

PUT THE CHILDREN FIRST

by Bryant Kitchell

The next great wave of revival to sweep the Apostolic church is going to come from a very unsuspecting place. We hold them in our lap, and they sleep on and under the pews. It is the forgotten army in 2016! This army is the children! We have a tendency to overlook them because they get on our nerves, they can't sit still, and we think they are certainly too young to understand what is going on in a church service. For the most part we don't spend the energy, the time, or the money to reach them because they have nothing to offer in return.

When we think of Sunday school, our first thought is kids! The theme of the Sunday School Division of the United Pentecostal Church International is "Put the Children First!" You see, we must understand that before one can be part of a youth group or an adult, he must first be a child. "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14).

The children have been put on the back burner far too long. We will do anything just to get them out of our hair. We have ignored this army long enough. I believe in youth ministry, single adult ministry, men's ministry, ladies ministries, and every other ministry in the United Pentecostal Church, but I ask the question, "What

about the children?" We are one generation away from truth being extinct in our world. We cannot afford to ignore the children.

Save Our Children is making a difference in Section 5 of the Texas District! Just recently, we kicked off the 2016 Save Our Children fund drive in Section 5. In that service there were close to 250 people in attendance. Before the service was over, six children had received the Holy Ghost for the very first time. Six souls that now have God's Spirit working in them. Six souls that on the following Monday after that service would walk down the hallways of their schools with the light of God shining through them. Six souls now with the possibility of growing up and becoming hell's worst nightmare!

Those six kids receiving the Holy Ghost for the very first time is priceless! Those six kids may not be able to give much right now, but if we reach for those who cannot give; God will send us people who can give.

So, how do we "Put the Children First?" We "Put the Children First" by putting together a staff of teachers and administrators with a passion for children. Invest in your Sunday

school ministry now and reap benefits that are out of this world. Our Sunday school staff ought to be the best-assembled team the local church has. We have youth pastors. Why not have a children's pastor? Section 5 is investing in teachers from local churches by having teacher training seminars and teacher certification seminars. In a recent teacher training seminar, the Holy Ghost moved in and the gifts of the Spirit were in operation; and more than forty teachers found themselves on their faces in prayer! More than ever before we need children's pastors, teachers, and staff that are full of the Holy Ghost so that when the children come into the room, they walk right into the presence of God!

I ask you to join with me in 2016 to do whatever it takes to "Put the Children First!"