own worldly authority and wealth.

Reader Responses
The essay describes characteristics of those who may enter the Kingdom of God, as given in Mark 10:13-27. In addition, four other references to the Kingdom in Mark's gospel are identified and discussed. Each of these is shown to add insight into the interpretation of the Kingdom of God emphasis in the Mark 10 passage.

This response clearly describes how one must become like a child to enter hayat basileia tou Theou. This part of the response would have been strengthened if it had included the other characteristics described in the later verses of the Mark 10:13-27 passage.

The response gives an in-depth description of hayat basileia tou Theou as it is used in other chapters of Mark's gospel, noting that both that the kingdom is near as Jesus begins his ministry and that it is only through God's grace, not through one's worldly wealth and status that one can enter the kingdom.

This response makes use of scholarly research from the New Interpreter's Bible.

The response shows a connection between the gospel of Mark as a whole and the targeted passage.

Section I
Historical Situation

Write an essay response to the following exegetical question. This response must focus on the biblical text. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section I.

Third Required Response

Describe the social and economic status of children in Palestine during the first century CE. Explain how your findings inform your understanding of Mark 10:13-27. Limit your response to 600 words.

Answer

While today we often view children as innocent and pure, this idea cannot and should not be transferred back to the first century CE in Palestine. Children had little, if any, social or economic status. While children were an expected product of marital unions, with Scripture even making provisions should a man die before producing and heir with his wife, children were not at all revered in society (See Deuteronomy 25:5). The lives, well-being, and importance of the lives of children resided purely with their parents. "The child in antiquity was radically dependent upon the pater familias" (New Interpreter's Bible, 647). Children in the time of Mark were dependent upon their father's family for everything. Parents had the power of life and death over their children. In a time where male children were preferred, a daughter would be even more utterly dependent upon the father for everything. Craig Evans points out that there was a pagan practice in place at the time which states "'If you bear a child: if it is a boy, keep it; if it is a girl, throw it out' (cf. P. Oxy. 744.8-10)" (Word Biblical Commentary, 94). Though this was not a Jewish practice, it was practiced in the first century CE. Indeed, children did not hold social or economic status of any kind.

It makes sense then that the disciples did not wish for Jesus to be bothered by children. Their reluctance indicates "the relatively low status of children in the ancient world in comparison with adults" (Collins, Mark: A Commentary, 472). Yet Jesus welcomes them, and lifts up the children, who hold no social status. The "radical dependence of the child on the father for any status, inheritance, or, in families where children might be abandoned, for life itself" then is the backdrop with which Mark 10:13-27 might be viewed (New Interpreter's Bible, 647). Jesus tells the disciples to let them come to him, and that one must receive the kingdom as a child (Mark 10:14-15). God's kingdom thus exists for those without preexisting attachment to social or economic status. One commentary suggests that because there is potential conflict between the assumed authority of adults and God's authority, "the person who wishes to receive the kingdom must receive it 'as a child does,' that is, without presumptions of self-importance and self-empowerment" (Word Biblical Commentary, 94). In the kingdom of God, God rules, and it is only because of God's grace that adults can receive this kingdom.
This focus on accepting the kingdom as a child seems to point back to the "child's lack of social status and legal rights" (Donahue, *The Gospel of Mark*, 301). As human beings, the idea that we can do something to earn or to bring about the kingdom does not fit Jesus' narrative. "No human can bring it about or put a claim on it. It is God's kingdom. Only those who recognize it as such can enter the kingdom" (Donahue, *The Gospel of Mark*, 301). Human authority is not over the kingdom in any way; as God's kingdom, humanity is only welcome through the gracious choice of the Parent God who, as the fathers in first century CE, has the power to give or take away every thing that a human might have. Thus, as Jesus converses with the rich man about what must be done to inherit eternal life, Jesus invites the man to give up the very things which provide any sort of status in first century CE Palestine: his accumulated wealth (Mark 10:21-22). He leaves sorrowfully; without giving up his own worldly status and authority he cannot accept the grace which God is giving him.

**Reader Responses**

The essay describes nicely the status and role of children in first-century CE Palestine. Citations to scholarly resources are given in the discussion, which explains well how these findings inform an understanding of Mark 10:13-27.

