

IT'S GOOD TO BE BORED

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From a very young age, when my oldest daughter felt stressed, overwhelmed, or needed space, she would disappear. Her favorite retreat was a climbing tree. One afternoon, she took a blanket, her lunch, some books, and a journal up into her tree. She spent hours there, surveying the neighborhood from her self-made nest. Every time I checked on her, she gave me a little eye roll and sent me away, reminding me she enjoyed the solitude.



As a young mom, I often felt guilty when I needed a break or wasn't in the mood to play with my kids. But learning to give my daughter the space she craved reminded me to seek the solitude / sometimes needed too. I realized my kids didn't require my presence 24/7. In fact, the three of them sometimes became more imaginative and independent when I wasn't around!

Even Jesus—who never turned a person in need away and came to rescue the whole world—prioritized times of retreat. Amid the events of Mark 6, he paused to climb a mountain alone and talk with God. In a world of relentless hustle, doesn't that sound luxurious? It shouldn't!

Unlike my oldest daughter, my son doesn't enjoy the quiet. When an activity ends, he whines, "I'm so bored." With him, stillness requires intention, practice, and the frequent verbal reminder that "it's good to be bored." We hope he'll grow to appreciate rest and solitude and take time to talk to God. In the meantime, my husband and I must model this for him by inviting him to participate in brief moments of stillness when we focus on God together. Family devotions after dinner, prayer before bed, and looking out the car window instead of at a screen might not resemble Jesus' mountain-top retreats with his heavenly Father. These simple practices invite our son to get comfortable with stillness and to enter God's presence with fewer distractions and less hustle.

The New Testament doesn't record the details of Jesus' private retreats. We don't know the words he prayed, his conversations, or the tears of joy, frustration, or grief that he may have wept as he walked and talked with his heavenly Father. As parents, the same happens when our kids find ways to enjoy solitude or retreat—to this day, I still can't imagine what kept my tree girl up in her leafy perch for so many hours.

If your child frequently tells you they're bored, resist the temptation to fill their stillness with entertainment. Letting them work that time out for themselves may yield surprising blessings. Giving our kids (and ourselves) the gift of quiet invites them to cultivate inner worlds and personal connections with God that are intrinsically unique to them.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Time Management with Jesus: Don't Rush Past the Blessings](#).

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