



# 20 Steps to Prepare Your Family

*Parents as Tour Guides of Everlasting Joy*

**A**mong all the places you will take your children, there is no place more important—outside your home—than the local church. Parents should not merely bring their children to church—they should prepare them for it as tour guides of everlasting joy.

## 1. Prepare Your Own Heart First

Children quickly detect whether their parents truly delight in worship.

Prepare your own heart before you ever prepare your children. Your children will learn how to approach the Lord's Day largely by watching you.

## 2. Cast a Vision for the Importance of the Moment

Help your children understand that the Lord's Day meeting is the most important meeting of the week, where they will encounter:

- the most important institution—the church
- the most important person—Christ
- the most important book—the Bible
- the most important people—the people of God
- the most important activity—worship
- the most important meal—the Lord's Supper

## 3. Cultivate Anticipation for the Lord's Day

Make the church sweet in your home throughout the week.

Speak positively about it. Pray for its members. Express gratitude for the privilege of belonging to God's people.

## 4. Use Family Worship as Training

Family worship serves as a kind of “mini-Sunday,” where children practice:

- Listening to the reading of Scripture
- Sitting attentively
- Singing together
- Praying together

If the only time children are expected to sit still and listen is Sunday morning, church will often feel unfamiliar and frustrating. But when families regularly gather around the Word during the week, children grow accustomed to the rhythms of worship.

## 5. Prepare Spiritually Before Sunday Arrives

Wise parents help their children prepare to hear the Word before the service begins.

Whenever possible:

- Review the upcoming sermon text together
- Explain the passage and its central message



- Discuss how the Word of God applies to your lives

Even a short conversation beforehand can help children recognize the passage and follow the sermon more easily.

## 6. Familiarize Your Children with the Songs of the Church

One simple way to help children participate in worship is to make the church's songs familiar.

You can:

- Sing them during family worship
- Play recordings of them during the week
- Practice them together as a family

When children know the songs, they are far more likely to sing with joy when the congregation gathers.

## 7. Train Children to Listen to Sermons

Help them understand that the sermon is not merely a speech—it is God's appointed means of speaking to His people.

Encourage them to:

- Listen carefully
- Notice important words or ideas
- Think about how the message applies to their lives

## 8. Pray for the Preacher

Before church:

- Thank God for the preacher's work
- Pray that God will strengthen him
- Ask the Lord to bless the sermon to the congregation

This helps children see preaching as a sacred responsibility and a gift from God.

## 9. Set Clear Expectations

Do not assume children know what is required.

Tell them clearly:

- Sit attentively
- Listen carefully
- Participate in singing
- Show respect

Clear expectations help children succeed.

## 10. Role Play When Needed

Practice is helpful—especially with younger children,

Walk through what sitting still and listening looks like. Let them rehearse what will be required. This kind of training builds confidence and understanding.

## 11. Pray as a Family

Take time—either Saturday evening or Sunday morning—to pray together.

Ask God to:

- Prepare your hearts
- Give attentiveness
- Help your children listen
- Bless the preaching of His Word

*"Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law."*

—Psalm 119:18

## 12. Prepare Practically on Saturday Night

Many Sunday morning struggles can be prevented with simple preparation.

Consider:

- Laying out clothes and shoes the night before
- Preparing meals ahead of time
- Organizing supplies for younger children
- Planning to leave early enough to arrive calmly



A peaceful start to Sunday morning helps families enter worship with a settled spirit.

### 13. Prioritize Rest

Late nights make for restless children and distracted parents.

Guard your family's rest so they can come ready to listen and engage.

### 14. Plan Your Morning Intentionally

Avoid a rushed, chaotic start.

Build in time for:

- Getting ready without hurry
- A brief conversation about the day
- A moment of prayer

A measured start often leads to a more attentive service.

### 15. Work Together as Parents

Discuss your plan ahead of time.

- Who is helping which child?
- Who will step out if needed?
- How will you respond to common challenges?

Unity between parents brings stability to children.

### 16. Fathers, Set the Tone

Fathers should lead—not withdraw—in preparing the family.

Your seriousness, your joy, and your consistency will shape how your children view the Lord's Day.

*"Bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." —Eph. 6:4*

### 17. Come Early and Settled

Arriving just in time often creates stress and distraction.

Arriving early allows:

- Children to settle
- Parents to prepare mentally
- A smoother transition into worship

A calm beginning helps the whole service.

### 18. Limit Distractions before the Service

What happens immediately before worship matters.

Avoid filling the morning with noise, screens, or unnecessary busyness. Help your children transition into a more focused and reverent frame of mind.

### 19. Come Ready to Engage

Do not arrive distracted or disengaged.

Come ready to sing, listen, and respond. Help your children understand they are not spectators—they are participants.

### 20. Lead Your Children with Intentional Joy

Do not simply bring your children to church—lead them there.

Good shepherds lead their flocks to green pastures and still waters. In the same way, parents must intentionally guide their children into the treasures of the church.

Think. Pray. Plan. Act.

Show them the beauty of worship. Help them savor the songs, the prayers, the preaching, and the fellowship of God's people.