

Creating Divine Moments

by David Boyd

Every so often a children's pastor or children's leader should ask himself the question, "What is it that I am doing that will cause these children, which God has given me to shepherd, to live for Him the rest of their lives?" As a children's leader, it is easy to get into the rut of doing what has always been done and, somehow in the process, miss the purpose for the activity.

In today's society, entertainment is at a premium. The average person wants to be entertained every moment he possibly can, everyday. People watch more TV, watch more movies, spend more time surfing the Net, listening to music, etc., than at any time in history.

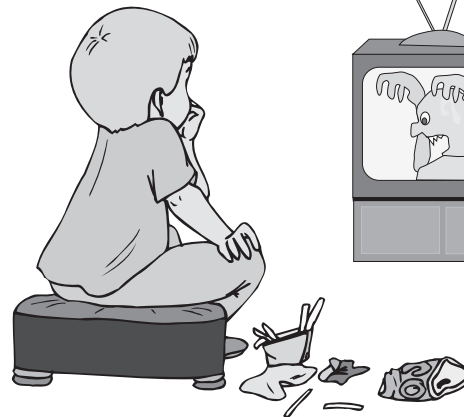
Children are no different—they are bombarded with entertainment. Churches that strive to attract these children sometimes try to create an entertainment-filled environment at church. But we must create a proper balance so that children, when they come to church, are not just entertained—they are changed.

Children must touch God, experience His presence, and learn to communicate with Him

through prayer.

If we fail to connect children to God, they will not follow in our footsteps. How sad it would be for a teenager to say, "Church was fun, but I've outgrown the need of it." That teenager was present in the services as a child, but the Spirit of God wasn't planted deep into his life.

I could remind you here of the importance of teaching children to worship God with their eyes shut,



hands raised, singing simple and meaningful choruses to their Savior. I could remind you of the importance of teaching children to pray, witness, serve, or sacrificially give. But I'd like to remind you, instead, of what Jesus said

when He was about to leave His disciples.

In Acts 1:4, Jesus said, "Wait for the gift my Father promised." Jesus seemed to know that the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of His disciples would help them to pray. He would help them to worship. He would help them to witness and to serve. Relying on the power of the Holy Spirit was commanded by Jesus for the disciples. It should be a command for us as well—a directive to follow as we teach the children.

Children are open to receiving the infilling of the Holy Spirit and acting upon the power He brings.

Recently I sent out an e-mail reminding individuals to offer Pentecost to their children. It was thrilling to hear the responses from children's pastors and children's leaders who said: "It was so easy. I told them God had a gift for them. They wanted God's gift, they prayed, and they received."

Talk with your kids about the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Let children who have been filled give their testimonies. If you haven't been baptized with the Holy Spirit yourself, ask someone to pray with you. Tell the children you are seeking as well. Allow time in classes for kids to seek the Holy Spirit. Ask some extra teenagers or adults to come in during class time to spend time with kids who want to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Once kids start getting filled,

remind them that this is just the beginning. God's gift is a gift of power. Speaking in tongues is a tool to be used when praying. Kids love to pray. Often, however, they run out of things to pray for. When children are praying in their prayer languages, their desire—combined with the unction of the Holy Spirit—is powerful: They pray and pray and pray.

Our job as children's lead-

ers must be doing enough "fun stuff" to keep kids interested in coming back; however, we must impact the lives of the children or their trips to church did no more good than a trip to the arcade.

Our goal must be to create divine moments of discovery as children discover God through worship, prayer, faith, and the great gift of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Questions for Further Study—

1. What are you doing to impact the lives of your children instead of "entertaining" them?
2. List ways in which you are teaching the children in your ministry about the Holy Spirit.
3. Give examples of how the Holy Spirit has worked in the lives of your children.