

### 3. Helping Our Children Work with the Holy Spirit in Evangelism

In our last topic, we gave a summary of the process of how to help our physical and spiritual children become reproducing Christians. Today, we are going to begin to expand on that summary. In 1 Thessalonians 1:5, we read, “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.” The first two things that we see in this verse is that we want to help our children learn to proclaim the Gospel in power and accompanied by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. That will be the focus of our topic today.

In Luke 24:49, we read, “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” Acts 1:8 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.” Then, in Acts 2:1-4 we see that the Holy Spirit came and filled the Christians and the following verses go on to show us that they went out to share the Gospel with boldness in many different languages. Later, in Acts 4:31, we read, “And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.” Throughout the book of Acts, we see that the Christians prayed that they would be able to speak the Word of God with boldness.

As a result, the first thing that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn about becoming reproducing Christians is that they can only witness with boldness as they learn to pray for boldness and yield their lives to the Holy Spirit so that He gives them boldness. Paul told the Ephesians what to pray for him in Ephesians 6:19 when he said, after telling them to pray always, “And for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.” We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to pray for boldness as they share the Gospel with others. We also want to model that for them by praying the same thing for our own lives.

However, as they pray for boldness, we also want to show them how to work with the Holy Spirit in evangelism. John 16:8-11 says, “And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” In these verses, we learn to show our physical and spiritual children how to work with the Holy Spirit in evangelism. Only as they learn how to work with the Holy Spirit will they become effective in sharing the Gospel with others.

First, we see that the Holy Spirit convicts the person that is not a Christian of sin. Notice that verse 8 does not say sins. Many Christians think it is their responsibility to convince people who are not Christians that they have committed many sins. The result is that they try to do this through their own efforts, because they are not working with the Holy Spirit. In the process of talking about sins, they usually totally ignore the one sin that keeps people from receiving eternal life. That one sin is defined in verse nine, where we see that the Holy Spirit convicts and convinces the person

that is not a Christian of the sin of not believing in Christ.

When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, God only gave them one sin that they could commit. Genesis 2:16-17 says, “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” In Genesis 3:1-6, we see that they committed that one sin. They immediately experienced spiritual death even though physical death did not happen to Adam until more than 900 years later. Genesis 3:7-8 says, “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.” Spiritual death is separation from God. As soon as they committed that one sin, they immediately hid themselves from God.

Their relationship with God was totally changed. Christ told the disciples the night before He was crucified that there was only one way that people could now come to the Father. John 14:6 says, “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’” Mankind will continue to be separated from God until a person individually comes to God through Christ. That is why the one sin that keeps people out of heaven is failure to come to the Father through Christ. This means that a person can only come to the Father by repenting of their sin of unbelief in Christ. The theme of every evangelistic message in the book of Acts is the message of the death and resurrection of Christ.

When Paul gave his final instructions to the elders in Ephesus, he summarized the evangelistic message that he had shared with them and had shown them how to share that message with others. Acts 20:20-21 says, “How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Paul said that he had shown these leaders both publicly and from house to house how to work with the Holy Spirit in sharing the Gospel. They had been shown how to work with the Holy Spirit by sharing the message of sin rather than sins. That message included repentance toward God (turning from their sin of unbelief and turning to God) and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. We equip our children to learn to work with the Holy Spirit by helping them learn to share verses that speak about the sin of unbelief.

Second, John 16:10 says that we work with the Holy Spirit as we share the message of righteousness. That verse says, “Of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more.” 1 Peter 2:21-24 says, “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ‘Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth’; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.” The Holy Spirit convinces the person that is not a Christian that Christ is the Righteous One that can pay the penalty for sin by His death and resurrection. We help our children learn to work with the Holy Spirit by equipping them to share verses that talk

about the fact that Christ was without sin and could pay the penalty for their sin by His death and resurrection.

Third, John 16:11 says, “Of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” God promised Adam and Eve immediately after they sinned that a descendent would come from Adam and Eve that would crush the head of Satan. Genesis 3:15 says, “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” When Christ said on the cross in John 19:30, “It is finished”, the judgment of Satan was completed. The Father also showed that He was satisfied with the payment for sin by raising Christ from the dead. Peter began his sermon on the day of Pentecost by saying in Acts 2:23-24, “Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.” We equip our children to work with the Holy Spirit by sharing verses that show that Satan was judged by the death and resurrection of Christ and that those who continue to follow Satan will share in his judgment.

As we equip our children to work with the Holy Spirit by helping them to learn and share verses about sin, righteousness and judgment, the Holy Spirit will use those verses to convict those who are not Christians of these things. Then the Father will speak through the Word that our children have shared to draw the person that is not a Christian to Christ. In John 6:44, Christ said, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Our physical and spiritual children will learn to work effectively with the Trinity as they share verses that convict of sin, righteousness and judgment. The Word of God allows the Holy Spirit to convince people of their sin of unbelief and of their need to repent of that sin. As they share verses about the death and resurrection of Christ, the Father will draw people to true faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord promises in Hebrews 4:12, “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

As we equip our children to share the Word of God, instead of their own words, the Lord will use His Word to penetrate the heart, instead of just the mind of people who are not yet Christians. In 1 Corinthians 14:24-25, we read, “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.” May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your physical and spiritual children to work with the Holy Spirit in evangelism.