

Children & the Promise of Power

by Wes Bartel

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Was this wonderful promise intended only for adult disciples, or is it possible that the promise was meant for a much broader audience? Peter addressed this issue when, on the Day of Pentecost, he explained, “This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last day, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on **all people**. Your sons and **daughters** will prophesy, your **young men** will see visions, your **old men** will dream dreams” (Acts 2:16,17, bold mine).

The amazing truth of this proclamation is that the Holy Spirit does not distinguish between age or gender. The focus is cross-generational. The promise is all-inclusive. Our children can and will experience Pentecost!

However, I would like to see our children move from the powerful **experience** of Pentecost to what God intended to be the powerful **expression**

of Pentecost. Notice again the unique promise of Christ to His disciples: “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses**” (bold mine).

In Greek, when there are two identical verb tenses in the same sentence, they both run concurrent in time. The two are inseparable. Each is the inevitable



result of the other. That means that the physical experience of spiritual power promised by Christ is directly dependent on the active expression of Christian witness by the child of God.

The implications of this truth are enormous for the Church and its leadership. If the Church really embraces the reality of Acts 1:8, then it must

intentionally develop ways to encourage and include cross-generational expressions of ministry. Our sons and our daughters must become an active part of the ministry of the Church.

How Will that Happen?

- Our children must be encouraged to share their faith in an effective way with their family, friends, and school-mates.
 - Our children should be taught how to lead a friend to Christ.
 - Our children's groups should be trained and released to do active ministry within the community and surrounding area.
 - Our children should be included in appropriate altar ministry and prayer.
 - Children's church and Sunday School classes must intentionally develop children as leaders and include active ministry participation rather than encourage passive attendance.
- If children are to experience the promised power of Acts 1:8, they must know that a driver's license is not the qualifying prerequisite. God will use them...if they are willing!

