

# Children Are People, Too

BY JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

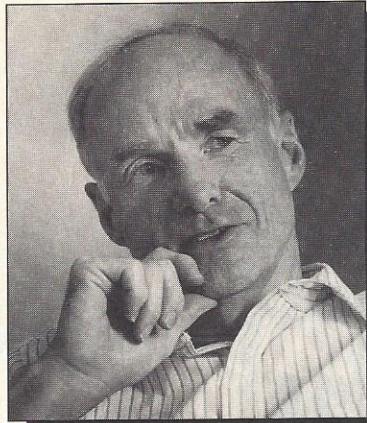
The charismatic movement began as an adult movement. Home prayer, study and ministry groups sprang up like wildflowers after a desert rain. Children, however, generally were excluded as adults not only soaked in the truths of the Scripture, but also experienced first-hand healings and miracles.

Thousands of churches materialized out of these home groups. They, too, more often than not, were geared to adult needs. Meetings were long—and often loud. The teaching was adult-friendly only. A nursery was provided—not for the intent of training little ones, but as a baby-sitting service.

Now those churches have moved into a new generation. The children of those early charismatics have their own children. And they are determined not to repeat the mistakes of their fathers.

Furthermore, the people being won to the Lord in these new-generation churches are in their thirties and forties. The parents of children and young teenagers, these baby-boomers are not satisfied with adults-only meetings. They are demanding their children be ministered to on an equal basis.

The new churches have wised up. They have discovered that in order to have a dynamic youth group, you need to start 15 years ago—with the children. They know that a church with more adults than children is a dying church. They know it's fruitless to invest in big auditoriums and small nurseries. Instead, they build huge children's



**A church with more adults than children is a dying church.**

facilities—and hold multiple services in their smaller auditoriums.

It is a refreshing, welcome movement in the church.

Yet it remains

difficult to convince the older generation that children really *are* people. A children's pastor invariably is the last staff person to be added in a growing church. And whomever is hired is seldom given full recognition as a pastor. One of the nation's top children's pastors resigned his position last year because, in part, the others in leadership refused to grant him pastoral status. He was, in their eyes, just a "kids' worker."

That's like saying a woman is "just a housewife."

In this issue we are featuring Bill Wilson, who heads up the largest and most impressive evangelistic church in the nation. And it is a church of children—10,000 children in the heart of the toughest inner-city ghetto in America. Why is he there—risking his life, losing his health? Because he believes children are people.

At *Ministries Today*, we believe children are people, too. That's why we're inaugurating a new column, "The Next Generation." In it, we hope to expose you to some of the most dynamic ministries for children and youth in the church today—and give you insight, inspiration and ideas for ministering to the kids in *your* church. ■

## Ministries TODAY

### EDITORIAL STAFF

Stephen Strang	PRESIDENT & FOUNDER
Jamie Buckingham	EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Michele Buckingham	ASSOCIATE EDITOR
John Archer	COPY EDITOR
Carol Chapman	COPY EDITOR
Timothy L. Gilmour	PUBLISHER
Joy F. Strang	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
Bob Minotti	ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Marc Stockwell	ADVERTISING ACCT. EXECUTIVE
Eric Jessen	ART DIRECTOR
Geoffrey V. Sprague	ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR
Wendy Cordeiro	PRODUCTION MANAGER
Kathy Curtis	TYPOGRAPHER
Brenda Haun	PRODUCTION ARTIST
Dan Reese	PRODUCTION ARTIST
Josephine Corrigan	PRODUCTION ARTIST

### CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

David Bivin	Professor of Languages, Jerusalem, Israel
Mark Buckley	Senior Pastor, Phoenix, AZ
Jean Coleman	Co-pastor, Laurel, MD
Richard Dobbins	Clinical Psychologist, Akron, OH
Loren Cunningham	Missionary Statesman, Kailua-Kona, HI
Michael Green	Co-pastor & Worship Leader, New Orleans, LA
James Guinn	Certified Public Accountant, Irving, TX
Jack Hayford	Senior Pastor, Van Nuys, CA
Frances Hunter	Healing Evangelist, Kingwood, TX
Leonard Lovett	Professor of Religion, Tulsa, OK
Francis MacNutt	Christian Healing Ministries, Jacksonville, FL
James McKeever	Financial Advisor, Medford, OR
Doug Murren	Senior Pastor, Kirkland, WA
Joyce Strader	Pastor's Wife, Lakeland, FL
Jack Taylor	Senior Pastor, Fort Worth, TX
Devi Titus	Pastor's Wife, Camp Hill, PA
C. Peter Wagner	Professor of Church Growth, Pasadena, CA

EDITORIAL OFFICES: 3901 Field Road NW • Palm Bay, FL 32907  
(407) 725-4206 Office • (407) 729-8707 FAX

ADVERTISING OFFICES: 600 Rinehart Rd. • Lake Mary, FL 32746  
(407) 333-0600 Office

*Ministries Today* (ISSN #0891-5725) is published bimonthly by Strang Communications Co., 600 Rinehart Road, Lake Mary, FL 32746. Second-class postage paid at Lake Mary, FL 32746 and at additional entry offices. Subscription rate is \$21.95 for 6 issues and \$31.95 for 12 issues. Canadian subscriptions add \$9 per year, including GST. Other countries add \$10 per year. Foreign subscriptions payable in advance in U.S. currency. Subscription questions? Call 1-800-777-9423. *Ministries Today* is available in microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Ministries Today*, P.O. Box 2111, Knoxville, IA 50197-2111. Copyright © 1991 by Strang Communications Company.

**STRANG**  
COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY

Publishers of:  
• *Charisma & Christian Life*  
• *Christian Retailing*  
• *Creation House Books*  
• *CharismaLife Learning Resources*  
• *Inside Music*

Bulk Rate  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Strasburg, VA  
Permit # 16

**Third Class  
Mail  
Enclosed**