

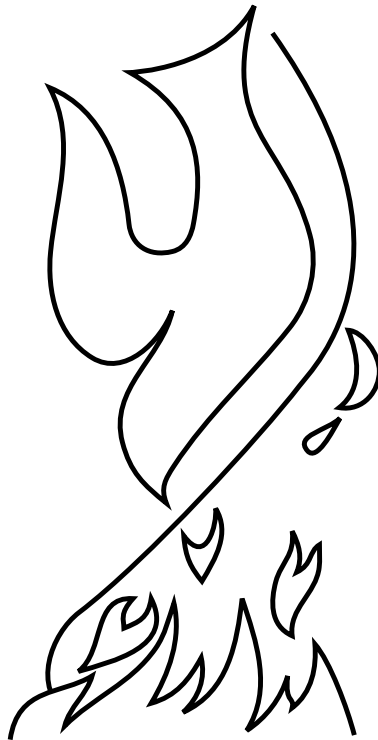


Pentecostal Distinctives, part 1 of 2—

Teaching Pentecostal Distinctives to Children

The glory and wonder of Pentecost is that God the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within individual believers. His indwelling brings power, purpose, comfort, and guidance to the life of the believer. God's design is for every believer to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. He wants to give this magnificent gift to every believer—including children.

As children's ministry workers, it is your privilege to teach children about the Holy Spirit, to help them want to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and to pray for and with them as they seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit. So how can you do that? This article will cover some principles for leading your children to become true Pentecostals, people who are personally Spirit-filled.



much as adults. He is the One who gives them power to witness and power to conquer sin. He is also the One who gives them love, joy, and peace—qualities needed in a world that is uncertain and stressful. Children are not immune to stress. They need the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Truths About the Holy Spirit

Below are seven truths about the Holy Spirit that you should teach to the children.

1 **The Holy Spirit is God, just as Jesus and God the Father are God.**

He is not an "it" nor a mere presence. He is a Person and He is God.

2 **The Holy Spirit wants to live in each Christian so He can help that person live a life that pleases God and is full of joy.**

The Holy Spirit brings power to conquer sin and to witness. He also brings love, joy, and peace—qualities that make life better for the Christian.

3 **The baptism in the Holy Spirit is for every Christian of any age.**

But it is only for Christians. Help your students understand that they first must have accepted Jesus as Savior. Then they can begin seek-

Three Key Principles

1 **The baptism in the Holy Spirit is for children too.**

According to Acts 2:38, the promise of the infilling of the Holy Spirit is "for you **and your children** and for all who are far off..." The infilling of the Holy Spirit is for all Christians. Age is not a criteria. Salvation is the only prerequisite. Therefore a child who has received Christ as Savior can receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit. If younger children do not seem ready for the baptism, we can still instruct and prepare their hearts to desire and receive at a later date.

2 **Never assume a child is too young to receive or understand the Pentecostal experience.**

Children learn and mature at different rates. If a child seems to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and desires to receive the baptism, encourage him. God sees a child's heart; He knows when the time is right.

3 **Children need the baptism in the Holy Spirit for the same reasons adults do.**

Children who have accepted Jesus as Savior need the Holy Spirit's help in their lives just as



Pentecostal Distinctives, part 2 of 2—

The Holy Spirit and You

(The first part of this article discussed three key principles about the baptism in the Holy Spirit and listed the first four of seven truths about the Holy Spirit that children need to know. Those seven truths continue below.)

5 The baptism in the Holy Spirit will not be scary, even though it is different from anything else.

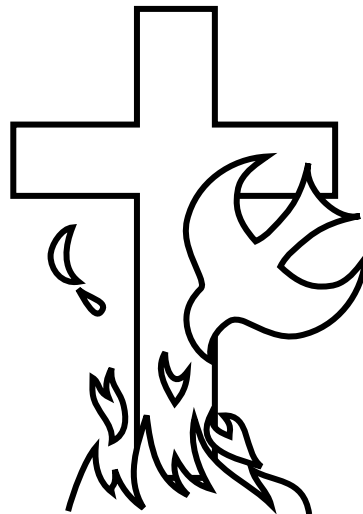
The idea of speaking in unlearned languages as the Holy Spirit fills him can be hard for a child to understand. Help him realize that the Holy Spirit loves people. He will not force them to do anything—including speaking in a language they have not learned.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a wonderful experience to be desired, not one to make a child feel frightened or uncomfortable. Help the children understand that if they want the Holy Spirit to fill them, the Holy Spirit will give them the ability to speak in an unknown language as He fills them.

6 The baptism in the Holy Spirit is the beginning of an ongoing relationship.

Emphasize the ongoing nature of the Spirit-filled life. Help children avoid the trap of seeking only the initial evidence of speak-

ing in tongues. Speaking in unknown tongues is not a sign that a Christian has “arrived” in his Christian walk. It is instead the sign of a beginning, the beginning of God the Holy Spirit dwelling inside as a teacher, counselor, and comforter.



7 The gifts of the Holy Spirit are for today.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit can be hard for children to understand. As they see the gifts of the Spirit in operation in your church, they may have questions. Answer those questions. Be prepared to talk to your pastor if you need help.

Stress to the children that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not just

tongues and interpretation. These are special, useful gifts, but the Holy Spirit has other gifts, such as the gifts of knowledge, discerning of spirits, healing, and other gifts that are valuable to accomplish God's work.

Also help the children realize that people who are used in the gifts of the Spirit are not any more special than any other Christian. They are just willing to be used by God to help His Church. The people who are used in the gifts do not own or control those gifts. They are just obeying as God the Holy Spirit gives them each gift. And God wants to give each Christian gifts to help His Church.

Teaching by Example

Students learn best through example. It is important to teach about the Holy Spirit. However, it is more important that the children see the Holy Spirit at work in your life. Here are three keys to teaching by example:

1 As a Pentecostal teacher, you must be Spirit-filled. In the business world, it is said that the best advertisement is a satisfied customer. If you are Spirit-filled and walking in the Spirit in your daily life, you are the best “commercial” the children will see for the desirability of being Spirit-filled.

