

Leading Children into the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

One of the most challenging areas of ministry for many children's ministry leaders is leading children to receive Baptism in the Holy Spirit. I often hear children's pastors and ministry volunteers say that this arena of ministry seems confusing and frightening. They are intimidated even to broach this subject. Consequently, many children are only allowed 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. There have been numerous times when lead pastors have told me 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. There is such ease because there is no pressure on me to produce anything. All I do is present a clear, simple Biblical teaching and then allow the Father 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.

Those of us with children know that the food in the McDonald's Happy Meal box is the same food we adults eat. The only difference is that McDonald's serves the Happy Meal in smaller portions. McDonald's doesn't use beef from miniature cows to prepare smaller Happy Meal hamburger patties. The meat in the Happy Meal hamburger is the same beef used for the quarter-pounder hamburgers, right? However, for Happy Meal, McDonald's reduces the portion of beef served. The Happy Meal French fries don't come from midget potatoes, do they? Of course not. The fries served in the Happy Meal are the very same fries served with the adult meals. However, for Happy Meal, McDonald's provides a kid-size portion of fries.

Let me appeal to your logic. Wouldn't it be ridiculous 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? Yet, in ministering on 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 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. In the first week, teach the children about Jesus' introduction of the Holy Spirit. (John 14). The following week, teach why Jesus knew His return to heaven was important. (John 16:7). The following week, teach what happens when we receive the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2). In 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 incredible gift from heaven.

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

Believe it or not, one of the most significant challenges of children's ministry is 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 unbelievable to watch people try to minister to children and see that the children really don't know what is 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 incredible how just a few props can exponentially multiply comprehension. Use barbells to illustrate how the Holy Spirit builds us (Jude 20), batteries and a flashlight to demonstrate 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 is 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 required, etc.

2. Be Relevant. Be sure to use humorous or dramatic personal stories to accompany the Bible teaching. Personal stories amplify the biblical truth and make 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 about when Vickie and I were going to Africa and had a layover in Amsterdam. On this trip, we carried quite a sizeable sum of money to give our missionaries. After being unable to sleep in our hotel room, we decided to take a late-night walk through this beautiful city. Before leaving the room to 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. We would have lost all the money if Vickie had not heard the Holy Spirit. (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 sharing a truth that makes a difference for the altar ministry is essential. Invariably, we use a "Here's What You Can Expect" segment utilizing a bowling ball, chair, and Bible. In this object lesson, we have a child to help illustrate this point. For the following three scenarios, we ask the child, "What would you expect?" First, we tell the child we will drop a bowling ball on their toes. Next, we tell the child to stand on a chair and fall backwards. We say to the child that we would not be there to catch them. These are all silly things that we would never, ever do. But let's examine these 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 will be confident about the

consequences of each action. It is a no-brainer!

In the object lesson, we utilize a short video showing what happened in Acts 2:1-4 in the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit. (This is available on the YouTube video *The Visual Bible – The Book of Acts*.) After the clip, we focus on 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 are filled with the Holy Spirit, they immediately begin 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 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. 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 says 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 them in a prayer. EVERY boy and EVERY girl will repeat out loud this prayer after you. According to this verse in Luke, EVERY boy and EVERY girl who asks will receive this gift from our Father. That means that upon completing this prayer, EVERY boy and EVERY 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 how to expect this to happen.

Here is a superb illustration to use before you pray. Using a water faucet (it would be great to have an actual water faucet valve with you) share that you began this day by taking a shower. But when you got in the shower, no water came out of the shower head until you took some action. We all know that water is waiting 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 mouths and begin to use our voices that the words from heaven begin to rise from our spirit.

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

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

Over the years, I have witnessed some unbelievable things happen during these altar times. Let's use a little brain power. Here are some things not to 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 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 says "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 allow this to be the generation that knows and flows with the precious Holy Spirit.

© 2012 Billy Burns Ministries.

PO Box 6981, Lakeland, FL 33807

Reproducing this teaching in any format is strictly forbidden
except for usage within the local church for training purposes.

Website: www.billyburns.com

Email: billy@billyburns.com

Twitter: www.twitter.com/IamBillyBurns

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BillyBurnsMinistries