

LET'S TALK: DUMPLINGS MEANS FAMILY

January 22, 2022

It's easy to see God the Creator when we look at majestic mountains or a beautiful sunset. But God's creation encompasses the *people* of the earth as well. All people are "created in God's image," and connecting with other cultures than one's own can teach our kids (and us!) so many wonderful things about God and serving others.

One of the most important values we can teach our children is respect for all people and their intrinsic worth. When we model this kind of respect, then kindness, compassion, and empathy will naturally follow. Seeing things from another person's perspective is one of the most effective ways to understand them and then, in turn, to be able to love and serve them.



When we adopted our youngest three children from China, they really missed Chinese food. One night, my son asked me to make dumplings. I felt so overwhelmed by that request! I didn't know how, and I really didn't feel like I had time to learn. But I realized that when my son had dreamed about having a family, this would've been part of it. Dumplings are very common in China, and many families make them together. When I looked at it from his perspective, this was more than just a food to him; it was a piece of home, the connection of family, and a reassurance that we could take care of him. When we met this request by learning to make dumplings, he felt loved and respected, which deepened our connection. It also opened our eyes to another world of cooking, flavors, and traditions, enriching our whole family!

Even knowing the benefits, it can be hard sometimes to engage with people who don't share the same culture. Here are some ways your family can connect with God's global community:

1. Look around your neighborhood. One of the best things about living in North America is the diversity right at home. Are there immigrants who need help navigating their shopping or getting their kids enrolled in school? How about a local English as Second Language (ESL) program that could use your help? Are there international students at a local university who would love to see a traditional American holiday, instead of being alone at Thanksgiving?
2. Sponsor a child. I have worked for many years as a Compassion International artist connecting kids in poverty with sponsors. When you sponsor a child, your family can write to them as well. This is a fantastic way to model generosity and caring while also learning about another culture.
3. Have an "Explorer's Night" once a month. Choose a country to highlight. Share fun facts, and find a recipe for a traditional food that you can make together. Spend some time praying together for the people who live there.

God has created us all and loves us all. When we help our kids see, respect, and appreciate the broader world, we are helping them to see people who are different as *people*, not merely differences. When you can love someone, they are better able to hear you when you share your faith with them. That will help our kids be effective as they grow up and give them a desire to serve God's global community.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's article [Become an Agent of Justice](#)

