

Children in Worship—Mom Tested Tips

Guest Blogger: [Jason Helopoulos](#)

This is a follow-up on yesterday's post...

1. **Focus on this moment throughout the week:**
Talk about Sunday morning worship all week long. Help your children to see that each week begins with this privilege ([Acts 20:7](#); [Hebrews 10:24-25](#)).
2. **Model excitement about the Lord's Day:**
Children learn a great deal by watching their parents. If Mom and Dad reluctantly go to church, then the children will reluctantly go to church. If Mom and Dad are critical of the preacher, sermon, etc. then the children will most likely be critical. Wake up early on Sunday morning and prepare for worship. Let the children see your joy and excitement.
3. **Implement family worship at home:** A family that worships together at home will find it much easier to worship together in corporate worship. A child will find it natural to hear the Word of God, to read the Word of God, to sing the hymns, etc. This will also help our children to learn to sit still, to understand the importance of worship, to focus during prayer, etc.
4. **Read the passage during the week:** Most sermon series are an exposition of one book of the Bible. This means that you know what you are going to hear read and preached in the week's service—the next passage. Read it throughout the week and converse about it around the dinner table or during family worship. The children will then be familiar with the text that the pastor is preaching on. With this knowledge, give them some things to listen for in the sermon.
5. **Start early:** Many believe that it is harder to introduce a five year old to corporate worship than a twelve year old, but this is not true. A five year old is in the formative years of training. They are not yet "set in their ways." A few months of struggling with a four or five year old teaching them how to sit in corporate worship yields benefits for the rest of their lives.
6. **Use Moments in the Service:** Use transitional moments in the service to whisper in your child's ear how much you loved a certain verse in a hymn, how you need to remember to pray for the sick person mentioned, or how you were convicted by that application. It keeps them engaged and allows them to see you participating intently in the service.
7. **Use the Obvious Helps:** We often forget to use the helps that are already available to us. For example: have an older child find the Bible passage or guide your finger over the text as it is read for a younger child. Use the bulletin and show your children where the service is at. Have them read the confession as you point along with each word.
8. **Sit near the Front:** Children are easily distracted, so sit near the front where there are less distractions.
9. **Create an atmosphere in your row:** Encourage your children to pay attention, to stand when everyone stands, to sing when they are to sing, to bow their heads in prayer when the congregation is to pray, etc.
10. **Enlist the Support of Other Members:** Ask another member to lend a helping hand by sitting with your family. Surround yourself with other families that you have enlisted to provide you encouragement and not to fuss if your child is a little restless.



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11. **Stop Worrying:** Many parents are concerned about what other parents or members of the congregation think of their parenting skills or how annoyed someone else is with their child's fidgeting during the service. DON'T! Commit as a congregation to welcome children into your services. This means that not only do our children have to adjust, but so do the adults. *In reality, it is adults who have to adjust the most!* Let's just learn to have a little more tolerance on this front. If a baby is a little fussy, papers are rustling, or a few things are dropping on the floor it is o.k. As congregations, we need to willingly and joyfully join in this great privilege of welcoming our covenant children into corporate worship. And that takes some minor adjusting on our part.
12. **Affirm Your Children:** When you leave the service and are on the way home, affirm your children. Ask them questions about the service and relay how the Lord blessed you. Encourage your children if they were well-behaved and let them know how wonderful it was to worship alongside of them.
13. **Be Consistent:** It will take time for your children to learn how to sit still, sing the hymns, etc. Be consistent in your expectations and desires for them during the service.
14. **Do Not be Overzealous:** *Be patient with your children and shower them with grace.* It takes children time to adjust and different children adjust or accept on different time tables. Your child may come into the service and sit attentively and quietly within a few weeks or you may have to help your child with this for months or even years (as has been our case!). Be patient! Love them and do not compare them to other children. God has blessed you with this little bundle of joy!