



The  
**PRACTICAL**  
Stuff

**TIPS & TOOLS** |



## THINGS TO REMEMBER . . .

- ❖ Intentionally training your child in the joy of worship is a **spiritual practice** in and of itself. Trust me, you might get as much out of this as they do.
- ❖ **The goal is not quiet, well-behaved children.** The goal is to regularly guide them into a worship experience that is not about them, but about God and his Body.
- ❖ It's okay to **whisper!!** Use any opportunity to give your child a bit of context and help them connect.
- ❖ Have some **basic ideas about God** that you are working on throughout the week and can reference during worship. (E.g. This is a "Jesus loves us" song. This is a "God is so great" song. This is when we talk to God and thank him for what He's given us.)
- ❖ **Make a "worship bag."** Include things that they can use to quietly respond to what they are hearing or thinking about. (E.g. their Bible, a pad of paper, crayons, pens, snacks, pipe cleaners, etc. If you're really adventurous play dough and a plastic lid.)

**NOTE:** In order to get the children to really engage in the rest of worship, only bring the bag out during the sermon or other long periods of sitting/listening.



# WORSHIP TRAINING STARTS AT HOME

- ❖ **Get excited** about worshipping God! (If you act like Sunday is a chore, your kids will too.)
- ❖ **Set 2-3 clear expectations** for worship and give them opportunities (like dinner time) to practice meeting those expectations during the week.
- ❖ Sunday morning starts **Saturday night**. (Lay out clothes, pack a worship bag, build anticipation!)
- ❖ **Sunday morning**, set your kids up for success. (Give yourself enough time to get ready without rushing. Feed them a good breakfast. Arrive early.)
- ❖ **Right before worship**, take a bathroom break/water fountain trip. Anticipate needs/requests & address now.



# WORSHIPING WITH YOUR CHILD

- ❖ **Welcome** – Make sure your kid gets a bulletin. Look ahead at what’s coming & give them the job of checking off things as you go.
- ❖ **Finding Your Spot** – Choose wisely. Sit near the front and/or somewhere with extra wiggle room, if possible.
- ❖ **Worship Music** – Give your kids a chance to move. Cue them in on repetitive words and themes.
- ❖ **Prayer** – How do you want your child to physically respond to prayer? Cuddle with small children & whisper sound bites to them so that you can emphasize what you are praying about. Talk about the meaning of “Amen” with your kids.



## WORSHIPING WITH YOUR CHILD CONTINUED...

- ❖ **Announcements** – Connect with your kids about announcements. Comment on things & help them connect. (E.g. *“That looks fun. Maybe we should think about going together!”*, *“Did you know that when your in youth group, you could go on the Mexico trip?”*)
- ❖ **Pew Pads** – Give children who can write the job of adding the family’s names.
- ❖ **Scripture Reading** – Help them to find the verse(s). Even better if they have their own Bible and can highlight it each week.
- ❖ **Special Events** – (E.g. new members, baptism) Offer sound bites encapsulating & explaining. Find ways to connect them with the event.



## WORSHIPING WITH YOUR CHILD CONTINUED...

- ❖ **Passing the Peace** – Be outgoing yourself and welcome those around you. Include your children in these moments.
- ❖ **Offering** – Help them find something to offer. (Little ones can participate just by adding change. Older children can learn to tithe their allowances or just offer to help the ushers pass plates.)
- ❖ **Communion** – Kids not old enough to partake can still participate! Utilize chances to explain what Jesus has done. Give your child a blessing.



# WORSHIPING WITH YOUR CHILD CONTINUED...

## ❖ Sermon –

- For very young ones, the message is a good time for snuggles and snacks or a nap.
- For older children, pull out their worship bags. Depending on age, you can ask your child to...
  - Draw or write something they hear in the message.
  - Make a quiz for you to take after church.
  - Pick a word(s) from the message topic & have your child make tic marks to see how many times it's mentioned.
  - Do anything with their worship bag materials that they think is related to the message or God BUT they need to tell you about it later.



## AFTER SERVICE ENDS

- ❖ Your first words after service ends, should be **words of praise**. (Avoid empty praise & seek to truly find something that your appreciated seeing them do as they worshiped.)
- ❖ **Don't be shy!** Chat up the pastor or other church members while including your child.
- ❖ If you decided to do a quiz, make sure to **follow through** on the drive home or at lunch.
- ❖ Another great thing to make a habit of on the drive home or during Sunday lunch, is for everyone to share something that stuck out from church. Whether it was a sermon idea or just that your preschooler saw their friend, you can point it all back to God.