

First Step Ministries, Inc.

Rev. Lawrence E. Blakeslee

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Kid's Prayer Power — Part 1

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In the June newsletter, I mentioned believing that The Lord wanted me to enlarge First Step Ministries, Inc. by working with children again. My area of interest is to develop their prayer potential. This is done by giving them more than bible stories, games and coloring books. This doesn't preclude kids just having fun. Lord knows they grow up fast enough and sometimes miss some of the joys of childhood they are entitled to. Rather, it means add a level of teaching that is deeper but remembering that they are children.

The desired outcome is that at a younger age, they will have a working knowledge of prayer and faith based on an understanding of God's covenant with us when we make Jesus our personal Savior.

This is going to happen in a program that I am working

on. It has a working title called Kid's Prayer Power.

Kid's Prayer Power has three main goals based on God's Word:

Train children to pray effectively

Build their faith and expect to see results from their prayers

Provide a safe environment to develop their potential ministry gifts

How Does That Happen?

It begins with the adults first. As parents and teachers, we must overcome a misunderstanding about our spirit man and chronological time. The Word says that we are all triune beings. That means that every human being is made up of a spirit and a soul which is contained in a body.

1 Thessalonians 5:23

23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and

through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. NIV

Some adults assume that because of a child's age, they can not pray effectively. The child may not be as knowledgeable and as articulate as an adult but their heart/spirit is much more pure and open to the leading of the Holy Spirit than most adults.

The error comes in not realizing that age or natural based knowledge is not the only aspect of what happens in the spirit realm. God's love and power are first based and expressed in His covenant with mankind. Each individual enters into this blood covenant when and by accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. A child or an adult accesses this covenant when they pray.

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Dennis Balcombe – Living Church Hero

If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, just send an email with your request to:

Larry@FirstStepMinistries.net

If there was only one reason for me to go to India this would have been a good one. I met Dennis Balcombe, a missionary to China for the last thirty-six years. He is a classical modern day church hero. He has been harassed, beaten, and imprisoned for his work in China.

Dennis was also invited by my

hosts, to come to India to preach at the first three locations I was going to be at. After spending six days with Dennis, you saw a humble and prayerful man. His daily walk with God was a constant state of prayer. Dennis is a man that loves God and walks with Him daily. To share a

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Dennis Balcombe, Missionary to China.

Kid's Prayer Power — Part 1

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A child may not have knowledge and wisdom based on years of life experience, but innocence can sometimes be an advantage. They are not "tainted" with doubt and unbelief. This is especially true when you apply it to faith. "Innocence" can sometimes have a distinct advantage over "experience". God doesn't always seem to be concerned with how much we know but how much we trust and care.

Matt 18:3-4 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. NIV

Matt 17:20 He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will

move. Nothing will be impossible for you." NIV

Practical Practice

After a child begins to understand the biblical principles that are operating, they need the opportunity to apply the principle. Practice builds their faith.

**FAITH
INCREASES AS
THEY
UNDERSTAND
WHAT THEY ARE
DOING.**

Faith continues to increase as they understand what they are doing. We all

respond to either success or failure. But success helps motivate us to keep going forward. God is not looking at a chronological age to determine if His Word is true. He is looking for a human

being of any age that has entered into His covenant, that will trust Him and exercise their faith.

Background

I would love to claim to all of these as "original thoughts" but that would be unfair and untrue. My experience as a children's pastor prior to this was unfortunately limited to the typical children's church activities. But I found out from first hand experience with my oldest son Shawn, The spiritual dynamics that can happen in a three year old child. Back then, I knew what my heart and experience were telling me but didn't know how to apply it in a practical application. But God had a plan and it was fulfilled.

Years ago I was blessed to have been a children's pastor and also a

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Mennonite Devotional Radio Programs for Belize, Central America

Pastor Jim and Jenny Duncan operate Destiny 105.1 FM in Ladyville, Belize. There is a

**THREE
THOUSAND
MENNONITES IN
LADYVILLE,
BELIZE,
CENTRAL
AMERICA**

Mennonite community of about three thousand people located in the broadcast area of the Duncan's Christian radio station. For some time now, First Step Ministries, Inc. has been searching for Low German or Plautdietsch language programming specifically for this audience. Recently we found an additional source. They are daily devotionals in Plautdietsch.

We are in the process of checking the production and content quality of these programs to see if they are broadcast quality. If it works out, God's hand will have reached across three continents and connected me in Germany to someone in Quito, Ecuador, to

Kansas in the United States to finally provide for His people in Belize, Central America.

More Wisdom / Less Tooth

Let's hope so anyway.... After much trouble with a particular wisdom tooth for much too long, it was finally pulled last month. The tooth started acting up just before my trip to India and continued to get worse until finally the crown came off. Loosing the crown turned out to be a "blessing" since it revealed that the tooth was cracked from under the crown to the root. Because of the position of the crack, it was not detected in an x-ray. Once the crown came off, it was obvious. It was removed with a lot less problems that I had expected. Thank you, Jesus.

Summer Bible School & Continuing Education Seminars

Rhema Germany will be conducting its annual Summer Bible School and Continuing Education Seminars the second week in August. Summer Bible School lasts for five days and the Continuing Education classes three days. They will run concurrently. Everyone will be helping with these seminars in various capacities. The response is always great. People from all over Germany and Europe attend. The meetings provide an opportunity to "test drive" Bible school for a week and see if they would like to attend the regular two year program. It also gives everyone a chance to renew friendships.

Dennis Balcombe

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platform with this man and hear about his missionary experiences will be something that I will never forget.

