

PASTOR MATT'S TOP 7 TIPS ON HAVING KIDS IN WORSHIP

[or, "How to keep from losing your mind and your kids!"]

7. If you expect perfection in week one of this process, you will never make it past week four. Remember that you are "training up a child", not changing a tv channel. This will take time. Give this process commitment and effort, remembering that it is about God drawing our children to Himself, not just a behavior issue.

6. Be prepared that there will be some failures. There will be times when your wonderful child will simply not be the "angel" that we all hope they will be. On these occasions, it is perfectly acceptable, and even encouraged that you take your child discretely out of the service and administer a "teachable moment". It may even be helpful to sit near a rear exit when you are beginning this to be able to get out & back in without distracting other worshipers.

5. Talk about your expectations before Sunday. If you walk in on Sunday morning and spring your expectations on them as they sit down, you will be setting them up to fail. Train them by your conversations during the week that you have expectations of them to participate as a part of the service.

4. Eliminate every possible roadblock that you can. Take your child to the bathroom before the service. Get them a sip of water. Let them run a lap...whatever. Getting to bed on time on Saturday goes a long way in giving them strength to endure.

3. Show your children that you take worship seriously. The best way to help your children understand that worship is something that is impacting you is by talking about the service together. Ask questions and discuss applications from the service with your kids.

2. Plan for your child's success! Provide a notepad or Bible coloring book, depending on their age. Praise every little success and encourage more of it.

1. Regular Family Worship is the key ingredient to training a child in the fear of the Lord. If your children don't see that worship is an everyday event in your life, it would be naïve to believe that they will want to participate in worship on Sundays. Weekday worship or family devotions is the BEST training ground for your expectations of your children on Sundays.

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