

Helping Kids Engage with Sermons!

Hi parents!

We are praying for you as you worship at home with your families and navigate this difficult season and its unique set of challenges. In addition to the children's bulletins and children's sermon notes on the Kids Resources page we wanted to offer some ideas for helping your kids engage with the sermon as they listen with you at home. Obviously everyone's situation is different and a variety of approaches may work better or worse for each family (or each kid!) depending on age ranges, personality or learning style. We hope some of these ideas below are helpful, please let us know if there are other ways we can help you worship together at home and help your kids grow during this time.

It's okay if kids don't understand everything

This is a great opportunity for your child to start listening to sermons with you, even if they don't understand all the words or ideas. Don't underestimate the value of exposure. When first learning to speak, it's important to talk to babies as much as possible. Though they don't know what you're saying at first, the more they hear you speak the more they begin to understand. The same concept applies to what we understand from God's word. Even if your kids don't understand everything (or even the majority!) in a sermon, the more they hear, the more they will begin to understand as time goes on.

Allow your kids to draw while they listen

While we often consider it ideal to be at "full attention" when listening to someone, for some it can be helpful to doodle as they listen. This allows them to process in a visual and tactile way what they are hearing. Encourage your kids to try to connect their drawings to some of the stories or emotions expressed in the sermon. Afterward, ask your child about their drawings. See if there are any that they are especially proud of or carry any significant meaning.

Encourage your kids to ask questions. We want kids to be inquisitive of what they hear in God's word and what they learn in church or Sunday school. This context provides a unique opportunity for your kids to ask questions about the sermon in real time. Encourage your kids to ask questions along the way (pausing when necessary); this may feel a little disruptive at first, but it could also open opportunities to talk about things greater detail. You can also encourage your kids to be listening for answers to their questions that may come up later in the sermon.

Summarize for you kids. One of the best ways to understand any subject better is to teach it to someone else. After listening to a 5-10 minute section of the sermon, pause it, and try to give your child a short summary of what's being said. Not only will this help them understand what they are hearing better, but it will help you internalize and process what God is saying to you through the message.