

The Worship No One Sees

by Paul Ferrin Former Director of the National Music Department, Springfield, Missouri

From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise.
Psalm 8:2

Giving praise through music, and praise flowing from children to the throne of God, has been ordained by God. In other Scripture passages are phrases such as, "Let the little children come to me," and, "Unless you...become like little children."

Our Lord loved infants and children. He saw in them an innocence and sincerity often lacking in adults. When toddlers are taught to worship and love God, they do it without pretense and with complete trust. Their minds have not yet been contaminated by the filth of this world. It is easy for them to praise the Lord with purity of heart, soul, and mind.

The Worship God Sees

A minister in a fashionable church had a dream in which he saw himself standing by the throne of God. As he looked down on earth, he saw his congregation and the 100-voice choir at Sunday worship.

Although he saw the lips of the choir and congregation moving in song, the only sound that rose

to heaven was that of one solitary voice.

He asked the Lord, "Why is it, Lord, that out of a congregation of many hundreds and a choir of 100 highly trained voices, I can hear only a single voice?"

The Lord replied, "The only sound that reaches heaven is the sound of heartfelt praise—anything less is lost on the way up."



As the minister looked more closely, he saw that the solitary voice reaching heaven was that of a little boy—who was not even in the choir—as he sang the praises of God with utter delight and sincerity.¹ It is important to teach even the smallest child that he can worship and love God with all of his heart.

Graded-Choir Ministry

Children's choirs are an

excellent vehicle by which children can be taught not only music, but also how to worship and love God. This also prepares them for worship in Sunday School, children's church, and adult worship services. I am not referring to the occasional children's Christmas or Easter presentation, but to an ongoing time of teaching.

If your Sunday School has classes for various grades, you can have a graded-choir program. The Sunday School, children's church, and graded-choir program can all work hand-in-hand in equipping children to love, worship, and praise the Lord, along with teaching them the basics of music.

Children's Music Material

A wide variety of materials is available from almost every publisher. Look for varied styles and subjects, but don't forget to include some contemporary choruses along with hymns and gospel songs. Here are some ideas to help you in your search:

Christian songs arranged for and sung by children.

Christmas music using many different characters to tell the familiar story.

Fresh and exciting arrangements for hymns and gospel songs. Some include stories of how these songs were written.

Material that will make learning music fun. They usually include games that assist in the learning process.

Non-seasonal musicals based on Bible stories.

This will encourage additional

involvement with sets, scenery, and drama

Music as Outreach

Involving your children in services, whether through a musical or only one song, is a wonderful way to reach unchurched parents and family. When children tell the Christmas story, bring life to a Bible story, participate in a missions theme, sing contempo-

rary choruses, or present the timeless hymns of the church, their lives will never be the same, and neither will the lives of their family members.

This also instills the need and privilege to worship God in the hearts of our children.

¹Selwyn Hughes, *Born to Praise*, (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000).

Questions for Further Study—

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2. What kind of worship reaches heaven?

3. What kinds of songs should you use in your children's worship service?

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