This response very coherently explains the lack of social or economic status of children in the first century CE and why Jesus would use the children as symbols of who will enter God's kingdom.

The response demonstrates understanding of the whole of Mark 10:13-27 as it contrasts the worldly status of the young man whose riches keep him from accepting Jesus' offer to become a disciple, with the utter lack of status of the children who will easily enter the kingdom of God.

This response makes excellent use of a variety of scholarly resources.

**Section I**

**Scriptural and Theological Context**

Write an essay response to the following exegetical question. This response must focus on the biblical text. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section I.

**Fourth Required Response**

In his response to the man who asks what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus lists several of the Ten Commandments (Mark 10:19). Compare and contrast this list with the commandments as they are found in Exodus 20:2-17. Explain how your findings inform your understanding of Mark 10:13-27. Limit your response to 600 words.

**Answer**

In his response to the man who asks what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus lists several of the Ten Commandments, specifically those concerned with relationships among human beings. Four of the commandments quoted are close in wording to the Septuagint or LXX. The fourth, 'you shall not bear false witness,' is an abbreviated allusion to Exod 20:16/Deut 5:20, omitting 'against your neighbor'" (Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 478). While the wording is close to that of the LXX, the order is that of the Hebrew Scriptures. "In the Hebrew texts, the commandment not to commit adultery follows immediately on the commandment not to murder. In the LXX, the commandment concerning adultery precedes that concerning murder" (Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 478). The choice of order may suggest that while familiar with the Hebrew Scripture, when writing the teachings of Jesus down, the author may have referred to a Greek manuscript.

The fifth commandment which Jesus cites is "you shall not defraud." This commandment is not found in Exodus 20:2-17. There is not a consensus among scholars as to why the fifth commandment Jesus gives is a substituted commandment. This commandment replaces the command "do not covet" in Exodus. Collins suggests that it may
"be a very concise summary of Lev 6:1-7 (5:20-26 LXX) which concerns defrauding a neighbor" or even sourced from Malachi 3:5 (LXX) as it relates to "two of the Ten Commandments (adultery, false witness) and also the deeds of economic injustice" (Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 478). Another commentary recommends that "defraudings--or perhaps 'depriving' someone of property--might be regarded as a specific example of covetousness, and a temptation to which the wealthy were especially prone" (Hooker, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, 241). Collins also suggests that the "defraud" commandment is possibly connected to the sixth commandment Jesus cites.

In both the Hebrew Scriptures and the LXX, the commandment to honor parents comes before the other commandments that Jesus cites, yet is the sixth commandment cited in the Markan text. "Honor your father and mother," is "an abbreviated allusion to Exod 20:12/Deut 5:16" with "the wording of the Markan text [agreeing] exactly with the first part of Exod 20:12 LXX" (Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 479). Collins suggests that "the placement of the commandment to honor father and mother immediately after the command not to defraud evokes in the Markan audience the memory of the saying of Jesus regarding the circumvention of the former by the korban-vow. Such defrauding of one's parents may also have been viewed as a temptation especially for the wealthy" (Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 479). This reference points back to Mark 7:9-13. Another commentary suggests that "the appearance of the command to honor one's parents at the end of the list may have been due to the fact that it is the first commandment to promise long life and so ends on the note with which the man's question began" (Evans, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 96). As the man has asked specifically for that which is mentioned in the Exodus version of the commandment, this explanation seems possible.

The man has kept these commands, defrauding neither parents or neighbors. Jesus responds by loving the man, invites him to give his wealth away to the poor and follow Jesus. The man's sorrow at giving away his wealth demonstrates the difficulty of being both in the world and in the kingdom, illuminating Jesus' words to the disciples regarding how difficult it is for the rich to enter the kingdom. Kingdom society is structured not based on wealth accumulated, but on caring for those without social status and obeying God's reign, serving each other rather than ruling.

**Reader Responses**

The essay presents and gives background on the commandments in the Decalogue (Exodus 20), then points out the ones from that list which are quoted by Jesus in his interaction with the man seeking how to inherit eternal life. The discussion explains how these findings inform an interpretation of Mark 10:13-27. The response could have been made even stronger by having fuller discussion of how the commandments quoted by Jesus are specifically applicable to the situation of the man with the implication of how love of possessions displaces love of God (as called for in the "unspoken" first table of the Law).

