



Worshiping at Home During Quarantine

May 8, 2020



If you're like us, worshiping at home on Sunday mornings has been hit or miss. We've had some very sweet times and we've had some mornings where it didn't even seem worth trying. Virtual worship is definitely not what the writer of Hebrews had in mind when he urged the church not to neglect gathering together. But it's the best we can do right now and, honestly, in many ways it's a great opportunity for training our kids to worship. There's none of the stress that comes from training them in the middle of a sanctuary with 200 people: you don't have any other church responsibilities, there are few distractions because there's no one else around you, and, bonus, we have a fun kids' song during the service! I hope that

you'll make the most of this opportunity because your kids were made to worship. But I also want to say that this isn't the time for rigorous spring training. We're all struggling, including our children, so this is the time for baby steps. Here are a few tips for your approach:

We are commanded to worship God with *reverence and awe* (Hebrews 12:28-29), but we also worship Him *with joy* (Psalm 98:4-6) *because we want to* (Psalm 84:1-2). This means that we require our kids to be respectful and reverent in worship but we don't want to hinder their joyful expression either.

We *require* our kids to worship but we also want to *nurture* a desire to worship. One helpful way is to remind them that God is calling them, by name, individually to worship him. Tell your kids, "[name], you are called by God to worship." Remind them that whether they're alone or in a room of 200 people, God hears their voice singing and praying. God is speaking directly to them through his Word. He's changing their hearts through worship.





Maybe your first step is simply requiring them to join you for the whole worship service. That may take weeks to accomplish without a battle. If so, just focus on that. If you're ready to move your kids from being present to being engaged, here are some possible targets. I suggest picking and mastering one before you try a second. Like I said, this is the time for baby steps. You're running a marathon, not a sprint. Set small goals and keep their hearts, not their behavior, as the focus by explaining why we do these things and continuing to remind them that they are made for worship and God is delighted when they worship.

- Have your kids stand up when we sing. This is both part of being reverent and in awe, but it's also because our posture helps us focus.
- Have your kids sing or hum along. It's okay if the words aren't right or if they're off tune. They just need to make a *joyful* noise, not a pretty one!
- Have your kids close their eyes and put their hands together during prayer. Explain that this is about helping them focus and be respectful during prayer.
- Help them say the confession. Readers can read along and littles can say it after you.
- During the sermon, have them color something that goes along with the sermon such as the provided coloring sheet or a picture that matches. For example, this past week we talked a lot about God as King, so they could draw a crown and a throne. Older kids can take notes in a journal or on the provided sermon notes for kids. Periodically draw their attention to something the pastor said. A helpful reminder is "Don't snooze or you'll miss the clues." My kids are more able to listen if we cuddle up in a blanket for this part.



- Encourage them to put their hands up to receive the benediction.
- Talk about what they learned or about the confession, prayer, or songs at lunch. This is a great way to build connections for them so that they better understand what they heard/sang. Try to help them make applications to their own lives and hearts when appropriate.

In Christ,
Sarah Beam