

mercEmail

"He delights in mercy" (Micah 7:18)

Crying Babies at Church

by Steve Higginbotham

David had Goliath. Moses had Pharaoh. Elijah had Ahab. And preachers have crying babies. Okay, well maybe the battle between preachers and crying babies at worship services doesn't quite rise to the level of the other conflicts in the list, but sometimes preachers, as well as the congregation can lose perspective.

I don't know of a preacher who hasn't had a few of his sermons ruined by one of these precious little bundles of piercing screams, or by a fidgeting three-year-old.

But please, before we mercilessly crane our necks around to give a struggling young mother a dirty look, first consider the following...Sometime take a very hard chair that is too big for your feet to touch the floor and sit there for an hour. During this hour, do not look side to side or behind you, simply look straight ahead. While sitting there, listen to a cassette tape that addresses a topic that is beyond your comprehension (such as comparative cytology). For the duration of this hour, do not move or speak to anyone. Then if you can, have someone bigger than you sit beside you, and every time you fidget, have them pick you up and sit you down real hard, or pinch you, or whisper, "If you don't sit still, I'm going to take you out and spank you!" After you've tried this, perhaps you will better understand the perspective of a small child in worship.

While I'll be the first to tell you that a crying baby can be quite an inconvenience and distraction, let me share a positive side.

- A crying baby announces hope for the future.
- A crying baby testifies of a mother and father's effort to spiritually train their child.
- A crying baby signifies that a church hasn't bought into the idea that children and adults should be segregated.

Friends, don't be so quick to frown at a Mother who absolutely has her hands full as she struggles to do what is right. Instead of complaining, maybe we should change our perspective and thank God for crying babies...and nurseries too!