This response is well supported by scholarly research and compares and contrasts the Ten Commandments in Mark with those of Exodus in great detail. The response then uses those findings to discuss how the Mark 10:13-27 passage illustrates the uselessness of worldly riches and status in obtaining entrance to God's kingdom.

**Section II**

**Careful and Critical Interpretation**

Write an essay presenting your interpretation of Mark 10:13-27 based on your full exegetical study of the passage (not just material presented in Section I). Support your interpretation by a careful and critical analysis of the text that reflects the use of scholarly resources. *Limit your essay to 1,200 words.*

This essay must *focus on the biblical text* and provide a basis for your application in Section III: Application. Discussion of the ministry context is not expected in Section II.

**Answer**

The book of Mark is a narrative, providing the continuous story of Jesus' ministry, beginning with his baptism and ending with his resurrection. "The narrator's point of view in telling the story is consistent throughout. The plot is coherent: events that are anticipated come to pass; conflicts are resolved; predictions are fulfilled. The characters
are consistent from one scene to the next, fulfilling the roles they take on and the tasks they adopt" (Rhoads, Mark as Story, 3). Mark is written in such a way that the story is continuous, easy to hear spoken, easy to remember with word play and events occurring which group together the teaching of Christ, such as our passage at hand. For further study, I highly commend David Rhoads and Donald Michie's book, Mark as Story, which outlines these characteristics and provides incredible insight into the structure of Mark's narrative Gospel.

In keeping with grouping events to reinforce teaching, two events, children being brought to Jesus, and a man who wishes to inherit eternal life, are paired together. Mark 10:13-27 outlines the social structure of the kingdom of God, and what may be required for entrance into the kingdom. Starting with the inclusion of the lowest members of society, children, Jesus lifts them up as an example of who will enter the kingdom, and as an example of how all must respond to God in order to enter the kingdom. The rich man who asks about inheriting eternal life presumes that obeying the Commandments may not be enough, and thus asks Jesus what else must be done to ensure entrance. After naming six commandments which outline the treatment of those around him, Jesus invites the man to give away everything to the poor - his things, money, and even earthly status - and follow Jesus. The man, saddened, leaves. The theme of entering the kingdom, present through the entire passage, is emphasized when Jesus turns to the disciples to discuss how difficult it will be for the rich to enter the kingdom. Their riches, social status, and worldly authority stand in the way of their acceptance of God's kingdom on God's terms. But to those who are willing to lay down their worldly wealth and social status to follow Jesus and serve others, the kingdom is easily opened.

Many scholars break Mark 10:13-27 into three movements, though some separate the section into two separate events. In any event, the first section is agreed to be verses 13-16. This section contains Jesus and the disciples' encounter with those who are bringing the children so that Jesus might touch, or bless, them. "This episode begins with the disciples’ attempting to enforce the social mores. Children should not be allowed to disturb the teacher and his students (10:13)” (New Interpreter's Bible, 647). The disciples respond to the presence of the children by speaking sternly, or rebuking, them. Who "them" is is not explained. It is possible that this refers to the children, or to those that were bringing the children to be blessed by the rabbi. Jesus, indignant at their response, proceeds to welcome the children, saying that the kingdom is theirs. "Once again, this behavior shows that the disciples do not understand the point of Jesus' ministry, which is inclusive, not exclusive" (New Interpreter's Bible, 647). Both the children and those bringing the children to be blessed would hear Jesus' message, and this was of great importance to Jesus. No one, not even children, who held no social or economic status beyond what was gifted from their father's homes, are to be excluded from the kingdom. In fact, Jesus even says that “it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs” (Mark 10:14). Children, who had no social status, no wealth of their own, and no authority are held up as an example of those who are much more likely to enter the kingdom. Jesus takes the children in his arms, and blesses them. Adela Yarbro Collins points out that "Jesus' indignation and his statement that 'the kingdom of God belongs to such as these' indicate not only that children are included in the kingdom of God but also that they represent the type of person who is especially associated with the kingdom of God (cf. Mark 9:33-37)” and further connects this perspective with that of the beatitudes present in Luke 6:20-21 and Matthew 5:5 (Collins, Mark: A Commentary, 472). The kingdom belongs to those who "give up the normal human calculations of greatness" in order "to participate in the rule of God" (New Interpreter's Bible, 647).

