



part 1 of 2—

Pentecostal Perspectives

by Sandy Friesen

When do you start teaching children about the intricacies of our Pentecostal perspective?

When Ian was just two, he sat in the pew next to his mom and dad and explained in two-year-old language that he wanted to pray. When Mom asked if Ian loved Jesus and wanted Him to live in his heart, Ian said that he did.

“Why don’t you pray and asked Jesus to live inside of you?” suggested Mom.

Ian did. His words were “Jesus, go me.”

When Ian was ten, he asked to be baptized in water. He understood that this would be telling everyone that he loved and followed Jesus.

When Ian was twelve, he was praying and began to speak in an unusual language. He was overjoyed by the feeling.

Ian is now almost twenty. He’s away at a university. He still has a solid, mature relationship with Jesus.

When do you start teaching children about the intricacies of our Pentecostal Perspective?

From birth! Because, like Ian, we never know what is im-

pacting the child. If we wait until a child has reached the age of formal reasoning (around twelve years of age), we’ve wasted many valuable years.

What are the Pentecostal Perspectives that we hold near and dear to our hearts?



1 We believe that we are saved by the grace of Jesus Christ. (It is not something we have to work to accomplish, but a gift that God has given and that we accept.)



2 We believe that Jesus offers divine healing. (We pray and God heals according to His will. We do not know when or who He will heal instantly, or who He will heal through time, but we still come to the Father, asking, knowing that God is able.)



3 We believe that the Holy Spirit empowers each of us to be a wit-



4 We believe that when the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs in one’s life, there will be evidence through that person speaking in an unknown language; that their daily lives will testify to the presence of Jesus through their choices. We believe that this is a gift from God and cannot be manufactured or created at will.



5 We believe that God provides supernatural gifts that will help us individually and as a corporate community to live more like Christ. (These include messages in tongues, interpretations of those messages, wisdom, discernment, etc.)



part 2 of 2—

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How can you communicate these Pentecostal Perspectives to the very young child?



1 Through your example.

Pray often and aloud when you're working with children. Sing God's praises often. Let your life reflect Christ. Treat the children the way Christ would treat them.



2 Through your intercession.

Pray for the children when you are not with them. Think of ways you can help meet the needs of their lives. If you have a preschooler that loves teddy bears and you see a teddy bear book at the library or a garage sale, get it and bring it to class. Tell the children that they are in your thoughts and prayers.



3 Through meeting the children in a variety of settings.

Let the children see you at church events and in attendance at church services. Let them see you praying for others. Let them see you praising the Lord. Be available outside of the classroom and be

just as accepting in those settings.



4 Through taking prayer requests from the youngest of these.

Pray for their "owies." Make a note to ask them how they're doing. Rejoice in their answers to prayers.



5 Through teaching the children to pray.

Teach them simple prayers that are fun and easy, and that teach Pentecostal perspectives. For example: Sing the following words to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star":

Jesus, Jesus, I love You.
And I know You love me too,
Holy Spirit, lead today
Heal my body when I pray.
Jesus, Jesus, I love You.
And I know You love me too.

Another example: Sing these words to the tune of "Are You Sleeping?":

God our Father, God our
Father,
Once again, Once again,
I will be a witness.
I will be a witness.
Amen. Amen.



6 Through reading the Word of God.

When you are teaching, use a version of the Bible that they can understand. Young children will grow accustomed to having the Word of God around.



7 Through memorizing Bible verses.

Teach children to "hide the Word of God" in their hearts. Memory verses need not be painful. Again, you can sing. Sing the words of Bible verses to familiar songs, and sing as you interact with the children. For example: Sing the following words to the tune of "Ten Little Indians":

All of them were filled with
the Spirit, (three times)
And began to speak in
tongues. (Acts 2:4)

Verse 2:

The Holy Spirit can fill me
too,
The Holy Spirit can fill me
too,
The Holy Spirit can fill me
too,
And I can speak in tongues.

Another example: Sing the following words to the tune of "London Bridge":

I will praise You, O Lord,

O Lord, O Lord.
I will praise You, O Lord,
Psalm 9:1.



Through always treating the child with respect.

You are probably working with children because you want to. Make sure your preschool children know that too.

I know a little girl who was only able to attend church sporadically while she was very young. But when she did at-

tend, she felt a wonderful sense of acceptance. There were never any put downs because she was not dressed appropriately or did not know all the words to the children's songs. There was just acceptance. She saw adults praying, speaking in tongues, and gathered around the altar praying for divine healing. She saw teens asking God to forgive them. She saw those same youths asking God to guide their lives. Although she was not able

to go to church regularly until she was almost twelve, she had a great introduction to the kingdom of God. She is now in her forties and is still serving God.

We may only get to minister to children for a few days, weeks, or years. But we can make a lasting positive influence in their lives. You can make all the difference.

Questions for Further Study—

1. Read through the eight ways you can communicate Pentecostal perspectives to young children and note which you are strong in and which you are weak in.
2. In what ways can you discipline yourself to grow in those weak areas?
3. List three practical ways you can show the children in your ministry that you care about them and respect them.