

Leading Children into the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

One of the most challenging areas of ministry for many children's ministry leaders is in the area of leading children into receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. I often hear children's pastors and children's ministry volunteers tell that this arena of ministry seems confusing and frightening. They are intimidated to even broach this subject. Consequently, many children are only given an opportunity to receive the promise of the Father in a camp setting or a retreat.

Allow me to let you in on a "secret". To me, this is the EASIEST ministry subject. In fact, there have been numerous times when lead pastors have told me that they can see my ease as I preach on the infilling of the Holy Spirit and provide the opportunity for people to receive this gift. It is almost humorous to see the "light" come on in their understanding as I explain that the reason there is such ease is due to the fact that there is no pressure on me to produce anything. All that I do is to present a clear, simple Biblical teaching and then provide the Father the opportunity to deliver on His promise.



Are you ready to see how easy this is? Let's get started

Help #1: Utilize the McDonald's Happy Meal Principle.

For those of us with children, we know that food inside of the McDonald's Happy Meal bag is the very same food that we adults are eating. The only difference is in the fact that the Happy Meal is just served in smaller portions. In order to prepare a Happy Meal hamburger, McDonald's didn't find miniature cows so that they could produce smaller meat patties. The meat in the Happy Meal hamburger is the very same beef used for the quarter pounder hamburgers, right? But, for the Happy Meal, McDonald's has reduced the portion of beef served. The Happy Meal french fries didn't come from midget potatoes, did they? Of course not. The french fries served in the Happy Meal are the very same french fries served with the adult meals. But, for the Happy Meal, McDonald's has provided a kid-sized portion of fries.

Let me appeal to your logic. Wouldn't it be insane to try to serve a 7-year-old child a double quarter pounder hamburger with a large order of french fries and an extra large soft drink? Even more insane, wouldn't it be incomprehensible to expect the child to eat that meal all in one setting? And yet, in ministering on the subject of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, we fail to see that we can overwhelm the children if we serve them an adult-sized spiritual meal in one service.

This teaching is so very, very important that we can't afford to cause their brains to go tilt, tilt, tilt by supersizing the ministry portions. Instead, we must serve this spiritual meal in kid-sized portions. Take what most adults could consume in one setting and serve this message in several class settings. The first week, teach the children on Jesus' introduction of the Holy Spirit. (John 14). The next week, teach on why Jesus knew that His return to Heaven was important. (John 16:7). The next week, teach on what happens when we receive the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2). The final week, teach about the importance of allowing the Holy Spirit to work within us daily. (Jude 20).

Remember. Use wisdom. Don't super-size the ministry portions. Utilize the McDonald's Happy Meal Principle (King James - line upon line principle). In doing so, you will see child after child receive this awesome gift from Heaven.

Help #2: It's Not Rocket Science ... So Make It Simple.

Believe it or not, one of the greatest challenges of children's ministry is in remembering that we are ministering to CHILDREN ... hence the name "children's ministry". While the obvious should be obvious, obviously it isn't! It is amazing to watch people try to minister to children and see that the children really don't have a clue as to what it being taught.

Since the majority if not all of the children in our ministries would echo the words found in Acts 19 "We didn't even know that there is a Holy Spirit", let me briefly share the three keys to make this message of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit come alive for your children.

1. Be Visual. It is amazing how a just few props can exponentially multiply the comprehension level. Use barbells to illustrate how the Holy Spirit builds us (Jude 20), batteries and a flashlight to illustrate how the Holy Spirit gives us power (Acts 1:8), a GPS or the navigational system on your cell phone to illustrate how the Holy Spirit can see things ahead of us that we can't see (John 16:13), a rubber chicken to show how the Holy Spirit has been sent to take the "chicken" out of you, a Swiss army pocket knife to illustrate how the Holy Spirit is *what* is needed *when* it is needed, etc.

2. Be Relevant. Be sure to use humorous or dramatic personal stories to accompany the Bible stories. Personal stories amplify the biblical truth and makes it an up-to-date truth. The stories could include events from your childhood or in your family's life, etc. I love to tell of the time while Vickie and I were on our way to Africa and had a layover in Amsterdam. (Forgive me for giving a brief man's version of the story. In our *Ignite Conferences* and in children's church settings I use the Amplified Version, aka women's version, to tell the full, unedited story.) On this trip, we were carrying quite a sizeable sum of money to give to our missionaries. Upon not being able to sleep, we decided to take a late night walk through this beautiful city. Before leaving the hotel room to go take a late night walk, Vickie felt prompted to tell me to leave this money in the room. While we were walking, a robber jumped out of the darkness and tried to rob us. Had Vickie not heard the Holy Spirit, we would have lost all of the money. (Illustrating John 16:13).

3. Be Memorable. Be creative. Use characters whose elevator doesn't make it to the top floor (I R Smart, Not Too Bright, Brain Freeze, Tool Time Tim) or characters who are there to rescue you or help you (a Personal Trainer, Scripture Man, Bible Blaster, Chef Pierre').

