

Chapter 7

Children are People Too!

*“One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts.”
Psalm 145:4*

The Bible clearly states the importance of sharing God’s goodness with the younger generations. We must work with our children to teach them the ways of God. Ministering to a child who is under the age of 12 is only slightly different than ministering to an adult. The key difference centers on the reality that you are an adult and they are a child, and therefore may misunderstand what you are communicating.

When you minister to a child, do whatever you can do to get on their level physically. This will make them feel more comfortable with you because they won’t have someone towering over them. Do your best to keep them from being nervous. If they have had a negative experience with adults it could be transferred to you, and they may be apprehensive around you. Be aware of the child and his or her needs; careful not to push them to make a decision out of fear.

Let the child tell you what choices they want to make. Do not put words in their mouth or tell them what they are going to do. When a child knows they want to be born again, they will be able to tell you. We know that when we were born again, it was from the heart. Allow them to come to that same decision in their heart. Kids will often say whatever you want them to in order to make the adult happy. Remember it is important not to put words in their mouth. Let them tell you what they want, and when they do, follow the Spirit and you will know what to do.

When it comes to salvation, some people ask, *“Can a little child of four to six years old really get born again?”* The answer is, yes, it is possible. Two of my children were born again before the age of 6. Especially if a child is raised in a Christian home, they will know what they want and will understand the need to accept Jesus into their heart.

One of my good friends was singing a song to her little niece one time and after a while, the little girl stooped and said, *“I wish Jesus would come and live at my house.”* Her niece was only four years old at the time, but she knew she wanted Jesus. My friend quickly responded that Jesus would love to come and live at her house, and would also love to come live in her heart.

The little girl became excited and asked how He would do that. My friend simply explained that all she had to do was ask Jesus to come into her heart and He would.

A child that wants Jesus will receive Him. She told her niece she would pray a short prayer with her and once she did, Jesus would live in her heart. They prayed, *“Jesus, please come into my heart.”* She then asked the little girl where Jesus was and she exclaimed, *“He is in my tummy!”* Now, the child did not know all the concepts, but she knew Jesus was with her. A child who wants Jesus will receive Jesus. Don’t put an age limit on children. Leave that decision for the child and the Holy Spirit.

Keep it Simple

When ministering to a child, they only need to hear two verses on salvation. Children are very trusting and accept what you tell them. Children do not need to be convinced with numerous passages, like adults often time do. Show them John 3:3, and explain that in order to see the kingdom of God, they must be born again. They need to know how to be born again, so show them Romans 10:9-10. Explain that all they need to do is believe in their heart and say with their mouth that Jesus is their Lord.

At this point, go into a very simple prayer of salvation. Children need to understand what you are trying to tell them. Using simple words is the key to making certain this happens. The prayer may be as follows, **“God I come to you in the name of Jesus. I believe You raised Jesus from the dead, and I confess. That He is my Lord. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”** Now, they are saved!

Children also need to be baptized in water. Explain to them that it is an outward sign of what He did in their heart. Being baptized in water should be done when they are around age twelve; at this point they fully understand the significance of their decision.

Next is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Explain to them that God has something very special for them that is a gift for everyone who has Jesus in their heart. Briefly explain what it means to pray in a heavenly language. Rely on the Holy Spirit and do not understand; they need to be ready and willing to receive.

There are two main problems adults face when working with children on being filled with the Holy Spirit. The first problem is adults pushing young children to do something they do not

understand and are not ready for. I heard a story about a little girl who was pressured into praying in tongues. Her parents thought they should tell her that she could do it, and told her this over and over again. The child was nervous and never spoke up. Several years later, she finally told her mom that she had thought God was mad at her and had been since she was five years old, because she couldn't pray in tongues.

We must be extremely careful and sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Children know when they are ready to receive and they will tell you. The little girl was freed from the fear of believing God was mad at her. Shortly after she told her mom of her fears, she was filled with the Holy Spirit and began praying in other tongues.

Another issue we, as adults, need to remember is that we do not belittle a child's understanding of God, and the Holy Spirit. There is not an again limit on when a child should, or shouldn't, receive the Holy Spirit. When my daughter was six years old, she called me into her bedroom and she said she was ready to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We sat on the floor in her room and parted for the Holy Spirit to come into her life, and together, we prayed in tongues. She knew exactly what she wanted and knew she was ready to receive.

With children, just like adults, you must make sure they can tell you how they got born again. Be patient in fully understanding exactly how they were born again. Once you know they have received salvation, you may proceed on to the steps of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Read them Acts 1:8 where it says: ***"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*** Tell them, ***"When you receive the Holy Spirit you receive power to live the Christian life."***

Read I Corinthians 14:14: ***"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful."*** Explain that they must decide to pray in tongues and they must use their mouth to do it. The Holy Spirit will always be there to help, but it is an act of their will; He will not pray for them. Tell them that when they were born again, they received a heavenly Father who wants to give them amazing gifts and bless their life. Their heavenly Father wants to bless them with the gift of the Holy Spirit, all they have to do is ask (Luke 11:13). Now, lead them in prayer: ***"Father, in Jesus' name, I ask you for the first of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking***

in tongues. I will now speak in tongues in Jesus' name." Then start praying in the Spirit, and they will, too.

It is important to explain to them the doubts and confusion that they will feel in the near future. Jesus as adults are attacked by the devil, he will also try to come to their minds and confuse them with thoughts of doubts and uncertainties. Remind them in Luke 11:13, God said He would give them the Holy Spirit if they ask Him. Explain that regardless of the doubts they feel, praying in tongues was real and they are filled with the Holy Spirit. Tell them that anytime they have doubts and fears, they can tell the devil to GO AWAY in Jesus' name, and he will leave.

Let them know they should pray in tongues every single day, and that they need to be with others who pray in tongues, as well. Read Jude 20: ***But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.***" The Holy Spirit is our helper Who builds us up and makes us strong as Christians.

Keep everything simple when explaining things of salvation and the Holy Spirit to a child. They will be excited to make the right choices for God and for His Kingdom!