

PARENTS SERVING BY EXAMPLE

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Do you ever feel exhausted as a parent? Your to-do list gets longer and longer as you clean up messes, bandage countless boo-boos, and wash endless piles of dishes and laundry. Not only are you responsible for your children's physical needs, but you also feel responsible for the mental, emotional, and spiritual health of their precious little lives. You're constantly explaining the "whys," drying tears, and praying for and with your children.



So, how do we renew our own desire to serve while teaching our kids to serve with happy hearts?

Fill yourselves up. [Luke 5:16](#) says, "But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." Finding time to do anything for yourself as a parent can be challenging. But it's imperative for your spiritual health to spend time alone with God. As a kid, I often came downstairs in the morning to find my dad quietly reading his Bible before he went to work. After bedtime, I'd sneak into the kitchen for a drink of water and pass my mom in the living room with her head bowed in prayer. As an adult, those memories have stuck with me and inspired me. What if our kids saw glimpses of us in our rare and valuable alone time, not buried in Instagram reels but stuck in the Scriptures? What impact would that make on their spiritual habits?

Serve in your home. What example are you setting for your kids? Do you complain and roll your eyes about their little needs? Or do you humbly and devotedly provide for them, guide them, and demonstrate servanthood? Help your kids practice servanthood at home by following your example. Find ways your children can serve the family. It may help to make a list of tasks they can do. Young toddlers may pick up their toys without being asked to do so. Older children might rake the leaves or help their younger siblings get ready for bed. Instead of treating these tasks like "chores," acknowledge them as ways your kids exemplify God's love to their family.

Serve in your community. You may already volunteer individually, but have you served alongside your family? Seek out opportunities where your family can serve together. Your kids will learn by watching you serve, and you'll be amazed at how Christ pours out his love through your kids.

Think of the responsibility Jesus felt towards his disciples. Some were well-versed in the Scriptures but didn't yet understand how Jesus would fulfill the Law and the Prophets. They were the first "baby Christians." And like sheep, they were utterly defenseless against the work of Satan and totally reliant on their Shepherd.

I'm sure Jesus felt exhausted during his ministry. Still, he set a selfless example for his followers by filling himself up for a life of servanthood by spending time alone with his Father in prayer, and then when he was back with them, he poured his love out time and time again through selflessly serving others.

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

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