Help #3: Prepare for the Receiving.

In the final session, we know that it is important to share a truth that makes a difference for the altar ministry. Invariably, we use a segment called "Here's What You Can Expect" utilizing a bowling ball, chair, balloon, and Bible. In this object lesson, we have a child to help illustrate this point. To each of the following three scenarios, we asked the child the question, "what would you expect?" We tell the child that we will drop a bowling ball on their toes. Next, we tell the child to stand on a chair and drop backwards. We tell the child that we would not be there to catch them. Lastly, we tell the child that we would want them to inflate a balloon and then stick their head up into the balloon. These are all silly things that we would never, ever do. But, let's examine these three scenarios. After giving each of these scenarios, the child is to tell us what they know will happen to them after doing the event. It is a great, fun object lesson because the child would be confident of the sure consequences of each action. It is literally a no-brainer!



In the object lesson, we utilize a short video clip showing what happened in Acts 2:1-4 in the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit. (This is taken from the DVD - *The Visual Bible - Acts* available from amazon.com for \$12.95.) After the clip, we then focus upon what happened in Acts 2:4 in the upper room. This passage is the first of many accounts in the Book of Acts showing that when people were filled with the Holy Spirit, they immediately began to speak in a heavenly prayer language. From seeing these accounts, it is easy to know what to expect. Just like the illustrations in the object lesson with the child, this becomes a no-brainer in us knowing what to expect when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Help #4: Get Ready, Get Set GO.

I've prepared the way through the teaching. I've prepared the way for the expectation. Now, I'm excited to prepare the way for the children to receive this gift from above. Invariably, I will read (show a slide of) Luke 11:13 which tells that the children are about to receive a gift from heaven given to EVERYONE who asks. What does the word "every" mean? Yep. I begin to point to each and every child. Explain that in just a few minutes, you will lead EVERY boy and girl in a prayer. EVERY boy and girl will repeat out loud this prayer after you. Now according to this verse in Luke, EVERY boy and girl who asks will receive this gift from our Father. That means that upon completing this prayer, EVERY boy and girl should stop praying in the language that they understand

and open their mouth and begin to use their voice to speak OUT LOUD the words that the Holy Spirit gives. Why? Because the Bible shows us to expect this to happen.

Here is a cool illustration to use before you pray. Using a water faucet (it would be great to have an actual water facet valve with you) share that you began this day by taking a shower. But, in getting in the shower no water came out of the shower head UNTIL you took some action. We all know that water is in the water line waiting for the faucet to be turned. This is true about receiving this GIFT from heaven. Upon asking (that's what Luke 11:13 tells us to do), we can EXPECT/KNOW that God has answered our prayer. But, it is only as we open our mouth and begin to use our voice will cause the words from heaven to rise up from our spirit.



Note that after praying the prayer that the children repeat after you, you should set the example by boldly praying out loud in your heavenly prayer language. Leading by example gives the children an assurance that the language that they have isn't spooky or weird. Also, it is an awesome idea to have the children's peers praying around them. This encourages the child as they hear their peer's voices praying in a heavenly language. This is also an excellent tool for developing altar workers.

Help #5: Don't Check Your Brain in at the Door.

Over the years, I have witnessed some really unbelievable things happen during these altar times. Let's use a little brain power. Here are some things to not do:

1. PLEASE don't tell the child the words to say. I have witnessed well-intentioned people tell children to repeat after them words like these ... "who stola the keysa to my Honda", "tie a my tie, tie a my bowtie". Don't insult the Holy Spirit by creating a language that according to Acts 2:4 should come from Him. "... as the Spirit enabled them."
2. PLEASE don't frighten the children by being loud and boisterous. The Holy Spirit is a Person, not an emotion. You don't have to MAKE things happen by being all loud and emotional.
3. PLEASE don't create confusion. Don't beat them on the back and holler "hold on" while the person on the other side is saying "turn loose!"

A Final Thought

One more time. Is this difficult? No. Is this complicated? No. No. Is ministering on this subject pressureful? No. No. No. Again, to me this is the EASIEST message to preach because the Father is ANXIOUSLY awaiting the opportunity to GIVE this GIFT to EVERYONE who asks! God's Word tells us:

"Even though you are bad, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Luke 11:13 (New Century Version)

"... and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away. It is for everyone the Lord our God calls to himself." Acts 2:38-39 (New Century Version)

Now go and allow this to be the generation who knows and flows with the precious Holy Spirit.

© 2012 Billy Burns Ministries.
4658 Blue Pine Circle, Lake Worth, FL 33463
Reproduction of this teaching in any format is strictly forbidden
with the exception of usage within the local church for training purposes.

Web site: www.billyburns.com
Twitter: www.twitter.com/lamBillyBurns
Email: Billy@BillyBurns.com