

## **Help! My Preschooler Goes to Worship Now!**

Just as a preschooler learns to play baseball, soccer, or ballet through example, practice and participation, so preschoolers learn to worship by worshipping. And they learn to worship by example and participation.

We, as parents, are the best examples for our children to understand what it means to seek God, love Jesus and respond to the Holy Spirit. Preschoolers learn that prayer is important when they see their parents make it a priority. Preschoolers learn to open their Bible and find the Scripture as their parents model. Preschoolers learn to give generously when they observe their parents giving with a happy heart. So, when worship is an obvious joy to parents, preschoolers expect the same experience.

Remember, preschoolers are not mini-adults. And, their behavior in “Big Church” is taught over time. Preschoolers can participate in worship. Parents, guide them with positive encouragement and example.

### **What is normal behavior for your preschoolers?**

1. He moves around a great deal. What do you do? Teach him to sit and stand at appropriate times during worship. Give him freedom to move around in a small area.
2. She forgets to whisper and talks out loud. What do you do? Keep gently reminding her to whisper.
3. He falls asleep. What to do? Try to keep your child occupied. Have him draw pictures of things they hear in Big Church. Review your Saturday night schedule and see if he needs to go to bed earlier.
4. She stares at people. What to do? Remember that one way preschoolers learn is by watching others. However, if you feel uncomfortable or if you think she is making someone feel uncomfortable, refocus her attention on something else.
5. He wants to leave to get a drink or go to the bathroom. What to do? Remember to address these two needs before going into Big Church. If the need is urgent and he cannot wait, simply slip out and take him to the bathroom.

### **What can they do?**

1. Greet people and shake hands during the welcome.
2. Bring their Bible.
3. Give an offering and help pass the offering plate.
4. Sit and stand at appropriate times during worship.
5. Draw or color something the Pastor is speaking about or something they see in church, etc.
6. Learn to worship and pray by observing those around them.

You are the best teacher for your preschooler. Enjoy this season. Trust me, it goes way too fast.

-Dianne

