



Children and Worship

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Children and worship—what a powerful combination. Recently at camps across the Midwest, it was my privilege to see multitudes of children gather at altars proclaiming their love and adoration to God. Some children stood with hands lifted high, others sat with bowed heads, still others knelt with their heads buried in their knees, all of them pouring out their love to God in worship, tongues, and songs of praise.

We need to bring this same experience into our children's classrooms. Worship is not just for kids camp. It can happen every week. We have to be committed to seeing it happen.

It's God's Plan

Scripture is very clear concerning God's expectation of children worshipping. It is His plan that children learn to worship Him. Psalm 148:12,13 says, "Young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord."

Worship is an environment where children discover that God is real. When children accept Jesus into their hearts, they believe in Him because they are taught to. But there is a point later on in their lives when children discover God for themselves. I'll never forget the many

times I've seen children new to the faith discover God for the first time during worship. With tears running down their cheeks, ordinary children suddenly encounter the extraordinary God who becomes their very own.



During worship is when children experience the presence of God in a powerful way. They can know God is real because they can feel Him so strong. If children never worship, they'll never have the opportunity to experience this.

Learn to Lead

Two children's churches I was in recently immediately stood out as places where children were taught to worship. From the very first word of the very first

worship song, every child lifted his hands, shut his eyes, and poured out his heart to God. One church was large and one church was small, but both had taught their children the power of worship. However, far too many times I see children's services where the children stand bored and unmoved while a worship team on the platform sings on and on, oblivious to the fact that the children aren't following. What causes this? How can this trend be reversed?

Leading children in worship starts with the word **LEAD**. A leader isn't a leader if no one is following. Take an accurate assessment of your children's worship. Have a couple of volunteers slip in and watch your children during worship and make observations. Ask yourselves questions like: Are the boys worshipping? Are the girls? Are the older ones? Are the younger ones? Videotape your worship services a few Sundays. Discover if your kids are truly worshipping. Sometimes the worship leaders can get so lost in worship that they don't realize the children are no longer following.

Evaluate Your Service

What are the chief causes of not captivating your kids through

worship?



Choosing songs with words that kids can't understand.



Choosing popular adult songs that have far too many words and verses.



Singing too many songs so that kids get tired of standing and singing.

How can children be taught to worship? How can you recapture your kids' desire to touch God?

Choose just a few simple worship songs with simple but powerful words. Choose songs that are much like short prayers. Songs like these lead the children into the presence of God. Sing the same worship songs regularly. The more familiar a child is with a song, the more he can worship God without being hindered by learning new words.

Teach About Worship

Explain to the children that God hears everything they say and sing. Explain that God wants to hear them sing songs of love and worship to Him. Show them Scriptures concerning worship. Teach them that God wants us to lift our hands to Him. Show them Scriptures concerning lifting our hands in worship.

Utilize the Altar

Kids love to go to the altar and worship. There is something corporately wonderful when children go to the altar to worship. It draws other kids in. Make the altar the place where anointed kids go to worship God.

Spend Time

Spend extra time with your older kids, especially the boys. Go into their classes or take

them on a retreat. Take them to a place where they can learn to worship God uninhibited. Once they learn to worship in that setting, they will begin to worship in a corporate setting. Remember, younger kids may follow older kids, so make a special effort to teach your older kids to connect with God through worship.

Psalm 8:2 says, "From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise." God wants our children to discover Him. He loves to hear them proclaim their love for Him. Worship draws children into the presence of God. Give your children the opportunity to corporately worship God and grow in Him through worship.

Questions for Further Study—

1. How can you encourage children to worship during your children's church services?
2. Take a moment to evaluate your children's church worship services. Ask yourself the questions given in this article. Plan ways to improve the worship session. List some of your ideas here.

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