

SERVICE

GOAL: *To inspire and engage the family in being the hands and feet of Jesus through church, community and global service as a family.*

Preparation:

1. Ask a missionary, a fireman, a doctor or police officer to come share their experiences as a public servant.
2. Make Service Booklets with options for families to pick from (see *Extra Resources* on the website).
3. Have cards and envelopes ready for participants to write encouraging notes to other people.
4. Create a picture wall with missionaries, firemen, soldiers, doctors, police officers, pastors, teachers, etc.
5. Questions to ask of person/people giving their testimony:
 - When and how did God call you into this position of servanthood?
 - What has been one of your greatest experiences serving others? Be specific.
 - In what ways do you feel like you are working with God?
 - How has serving others brought you closer to God?

Explain it:

Activity: The Picture Wall

As families arrive, ask them to sit around the tables. Direct their attention to the picture wall.

Ask what they notice about the people in the pictures. Allow time for responses on how these people serve others.

Ask them to think about people who have served them during the week. Let them write it on the pages on their tables and then to give some feedback.

Ask the children what opportunities they had to serve their parents and how they had used those opportunities.

Ask the parents what opportunities they had to serve their children and how they had used those opportunities.

Ask them to shout out characteristics of someone who serves and write it on the whiteboard or type it straight onto PowerPoint.

Inspire them:

Introduce the person who will be sharing their story and their testimony.

Allow 8-10 minutes for sharing and approximately 5 minutes for questions.

Model it:

Read the story below or ask volunteers to act it out as you read.

JESUS IS COMING

A family sits together at home when the phone rings. The person calling identifies himself as Jesus and lets them know that He is coming over that evening. After figuring out that this was a legitimate call, the family realizes that they have to get a few things ready for their prestigious guest, Jesus!! They hastily start cleaning the house. The preparation involves replacing the pictures on the walls with crosses, hiding the variety of magazines on the coffee table and putting out the Bibles. The teenagers discreetly remove a few items from their bedrooms.

During this time of preparation, the family has three different visitors who come to their door.

The first visitor asks for food donations for the local food bank.

The second visitor is raising money for the women's refuge.

The third visitor has had an accident with his car and would like to call someone to come help him.

On all three occasions the family pushes the visitor out the door exclaiming, "We are too busy right now preparing for a very important person. Please ask next door.

The family looks at the clock. It is one minute before midnight so they decide to really impress Jesus, as He is sure to come any second now. They sit down together, open the Bible randomly and begin to read.

The text they happen to turn to is Matthew 25:41-45:

⁴¹ Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

⁴⁴ They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

⁴⁵ He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

By the time the family is done reading these verses, it is midnight. The teenage son says, "I guess Jesus isn't coming after all." After a moment of silence, the mother replies, "I think Jesus was already here."

Discussion Questions:

Ask the following questions for discussion:

- What did you learn from the story? What was the main point?
- Is serving others important to Jesus? *Look at Matthew 20:28 and Luke 22:27*
- What should our attitude be towards serving others? *Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 4:10*
- Who are people who serve God today? Have families name the people they think are serving God.

Practice it:

Explain to the group that they will have an opportunity to share in a family project. Explain that there are people in the church who are hospitalized or recovering at home. One way to serve them is to send a card of encouragement.

On each table have enough cards as well as names and addresses of people who are in hospital or recovering at home.

Give the families time to think about who they would like to encourage.

When the task is completed, ask:

- How difficult was the activity?
- How does it make you feel knowing that you have served?
- How do you think it will make the person feel who receives this card?

Take it home:

1. Give each family the 12 month Service Booklet (see *Extra Resources* on the website).
2. Explain that there are many different ways to serve others.
3. Ask them to come up with 12 service opportunities that they can do together as a family.