



CHRIST COVENANT CHURCH

Parents Matter

God has designed the family and charged parents with the responsibility of raising children who know and fear the Lord.

Christian Smith, founder of the National Study on Youth and Religion and lead researcher on the largest study of the religious and spiritual lives of American Teenagers says, “Many parents of teens say, ‘my teen doesn’t listen to me anymore,’ but I believe in most cases that is wrong — most teens in fact are still very influenced (for better or worse) by their parents and other significant adults in their lives, whether people realize it or not.”

In his research, Smith found two findings that stood out the most. First, contrary to popular notions fueled by the media, most teens today are not religious “seekers” rebelling against their parents’ religion. Instead, they willingly accompany their parents to church. Second — here’s the troubling part — these teens, even those regularly attending Christian churches and youth groups, are hard-put to articulate the first thing about what they believe. And when coaxed by the study’s 17 trained interviewers, the teens eventually described a religion largely devoid of any notion of Jesus, grace, judgment, salvation, or the cross. Rather, the creed of their faith goes something like this: “God’s out there somewhere, and if you just do what makes you happy and avoid being really bad, you’ll go to heaven when you die.” This faith is characterized by what Smith and Denton call “benign whateverism,” otherwise known as indifference. “MTD is wide open, accepting, and tolerant,” says Smith, “so it fits well with the general whateverism we observed in the youth.”

At CCC, we want to do things markedly different than what is often the approach in our culture to raising children and teenagers in the church. We want to have chances for children to receive age appropriate instruction and hear from teachers in their classes. However, we also want to emphasize the place of corporate worship for children of all ages, as parents take on the responsibility of being the primary disciplers of their children.

Help! My kids are bored in church

This is a real and seemingly constant struggle in today’s world. Realizing there is no quick fix, here are some suggestions for how you can help your kids get the most out of Sunday morning?

1. *You must have the reality yourself.* If Sunday morning is the highlight of your week and you enjoy worshiping God with His people, etc..., then this will likely be what is communicated to your kids. If you are going through the motions, they will pick up on that as well. As with most things, enjoying and prioritizing Sunday mornings is something that is more caught than taught.

2. *Ask them Questions about Sunday morning.* Over Sunday lunch, ask your children what they learned in Worship Training or what they want to apply from God=s Word based upon what they heard in the Worship Service.

3. *Help them complete their Worship Guides.*

4. *Sing robustly.*

5. *Model taking notes during the sermon.* Before the worship service, ask them to be ready to tell you 3 things that the pastor said in his sermon. Make it a game. Let them know that you are interested in what they are learning.

6. *Prepare them on Saturday night.* If your children are staying up to 11 p.m., midnight or even later on Saturday night, it is reasonable to expect that they will be tired and sluggish on Sunday mornings. If we make them go to bed between 8-9 p.m. on school nights so they can be attentive at school, what is this teaching them about our priorities when we let them stay up too late on Saturday night and sleep in on Sundays? Obviously there are exceptions to this general rule, but our pastoral advice—in response to the question, “How can we get the most out of Sunday worship”—is that we should begin preparing for Sunday morning on Saturday night.

7. *Pray for them.* As parents, we can do all that we can to teach our children the gospel, show them their need for a savior and point them to Christ, but we do so all the while realizing that unless God’s Spirit shows up and changes their hearts, they will not be saved (just as we would not have been).

Our Desire: Family Integration Rather Than Family Segregation

We believe that the church is a family of families, and that we should plan our programs around this conviction. Practically speaking, this means that we trust parents (and seek to equip) and not merely a church staff member to be the ones who actually evangelize and disciple their own children. It means that our children worship with their families—actually sitting by them in the worship service. It means that we seek to be cross-generational in all that we do. A great resource for exploring this model of ministry—and how this is the most effective way to pass on the Christian faith to our children—is Voddie Baucham’s Family Driven Faith.

Parent Links:

- [The Family: Together in God’s Presence](#)
- [Is the Era of Age Segmentation Over?](#)
- cpyu.org – Center for Parent Youth Understanding Deals with current issues in today’s culture and provides helpful resources for leading your children in their walk with Christ.
- www.youthandreligion.org - Christian Smith, noted researcher and author, publishes helpful studies of American Teenagers and their perspective on religion, faith, and the spiritual life.
- [Shepherding A Child’s Heart by Tedd Tripp](#)
- [Family Driven Faith by Voddie Baucham](#)
- [Big Picture Story Bible](#)