

# FAMILY TOOLBOX



## SERIES

### THE HOLY SPIRIT



*Children's Ministry*

*Golden Hills Community Church*

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## **A Note to Families**

The Children's Ministry of Golden Hills Community Church exists to "*Glorify God by helping families develop age-appropriate disciples who impact their world for Christ*".

In order to accomplish this task, we at GHCC have attempted to describe the discipleship of a believer, which includes these three elements:

- **Worship**
- **Grow**
- **Serve**

We believe that children, as followers of Christ, can also participate in the discipleship process. We have further identified twelve specific spiritual growth issues within these three elements of discipleship.

It is our desire in Children's Ministry, to create a balanced program, which addresses all of these spiritual growth issues, helping to produce a healthy, age-appropriate disciple.

However, statistics tell us that the national average for children attending Sunday school is 26 hours each year (that's only half of the time). And our church is no exception to this. Our average Sunday attendance is roughly half of our total registration. What does this mean? Well, we could have the best programming, the best teachers and staff (which, by the way, I think we do) and we would still have a very hard time in accomplishing the goal God has set before us. But there is a way.

The way in which we can realize the goal of making age-appropriate disciples is stated in our purpose: "...by helping *families* develop age-appropriate disciples..." In fact, the best approach to aiding your child's faith development is *not* in the formal setting of the church, but in the informal, everyday life of your home. God's Word clearly reminds us of this in Deuteronomy 6:4-7:

*"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. The commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress (teach) them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home, and when you walk along the road, when you lie down at night and when you get up."*

We encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity to "impress upon your children" spiritual truth. Use dinner conversation, driving in the car, bedtime routines and getting ready each morning as times to reflect and teach about God and his faithfulness.

To help you in these discussions, we have developed a series of tools for you to use. These tools are series of booklets (**THE FAMILY TOOLBOX SERIES**), each addressing the spiritual growth issues. In them you will find information, discussion questions and activity suggestions to help you guide your children on their spiritual journeys.

Dear Parents,

Understanding whom the Holy Spirit is and how He works is a difficult concept for our kids to grasp (even for us grown-ups!).

This booklet is intended to give a basic foundation to help you walk your children into a beginning understanding of the Holy Spirit and His work. The benchmark for our children's understanding is that they know the Holy Spirit is a member of the Godhead, or Trinity, and though He is God, is distinct in personality and function.

God bless you, and may the Holy Spirit guide you, as you "impress upon your children" His truths.

Pastor Mark

## **The Holy Spirit is a Member of the Godhead (Trinity)**

As God, the Holy Spirit has always existed. The spirit was present at creation, Genesis 1 tells us the “Spirit of God moved across the waters”. He was an active force in creation. The phrase, “God created” contains the key. “God” is translated from the Hebrew word “*Elohim*” which is a plural form, while the word for “created” is singular. This implies that God exists in plurality as seen in the Trinity.

Other Scripture also points to God existing in three persons. The baptism of Jesus in Luke 3:21-22 is an example. Here we see all three: Jesus the Son, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit descending from heaven in the likeness of a dove.

In Matthew 28, just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave the disciples (and us) some final instruction, which we call the “Great Commission”. Here, Jesus instructs to go into the whole world and make disciples, teaching them everything Jesus commanded and to baptize them in the name of the *Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*. Again, we clearly see the Trinity represented.

## **The Role of the Holy Spirit**

Here’s a listing of some of things the Holy Spirit does:

\* The Holy Spirit inspired individuals to write the Word of God. (2 Peter 1:20-21)

\* The Holy Spirit was sent on the Day of Pentecost to indwell and empower believers. (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:1-7)

\* The Holy Spirit dwells within every believer. (Ephesians 1:13)

\* The Bible says that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

\* The Holy Spirit gives each believer one or more spiritual gifts. These gifts are to be used within the body of believers (the church) to help equip believers and reach the lost. (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 12:27-31; Ephesians 4:11)

Please refer to **FAMILY TOOLBOX SERIES: *Spiritual Gifts and Children*** for more information on this topic.

\* The believer is to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:8-11)

\* Believers are instructed not to grieve the Holy Spirit by acting and speaking in a way that would be dishonoring to God. (Ephesians 4:25-30)

\* The Holy Spirit empowers the believer to say “no” to sin. (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Romans 8:12-13)

\* The Holy Spirit aids the believer in learning about Jesus and remembering what He teaches through God’s Word. (John 14:26)

\* The Holy Spirit guides and empowers the believer as they tell others about Christ. He gives the right words at the right time. (John 15:26-27; Acts 1:8)

\* The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin and gives the believer assurance of their salvation. (John 16:7-11; Romans 8:14-17)

\* The Holy Spirit assists the believer in prayer. Even when we

don't know what to pray for, or even how to pray, the Holy Spirit communicates our needs to the Father on our behalf. (Romans 8:26-27)

\* The Holy Spirit produces "fruit" in the believer. When we yield to the Holy Spirit's control and guidance, the following attributes will be seen in the believer: Love, self-control, goodness, kindness, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, faithfulness. (Galatians 5:22-23)

## **Explaining the Holy Spirit to Children**

It has always been a challenge to teach such an abstract concept to children-how God can exist in three persons (again, even difficult for us adults!)

A popular method over the years has been to use an egg as an object lesson. The egg is made up of three very distinct parts: The shell, the white and the yolk. Yet (before you break open the egg, anyway), it is one egg-just, as God exists in three persons, yet is one being.

Another way of describing the Trinity (which I like to use because it relates to the individual personalities of the Godhead) is to use myself as an example (don't get freaked out-I am not saying I'm God). You see I am a father. I am a son. I am also a husband. Each one of those roles requires an individual set of tasks and characteristics, much like the personalities of the Godhead. Yet, I am not three different people-I am one, just as God is one.

Perhaps the Holy Spirit will lead you into a new way of helping teach and explain the Trinity and work of the Holy Spirit to your children. If so, I'd love to hear about it!









## **The Spiritual Growth Issues:**

### **Worship**

- Salvation
- Worship

### **Grow**

- Bible knowledge/Application
- Bible Memory
- Stewardship
- Healthy Relationships
- Using Gifts, Talents and Skills
- Church Commitment

### **Serve**

- Outreach
- Missions Involvement
- Christian Service