

## ENCOURAGEMENT: COMING ALONGSIDE

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As parents, we have all stood beside our kids and tried to decide how much we must let them do for themselves and when we may need to step in to help. It was hard when they were little, and it may continue to be hard today. This happens with homework, sports, and school projects. Sometimes we can see the look on their tired faces: discouraged and ready to give up. Do we decide then to help? Sometimes as parents, it is tempting to take over instead of standing beside them. Aaron and Hur may have thought the same. They could see that unless someone came alongside Moses, the battle would be lost. They did not take on the task of holding up their own arms but merely held the arms of Moses at his side.



Sometimes our children might resist our help, or they might throw up their hands and just give up altogether. While other times, we can come alongside with an encouraging word or helping hand.

How do we show our children how to accept help when they need it, and, more importantly, how to help others in need?

**Teach helping.** "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Sometimes helping others and our children is as simple as living an honest and faithful life. By living thoughtfully and honoring God with our actions and words, we can inspire our children to do the same. Kids will know how to help when they have seen it in practice, modeled in the lives of their parents.

- Do chores together around the house.
- Do acts of service together in your neighborhood and with your church.
- Let them lead by asking them to pick a service project.
- Always explain that you are serving God by serving others.

### Offer God's wisdom and guidance.

- [Deuteronomy 11:19](#) This well-known parenting passage encourages us to model God's Word and to have it always present in our children's lives daily.
- [Proverbs 22:6](#) shows us the future benefit for our children when we train them with God's guidance today.

**Trust God and them.** Struggle and challenge are opportunities to develop resilience, creativity, and problem-solving skills, which our children need for the future. [James 1:2-4](#) reminds us to "consider it pure joy" when we fall into trials, for this kind of testing produces perseverance. Perseverance leads to maturity.

Encourage boldness and fight against making things risk-free. Perhaps together you are stirred to action when reading Joshua 1:9, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Show them that God is faithful and that you are present too and happy to help when asked.

**Discover their gifts.** God has given your child talents with which they can serve him. With so many opportunities for learning and growth, as a family, explore different skills and opportunities.

- Show them your gifts and talents. Do you have a love for baking or a passion for auto repair? Teach them how to bake cookies or do an oil change.
- Have a friend who's a plumber or a photographer? Set up a day when your children can shadow them and help out.
- Go hiking to enjoy God's creation. Take apart a computer to discover God's order in all things. Explore all of God's good gifts ([James 1:17](#)) and create choices for their own interests, skills, and passions.

Show them what helping looks like. When they ask for help, listen and respond. Do work together. "Let's not get tired of doing good, because in time we'll have a harvest if we don't give up" (Galatians 6:9). Helping others has a ripple effect: Soon kindness is contagious and goodness is spread all around. Our children receive it, see it, and feel it. Finally, remember to accept their help when it's offered to you. That's modeling too.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Missional Living: Serving Your Community](#)

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*written by Beth Fellingner*