



The Holy Spirit and Children

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Thirty-some years ago as a twelve-year-old child, I was seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This burden had been planted in my heart by caring teachers and pastors as well as by the unction of the Holy Spirit. As I prayed alone at the altar, this wonderful experience blessed my life.

Later that same night, my younger sister and brother were filled as well. Today the three of us live for God, having never strayed from the faith.

Statistically, only one in three children continue to live for God without turning aside as teens. What made the difference in our lives? We belonged to a great church with great leadership, and we received the power of the Holy Spirit to help us against the pressures of the future.

First Line of Defense

The Holy Spirit is a free gift from God. It is a gift of power for everyone, young and old (Acts 2:39). This gift was of such significance that Jesus told His disciples to

“stay in the city until you have been clothed with power” (Luke 24:49). This gift improves one's ability to pray, praise, and comprehend God's Word.

The youth of the Church need every power and boldness available to them as early in their spiritual journey



as possible to fortify themselves against the pressures and temptations of life. The baptism of the Holy Spirit should be the Church's first line of defense, helping to guard against the large percentage of teens who turn away from Christ.

A Tool...

...For Praise

When the disciples received the Holy Spirit, they received the evidence of speaking in other tongues (Acts 2:4). This evidence of tongues not only served as a sign to show they had received God's gift, it also served as a tool of prayer and praise—enhancing both.

On the day of Pentecost, the crowds understood the disciples speaking words of praise to God in languages they had never learned. “We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues” (Acts 2:11). This prayer language enhances the ability of children to praise God. Children often run out of words to express their adoration to God. Speaking to God in their prayer language allows them to draw close to Him through this application of praise.

...For Prayer

A prayer language can also be used when praying to God. Paul says Christians

have a weakness. That weakness is not always knowing how to pray. The Holy Spirit will intercede for us and through us with words that we don't understand. He states, "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express" (Rom. 8:26).

This ability to pray in tongues is very comforting for children who often run out of words to say to God. As

speakers at children's camps for the past 20 years, Mary and I have seen thousands of children interceding before God, using their prayer languages. It is amazing to see the intimacy these children exhibit in the presence of God.

...For Power

As amazing as the evidence of speaking in tongues is, it is the minor part of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit is a gift of power for service.

Tongues is an evidence of

the gift being received and a tool to use to assist in communicating with God. The gift of the Holy Spirit provides miraculous power and boldness for Christians.

Children need this power and boldness. As they see God do miraculous things through their lives, their faith in Christ grows. As they boldly stretch forth their hands to pray and see God use them in miraculous healings, they cannot help but build a powerful faith in God. This gift increases the faith of children and helps them live for God forever.

Questions for Further Study—

1. What are some keys to keeping children from straying from faith as they grow older?

2. Discuss ways in which children can use the gift of the Holy Spirit to:
 - a) enhance their praise

 - b) improve their prayer

 - c) be filled with power