

Sermon Notes for Kids: Parent Tips

What is “Sermon Notes for Kids”?

We provide two versions of SNFK each week: the main “Sermon Notes for Kids” bulletin features activities and questions to help kids to participate in the worship service. “Sermon Notes for Kids Junior” provides activities for younger children who are not yet proficient at reading and writing.

The goal of SNFK is not to entertain but to train. Parents, we are not trying to help kids sit still so that *you* can listen to the sermon; we are trying to resource you to help *them* to listen to the sermon and participate in the worship service alongside you. It takes work, but the end result is worth it!

Suggestions for using SNFK with your kids:

1. *Set clear expectations for their participation.* For example, are they expected to stand during the songs? To face forward and read the words on the screen? To sing along (or hum if they don't know the words)? Encourage participation, but remember grace: we want to engage the heart, not just comply with a list of rules.
2. *Set clear parameters for when they can use their SNFK sheets.* Can they start filling them out as soon as they service starts, or do you want them to wait until the sermon? Is it OK if they are coloring a picture during the singing... announcements... a long prayer? The goal is to train them to worship through participating in the service with you—but kids often absorb more than we realize while coloring or drawing, too.
3. *Use discernment about how much of the sheet to expect.* Some kids will enjoy answering all the questions; others will just want to complete the word search and color the picture. They may still be listening... or they may be tuned out. Pay attention to your kids and ask God to help you discern how to encourage and help them.
4. *Look for ways to motivate reluctant children.* For example, you may want to require a base level of participation (such as looking up the passage and copying the verse) before they draw or color. You may want to offer incentives for completing their SNFK or warn of consequences for poor attitudes. Just remember that the goal is worshipping hearts, not merely good behavior.
5. *Ask kids to share their questions, answers, and responses with you.* Do this as soon after the service as possible, such as on the way home or over lunch. Discuss the family questions. Or read and discuss the sermon passage together later in the week, using the questions as a guide.
6. *Fill out your own SNFK each week!* Share your responses to questions and notes you made during the sermon. Let them laugh at the picture you drew of the Bible story or illustration. The best teaching tool is often your own example.
7. *Consider collecting your kids' SNFK sheets in a binder.* Look back through their sheets for services or sermons that were especially memorable. Compare their notes at the end of the year with what they did at the beginning, and encourage them with how they are growing.