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GENEROSITY

This year our Birthday Faith Experience is centered on developing generosity. Below you'll find a guide on practical ways to develop generosity in your family.

The Importance of Generosity

Your six-year-old is likely beginning to think beyond themselves. They are developing empathy. And it's a great time to capitalize on that by helping them see that they can be generous to those around them. We want to help families carve out time to look at what the Bible says about generosity, leading to an experience where your family can SERVE together.

Activity 1 - What do I have?

This family activity is designed to help your child recognize that every gift we have is from God.

What You Need: Blank piece of paper for each person in your family, crayons or colored pencils

What You Do: Read **Matthew 14:14-21 NIRV** below or use a kids' Bible and read the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000.

When Jesus came ashore, he saw a large crowd. He felt deep concern for them. He healed their sick people. When it was almost evening, the disciples came to him. "There is nothing here," they said. "It's already getting late. Send the crowds away. They can go and buy some food in the villages."

Jesus replied, "They don't need to go away. You give them something to eat."

"We have only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered.

"Bring them here to me," he said. Then Jesus directed the people to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish. He looked up to heaven and gave thanks. He broke the loaves into pieces. Then he gave them to the disciples. And the disciples gave them to the people.

All of them ate and were satisfied. The disciples picked up 12 baskets of leftover pieces. The number of men who ate was about 5,000. Women and children also ate.

What You Say: This boy with the fish and bread gave Jesus what he had, and it was enough. Everything we have is from God.

Encourage everyone to draw pictures of things that God has given you. Parents, make sure to draw a couple of pictures as well.

Pray together, thanking God for all the things He has given you.

Activity 2 - What can I do?

This family activity is designed to help your child realize that you're never too young to make a difference.

What You Do: Read the story of the Good Samaritan from a kids' Bible or read the following verses, **Luke 10:30-37 NIRV:**

Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Robbers attacked him. They stripped off his clothes and beat him. Then they went away, leaving him almost dead. A priest happened to be going down that same road. When he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. A Levite also came by. When he saw the man, he passed by on the other side, too.

But a Samaritan came to the place where the man was. When he saw the man, he felt sorry for him. He went to him, poured olive oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey. He took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins. He gave them to the owner of the inn. 'Take care of him,' he said. 'When I return, I will pay you back for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of the three do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers?"

The authority on the law replied, "The one who felt sorry for him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do as he did."

Discuss as a family what made the Samaritan good. Parents, you may have to give some examples to help get conversation started.

Activity 3 – Who needs help around me?

What You Need: Band-Aids, pen, doll or action figure, paper, colored pencils or crayons

What You Do: As your child answers the questions below, write the answers on the Band-Aids. Then place the Band-Aids on a doll or action figure.

What You Say:

What are you good at?

What do you like to do?

How can you help others?

What You Do:

Read **Mark 2:1-12 NIRV**, the story of Jesus healing a man who couldn't walk, either from a kids' Bible or from below:

A few days later, Jesus entered Capernaum again. The people heard that he had come home. So many people gathered that there was no room left. There was not even room outside the door. And Jesus preached the word to them.

Four of those who came were carrying a man who could not walk. But they could not get him close to Jesus because of the crowd. So they made a hole in the roof above Jesus. Then they lowered the man through it on a mat.

Jesus saw their faith. So he said to the man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Some teachers of the law were sitting there. They were thinking, "Why is this fellow talking like that? He's saying a very evil thing! Only God can forgive sins!"

Right away Jesus knew what they were thinking. So he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Is it easier to say to this man, 'Your sins are forgiven'? Or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins."

Then Jesus spoke to the man who could not walk. "I tell you," he said, "get up. Take your mat and go home."

The man got up and took his mat. Then he walked away while everyone watched. All the people were amazed. They praised God and said, "We have never seen anything like this!"

What You Say:

What did the friends do in this story?

What was wrong with their friend?

Do you know someone who needs help?

What You Do:

Encourage your child to write the name (s) of the person(s) on their paper and pray for them.

Serving Project Planning Guide

There are tons of ways to serve within your community. This experience will be most impactful when the entire family is involved and when it ends with something tangible for your child to keep that reminds them of this time. You can use all the information you gathered through the activities as a frame of reference as you answer the questions below. In order to land on a good serving project for your family, think through and answer the following questions.

Serving Project Worksheet

1. What do we have?
2. What can we do?
3. What are the needs we see?
4. What organizations do we know about?
5. What are our top three choices? (List them, then vote and circle the winner)
6. Contact the organization to schedule a date to serve.
7. Mark your serving project on the calendar!
8. Schedule a time to celebrate serving together as a family! (see sample script below)

Serving Project Ideas

1. Rake leaves/Shovel snow for a Neighbor.
2. Serve dinner at Ronald McDonald House.
3. Server dinner at Inner City Mission.
4. Drop off food at the local food pantry.
5. Make cards for residents at a local nursing home.
6. Play board games or BINGO with residents at an assisted living home.

Celebration Script Example:

We've read three stories in the Bible to see how others have served. We learned that we can serve by giving out of the things God has given us, working out of the way He created us, and clearly seeing all the places we can serve around us.

God has led us to serve together as a family by . . . (Talk about the project you completed.)

While serving, we saw you . . . (List any stories, character traits, etc. that stuck out to you.)

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH MY 6-YEAR-OLD?

Six-year-olds are fairly self-sufficient. They are beginning the phase of independence. Rest assured -- your child is ready for this change.

Here are some of the developmental changes they are experiencing right now.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Perform locomotor skills, including running, jumping, leaping, sliding, and skipping
- Engage in one to two minutes of moderate to intense physical activities, leading to increased heart rate, breathing, and perspiration
- Possess strength to lift and support their own body weight for a variety of activities (hopping, jumping, hanging)
- Show left- or right-handed dominance
- Can perform self-care tasks with fine motor dexterity (zipping, buttoning, etc.)

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Understand the difference between right and wrong
- Can verbalize feelings appropriately
- Can play independently and also with peers without constant supervision
- Want to make decisions for themselves
- Are willing to take "safe" risks

RELATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Enjoy playing with friends
- Can play cooperatively with peers
- Will encourage others
- Respect authority figures
- Recognize that others have feelings

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

- Begin to understand what they see/hear (This is a great time to begin reading the Bible to your child.)
- May ask questions about spirituality
- because of their desire for learning
- Have very close relationships with mom and dad, who have a great deal of influence at this stage