By the way, Dennis reports that the Christian church is alive and well in The People's Republic of China. The church still has problems with the government but Dennis believes that it has a high probability of actually becoming a Christian nation within a decade. There are millions of people that have opened their hearts and to hear the Gospel. Dennis also told me that he believes the best way to spread the Gospel was to restrict it or deny people the opportunity to hear it. It sounds like the Book of Acts all over again, doesn't it?



Dennis having dinner on the train after an already long day. The "plates" are made of dried banana leaves sewn together with thread.

Kid's Prayer Power — Part 1

**THIS WOMAN
EXPRESSED A
LOVE FOR
CHILDREN AND
EXPECTATION
FOR THEIR
SPIRITUAL
GROWTH...**

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children's worker. During one of my children's worker periods, I helped a tremendous children's pastor named Stevie Mitchell. At that time she was at Grace Chapel,

Scottsdale, Arizona. Stevie expressed a love for children and an expectation for their spiritual growth that I had not seen before.

Under her direction, the goal in children's church was to have children understand who they were in Christ and exercise it. Seeing the children, including my youngest son William, develop, made a lasting impression on me. The children knew and understood these spiritual principles and it made an indelible mark on my heart.

After All These Years, Why Know

During my trip to Mongolia in 2003, I was surprised to find a desire to return to children's ministry. After some serious time in prayer, The Lord began to re-

mind me of what I saw and experienced years before and realized that would be a great concept to teach. It would also add another aspect of training for children.

With adult guidance and direction, there is no reason why we can not train our children to not only understand who they are in Christ but also to openly develop and operate in the gifts that God gave them.

A Season for Everything

There is a time and season for everything. Now years later, it is time to resurrect this in my heart, formalize the concepts and add my experience to it. It will then be brought to churches in Europe and elsewhere.



Family Pastors Stevie Mitchell and (neat guy) husband John. They currently are at Grace North Anthem, in Anthem, AZ

German Factoid

All Local Phone Calls Cost

Every outbound phone call is a toll call. Even if it is across the street. Depending on the time of day, the rate can be from 2-4 cents a minute.

Cell Phones are billed to the caller. They cost around 3.5 cents / minute. FYI I've had three telemarketing calls in just over two years.

God's Little Hugs

Has God hugged you lately? Probably but you might have not realized it.



A few weeks ago, I was a little bummed out. Yep, some days it just happens, here in Germany or anywhere else.

It was Sunday and I was scheduled to work in children's church.

The kids are always fun but that day they

seemed a bit more rambunctious plus all twenty-five of us happened to be jammed in the smallest of rooms with a very low ceiling that amplified the sound.

It had been a long morning when two little girls Pauline and Debora, about seven years old, came over to me as I was packing up the ministry materials. One of them was hiding something behind her back. She pulled it out and presented it with great fanfare. It was a picture of a dog and puppies they had carefully colored for me. I asked them if it was a present for ME? "Yes!". They giggled and smiled from ear to

ear. The girls were blessed when I asked them to sign the bottom of their art work, after all I explained that a "signed original" could be valuable.

I thanked them and told them that I would put it on the door of my refrigerator when I got home. They watched me carefully put the drawing in my backpack for safe transport home.

Pauline and Debora blessed me that morning. There was no doubt in my heart that they were used by God to touch me that day. Really, God hugged me. Has God "hugged" you lately? Did you know it?

Planning & Goals for the Mongolian Visit

Right now there are three key focuses for the three weeks now being planned for my next visit to Mongolia. They are:

- Minister to the children, children's pastors and workers in Ulaanbaatar, Tumerbulag and Muren
- Return to the nomadic families to minister to them again in Muren, Tumerbulag, Orkhon Valley and the surrounding areas.

Do research with Trans World Radio Singapore team to determine additional broadcast programming needs to reach Mongolia as a whole and specifically the nomads.

The Mongolian Kids

The plan for the children and their workers will be to use the Kid's Power Prayers Program. This program will be ready to roll out to them. The concepts and programs can be taught and presented with the help of translators. Translation of the printed information into the Mongolian language will come later as the need and personnel become available. The challenge here might be greater with the adults than the children. Children in many parts of the world are not considered to have any spiritual abilities by the parents or adults.

We are also planning a public outreach to children in various areas. We will be using the Four Square "Shoe Box" materials as part of this plan. The "Shoe Box" contains materials like puppets, visual aids, colored pencils, books and tracts. It will be able to touch around 750 kids.

The Nomads

Visiting the nomads will have a two-fold purpose. First it is to reach out and minister directly to the nomads the Gospel of Jesus. At the same time, to deliver food staples to the most needy and minister to them both physically and spiritually.



Trans World Radio

A team from Trans World Radio and I would like to determine the short-wave listening habits and interests of the nomads. We hope to take that information and develop Mongolian programs that will meet their needs and prepare the ground for the gospel. Short-wave radio is, in many cases, the only connection the nomads have to the outside world.

A Translator

Virtually no one speaks English in Mongolia therefore a translator is mandatory for the duration of the trip. This creates the additional expense of food, lodging and transportation while in Mongolia.

Would you or your church consider donating to the travel and outreach expenses? Thank you.

Project	Need	Given
Mongolia Outreach	\$1,800	\$0
September - Netherlands Worship Seminar & Meeting	\$100	\$70
September - Netherlands Children's Church Meeting	\$150	\$0

Rev. Lawrence E. Blakeslee

Extra Pictures

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These pictures were taken in India. You saw many in last month's newsletter but there were still many more that I wanted to share. Since I had some additional space, I thought I would use a few of them there.



Donation Information

First Step Ministries, Inc.

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- I.R.S. 501 (c) 3 Tax Deductible Organization

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