The lowly status of the children, and what follows with the rich man suggests that those without worldly wealth or status stand ready to accept God's reign and authority, while those who judge greatness by human standards will never reach the kingdom. The rich man, who desires to inherit eternal life, has done all that the law has commanded, at least, the commandments Jesus has listed regarding human relationships. When Jesus loves him, and invites him to leave his earthly wealth for the poor and follow him, the man is sad. For the kingdom, “a disciple cannot be a rich person with all the accompanying complex socioeconomic ties and relationships” (New Interpreter's Bible, 648). This man, though prepared in all other ways to accept the inheritance of eternal life, is not prepared to cut those ties and relationships. This contrasts with the scene directly before, in which children, who do not have these ties, are held up as an example of how one must become in order to receive the kingdom. None of the earthly accumulations of this man can provide him with the inheritance he seeks; he must become like a child, vulnerable, accepting the grace of God as the source of the worth of all humanity, including himself.

The man is not the only person in the story whose understanding of wealth is being reoriented. The disciples are learning to reorient their understanding as well. This reorientation is radical, as there was "a common cultural assumption rooted in scripture, that wealth is a blessing given by God, even a reward for obedience to God's commandments" (Collins, Mark: A Commentary, 480). Here Collins is referring to Deuteronomy 28:1-14, particularly 11 and 12 in which worldly goods such as livestock are promised to be multiplied when obedient to God. Upon his saddened departure, Jesus turns to share with the disciples that it will be difficult for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom. Not just a little difficult, but immensely difficult. For those who rely on their earthly wealth and social status for their sense of worth and authority, entering the kingdom of God will be like a camel entering through a needle. The disciples are certain that no one can be saved then, if this is the case (v. 26). But Jesus responds that for God, all things are possible (v. 27). Trusting in God, relying on God for things that this world cannot provide, things that cannot be seen in this life, giving up the things in this world that provide one with worth according to humans, can provide one with unfathomable worth and wealth in the kingdom of God. Becoming less in the world now, shrinks the proverbial camel so that it is merely thread.

**Reader Responses**
The essay demonstrates a thorough exegetical study of Mark 10:13-27. The discussion is supported by a solid, careful, and critical analysis of the text. The use of scholarly resources is evident.

This essay does an excellent job of using critical thinking and a variety of scholarly resources to analyze the Mark 10:13-17 text. The response is well structured with each paragraph building on the insights of the one before it.

The essay's analysis of the narrative structure of the gospel of Mark, combined with knowledge of the historical and cultural context of first century CE Palestine, helps illuminate the understandings that the writer of Mark was presenting about the nature of God's kingdom and the characteristics of those who would enter it.

Section III
Application

Provide an outline or summary of themes for your sermon that addresses the required ministry context. Your work must be based on your careful and critical interpretation of the biblical text presented in Section II. Limit your work to 600 words.

Your response to Section III must address the ministry context.

Answer

Radical Reorientation: Sermon Outline for the 125th anniversary of That Children's Home.

Scripture: Mark 10:13-27

I. Introduction: I am the rich man.
A. My household is rich in clothing. Each of us could likely go a month without repeating any of our outward clothing, and leave several items untouched.
B. I have a job, which, in addition to paying me, comes with a required sabbatical, or time of rest, so that I might retain my health and well-being.
C. I have money in a savings account. I have extra money in case of an emergency.
D. I have a home, which comfortably fits my family. And has nice comfortable places to sit, rest, and sleep.
E. To the world, I have control over my life. I am the rich man.

II. How am I the rich man?
A. A person doesn't need have to have all of the things I've mentioned above to "be the rich man"
1. Just one thing that gives us standing, makes us the rich man. That teddy bear you're grandma gave you gives you worth.
2. Just like the rich man's possessions told him he was of value on earth.
   i. (go into detail about rich man's attachment to wealth)
B. Yet, we are told that no, we are to come as children into the kingdom.
   1. (go into detail about the worth of a child in the time of Mark)
2. But children, having nothing that defines their social or economic worth, are the very example Jesus gives for who the kingdom belongs to.

