

Abundant Living

MINISTRIES

Encouraging Christian Living Since 1978

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**ALWAYS
ENOUGH TIME!!!**

Question: As a parent, I often feel inadequate for the task of raising my children to love God. Days rush by, filled with lots of activity, but seem sadly lacking in worthwhile lessons. How do I fit truly-important training into our busy schedules?

Response: From the time a child awakens in the morning until he falls asleep at night, he is impacted by his parents. Their physical, emotional, and spiritual care (or absence thereof) hugely impact the child's growth in those same areas. Often it is the accumulation of *small* acts of love that makes the biggest difference in a child's life. Sons and daughters are never too young, or old, to have seeds of love sown in their hearts. Following are some *little* things (most take only a

few minutes!) dads and moms can incorporate in the midst of daily routines to help instill Godly values in their children:



Awaken your infant or young child with a smile and gentle voice... “Honey... it’s time to get up. God has given us another wonderful day. Let us rejoice and be glad in it!”



Read a short daily devotional to the children while they are eating breakfast.



Pray a simple prayer of blessing over each child as they head out to the school bus. Send them off with uplifting words such as, “I love you... Jesus bless you and give you a wonderful day at school.”



Play Christian music or audio books when in the car... or, better yet, sing together.



When a child falls and skins a knee or elbow, pray as you apply a bandage, thanking the Lord for speedy healing of the wound.



From time to time, hide encouraging notes in a lunch box or book bag or under the child’s pillow.



Purchase vegetable or flower seeds and help your child plant and care for the growing seedlings. Talk about spiritual seeds we can plant and nurture in our own lives and the lives of others.



Before entering a store or visiting in someone’s home, briefly review appropriate and respectful behavior. Give specifics...where to sit, walk, keep their hands, etc. (Children needs lots of reminders!)



Stop and pray briefly with your child throughout the day about their concerns. Let children see that conversation with the Lord is a normal part of life. Always pray with them at bedtime.



When your child disobeys, stop and ask the Lord to help you correct out of love and concern for the child... not out of anger, frustration or embarrassment.



Invite your child to help you with meal prep or some family tasks. You can teach while having lots of fun!



Leave a message or text for your adult child, telling them that you were thinking of them and that you prayed for them that they would have a great day.



Share an encouraging Scripture verse, perhaps selecting a verse to memorize together.



Take a few minutes to practice a valuable skill with your child... e.g. how to respond to the parent's instructions, how to use polite phrases like, "please," "thank you," and "you're welcome," how to respond when introduced to an adult. Remember... it's easier to teach right behavior than to correct wrong behavior.



Give daily hugs and kisses, smiles and warm affection... a hand on the child's shoulder, a tousle of his hair, holding her hand as you walk together, a wink and a grin, a shoulder or foot rub.



Turn off the “screens” and urge the child to play a table game, work on a craft, or play outdoors.



When you wrong your child, ask their forgiveness and then pray aloud, asking God’s forgiveness.



Take walks and, together, see how many amazing examples of God’s creative power you can spot.



Assign some regular chores. This helps develop responsibility and unselfishness.



Before naptime and bedtime, read aloud one story... choose many that reinforce Christian values.

We definitely desire that our children become “on fire” with love for God and for others. Let’s remember that becoming “on fire” is work of the Holy Spirit and we parents can’t “make it happen.”

We also should remember that a huge fire begins with one little spark. And here is something we fathers and mothers CAN do. We can add lots of good “sparks” into the nitty-gritty of daily routines.

A minute here and five minutes there can make a difference. Then we trust God that HE will use one of those minutes as the spark, lighting the flame of goodness, love, and righteousness in the next generation!



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