

Every Young Mother's Question

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As a young mom you have most likely lived through many a Sunday that goes something like this:

1. You arrive with children in tow either a few minutes late or just in time despite your best intentions to be early this morning.
2. You file into Bible class where your two-and-a-half-year-old will again not remain without you and clings to you the entire time.
3. Bible class ends and you make your way to worship already fatigued from the morning rush.
4. During worship the songs seem to soothe your children but during the opening prayer the baby starts to wail.
5. As the Lord's Supper is served you quickly take of the emblems terrified that a pudgy little hand will reach out and upset the fruit of the vine. You pray that the Lord understands the heart of a woman who feels she may have partaken in vain.
6. During the sermon you are up and headed to the nursery not two but four times to administer discipline and nurse your infant to sleep.
7. Upon returning with your sleeping infant you settle back into your seat only to hear the speaker utter the discouraging words, "In conclusion..."
8. After worship you leave quickly so the children can be fed and get naps before you return to do it all again.

Sound familiar? I have spoken to a lot of mothers and I have even asked myself, "Why am I even here?" It seems to be a prevalent question among those of us who are nurturing young ones. Society plays into an attitude of making things convenient for children ("child-friendly") and sometimes we want that to carry over to our worship. But should it?

When we approach worship with children we must remember three things:

- You are not there for yourself alone, but are there to worship the One that created you and your children and the One that understands you and your plights more than

you do yourself. You may come away more encouraged than you think as a particular verse is read or a friendly pat on the shoulder from another mama is very reassuring. Consider: Galatians 6:2-5, James 5:7-8, Mark 10:13-16.

- Your children are learning on a weekly basis how important worship is to you and how much effort you are willing to put forth to do what God commands. In short, they are learning obedience. Consider: Ephesians 6:1-3, Colossians 3:20, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Proverbs 22:6.
- This is a season of life. It will pass but as it passes you want to see the cultivation in your child's maturing heart a relationship with his Savior. Consider: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, 2 Timothy 1:3-7.

As you prepare for Sunday's day of worship, make things as easy as possible for that morning. Set out the clothes the night before and iron anything that needs it. Set the breakfast table before going to bed or make breakfast a very simple affair. Make yourself portray a cheerful countenance and be encouraging with your children to set the tone and atmosphere of the day (Proverbs 15:1). You want them to know that worship is a privilege and that we all should be happy because the first day of the week is a special day!

Making the day special in other ways is a good idea. Making Sunday a visiting day or marking the occasion with a special dinner or dessert is fun for the kids and easy for them to recognize that Sunday is a unique day.

Always keep in mind that many moms have walked and are walking in your shoes. They are a wealth of knowledge on tips and encouragement for keeping a weary mama energized. Lastly, pray and pray hard! Pray for strength to get through the tough Sundays and to guide your children's heart to the Lord. Pray for other mothers doing the same thing. After all, you sit each Sunday amidst the best company on the planet: God's people!