



## Always the Cross

My children, when young, were the typical squirmy kids who found it difficult to sit still in church on Sunday. As with many churches, many well-meaning matriarchs of the church offered unsolicited advice to young families.

Noticing my distressful attempt to keep three youngsters under control, I was told to try sitting up front one Sunday. That way the kids would know that everyone could see them and behave better, or so they said. My toddler son simply turned around to find an attentive audience, so he started waving and yelling “hi” to everyone. He was not disappointed when he got a giggling reaction from the congregation.

Since that was a noticeable flop, another woman suggested giving each of my children pen and paper. “Tell them to draw a picture about the pastor’s message, that way they will sit and listen attentively for something to draw on their paper.” After explaining this to them, we were set to try it (from the back of church again). As the pastor began his sermon, they promptly drew a picture of **a cross** on the paper and declared they were done before he spoke two whole minutes. They weren’t great artists but, even as youngsters, they knew that the pastor **always talks about the cross** on which Christ suffered and died for their sins and ours, too.

It is good to know I have a church home that always ties every message to the cross. My children grew up knowing about God’s love and forgiveness. We tried to follow the words of Solomon, *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it* (Proverbs 22:6). As adults, I am glad to say all my children are church members and my grandchildren attend regularly too. Hopefully, their wiggly youngsters will also grow up boasting in the cross of Jesus Christ, as St. Paul did when he wrote, *But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world* (Galatians 6:14).

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, make the cross my constant focus. Whatever I do, and wherever I go, may I always boast in the work of Jesus who sacrificed Himself for me on the cross. In Christ’s name, Lord, hear my prayer. Amen.

Scripture references are from the ESV.

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