III. The Scripture outlines the social structure of the kingdom. (explain)
A. It goes to those who have no wealth in the world.
   1. Again, children had no worth.
   2. And the rich man did everything that Jesus had suggested.
      i. Except one thing. His wealth gave him power. Give it all away. Trust in God.
      ii. And how difficult it will be for the rich to enter the kingdom!

IV. The rich man is disappointed. Jesus' suggestion is a radical reorientation.
A. For the disciples too! (detail about wealth as blessing from God)
B. We are the rich man. 125 years ago, our congregation sought to include children in the kingdom. We had this thing figured out!
C. But now, that has changed.
1. We are not in charge. We no longer possess this place.
2. This leaves us vulnerable - we no longer have control. We can no longer decide how these children encounter God.
   i. "For Jesus, it is God, not human beings, who is in control, even in matters that seem to center on human choices and decisions" (Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, 481).
B. We can still support the children with prayer, and in discerning how and if we might partner with each other to care for the children as we can.
1. We no longer have control, but if God is in control, the kids are going to be alright with these caring, talented people caring for them.

V. Conclude: God's got this.
A. This change means a radical reorientation for our congregation.
1. What are we going to do?
B. Reorientation of the situation
   1. How might we reorient our understanding of this loss?
   2. What new opportunities for connection might grow as we let go of control?
C. Maybe: Radical hospitality for 125 years for the kids = what about their origins?
   i. How can we aide in preventing their arrival at the center?
   ii. Parenting classes? After-school programs?
D. If we pause, and listen, God is inviting us to partner with God in exciting ministry. Where is God leading?
1. Doesn't mean we forget the kids. Does mean we change our vision.

Reader Responses

The outline summarizes themes to be used in a sermon for a particular congregation on a special anniversary of its connection to a local children's home. The outline addresses both the chosen text (Mark 10:13-27) and the ministry context (the children's home). It is grounded on solid exegetical work from the previous sections of the examination, and the use of multiple scholarly resources is evident.

This response provides a well developed outline summarizing the themes of the sermon to be presented. The tone is sensitive to the sense of loss felt by members of the congregation as well as hopefully anticipating God's leading in a new way of discipleship.

In addition the outline clearly shows evidence of the sound exegesis of Mark 10:13-27 that was done in Sections I and II.

This response could have been strengthened by more directly addressing the last part of the Ministry Context regarding the celebration of 125 years of ministry to the children's home and acknowledgement of the staff, board members and residents of the home who are going to be in attendance at the service.

Section III

Works Consulted

In the text box below, please provide a bibliographical listing of all research materials consulted during the preparation of your exam responses.

Answer


**Reader Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The bibliography is in proper form and reveals use of original-language (Greek) grammar tools and up-to-date scholarly resources.</th>
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<th>This response gives evidence of a diverse list of scholars who are writing at the end of the 20th and early 21st century CE.</th>
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**Overall Evaluation**

**Final Evaluation and Notes to Presbytery**

Please include here your comments in support of the overall evaluation of the examination along with any notes for the presbytery committee/commission overseeing the examinee's preparation for ministry.

**Reader Responses**

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<th>The responses to the various sections of the examination indicate a good ability to perform exegetical study of New Testament texts. Use of scholarly resources is good and the writing is clear and concise. These skills should serve well in the ongoing life of ministry in service to Christ's church.</th>
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This exam is a well-constructed and insightful exegesis of Mark 10:13-27. The writing is clear and concise; the discussion of the original Greek is extensive and is carefully used to explain the deeper meanings of the two stories included in this text. In addition, the discussion of the historical status of children and the comparison of the two versions of the Ten Commandments, helps to develop one's understanding of the kingdom of God and the characteristics of those who will enter it.

Both the essay in Section II and the sermon outline in Section III, show evidence of careful, critical thinking informed by research from respected scholars. The Works Cited section gives evidence of reliance on a diverse group of writers and relatively current research.

The sermon outline is well organized and gives evidence of a willingness to share insights from the study of the Mark 10:13-27 passage as well as pastoral sensitivity to the loss of a long-term mission and perhaps fear of change.