

# FAMILY TOOLBOX



## SERIES

### CHRISTIAN SERVICE



*Children's Ministry*

*Golden Hills Community Church*

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## **A Note to Families**

The Children's Ministry of Golden Hills Community Church exists to "*Glorify God by helping families develop age-appropriate disciples who impact their world for Christ*".

In order to accomplish this task, we at GHCC have attempted to describe the discipleship of a believer, which includes these three elements:

- **Worship**
- **Grow**
- **Serve**

We believe that children, as followers of Christ, can also participate in the discipleship process. We have further identified twelve specific spiritual growth issues within these three elements of discipleship.

It is our desire in Children's Ministry, to create a balanced program, which addresses all of these spiritual growth issues, helping to produce a healthy, age-appropriate disciple.

However, statistics tell us that the national average for children attending Sunday school is 26 hours each year (that's only half of the time). And our church is no exception to this. Our average Sunday attendance is roughly half of our total registration. What does this mean? Well, we could have the best programming, the best teachers and staff (which, by the way, I think we do) and we would still have a very hard time in accomplishing the goal God has set before us. But there is a way.

The way in which we can realize the goal of making age-appropriate disciples is stated in our purpose: "...by helping *families* develop age-appropriate disciples..." In fact, the best approach to aiding your child's faith development is *not* in the formal setting of the church, but in the informal, everyday life of your home. God's Word clearly reminds us of this in Deuteronomy 6:4-7:

*"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. The commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress (teach) them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home, and when you walk along the road, when you lie down at night and when you get up."*

We encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity to "impress upon your children" spiritual truth. Use dinner conversation, driving in the car, bedtime routines and getting ready each morning as times to reflect and teach about God and his faithfulness.

To help you in these discussions, we have developed a series of tools for you to use. These tools are series of booklets (**THE FAMILY TOOLBOX SERIES**), each addressing the spiritual growth issues. In them you will find information, discussion questions and activity suggestions to help you guide your children on their spiritual journeys.

Dear Parents,

Children and youth who are engaged in social concerns and Christian service grow up to be adults who are similarly involved. We want our kids to be involved serving the Lord Jesus Christ both inside the church and out in the community as frequently as possible. One of the greatest ways to accomplish this is to serve as together as a family.

This booklet (part of the **FAMILY TOOLBOX SERIES**) is designed to offer a basic understanding of what Christian service means and perhaps generate some practical ideas of ways your family can serve together.

God bless you as you serve Him.

Pastor Mark

## Christian Service

*“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in various forms.”*

*1 Peter 4:9-10*

A natural outcome or response of our spiritual maturity is serving Christ by serving others. In fact, at GHCC, it is a major element in the description of the discipleship of a believer:

**\* *Worship* \**Grow* \* *Serve***

First, let’s discover what Christian Service means.

George Barna, in his book Transforming Children Into Spiritual Champions says of Christian service:

*“One of the best ways for people to develop their faith is by serving people. It becomes unhealthy for Christians to get in the routine of attending church events and taking spiritual resources from those activities while failing to give away whatever they have received, whether those resources are tangible or intangible. The Christian faith is not meant to be hoarded but shared. Our faith is founded on the notion of expressing love in real ways, not simply discussing it as an intellectual concept. Building the habit of service at a young age tends to alter the attitudes and expectations of young people, resulting in a lifelong practice of helping others. The younger we instill such a mind-set and lifestyle, the more ingrained they become.”*

## **Christ Is Our Example**

Christ's purpose for coming to this world was "not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45).

During Christ's last time with the Disciples, Jesus demonstrated and taught them about having a servant's heart and attitude. (Read Luke 22:24-27).

In this passage, a dispute broke out among the Disciples who would be greater in the kingdom of God. Jesus taught the disciples that, in the world, those in authority rule over those beneath them. But, as followers of Christ, we are to serve others, just as Christ came to serve.

John 13:1-15 gives us another example of the servant heart of Jesus. Here, we see Jesus washing the feet of the disciples. Jesus was clearly setting an example of how they were to serve each other.

As Christians, we have been set free in Christ-not to do whatever we please, but to serve. Believers have been set free from sin to serve righteousness (Romans 6:18-19), set free from Satan to serve God (1 Peter 2:16), and set free from self to serve others (Galatians 5:13). Christians no longer serve the things of the old life, but are free to voluntarily serve the things of the new life.

### **Keys to Becoming a Servant**

1. *Be humble.* We are only Christ's servants. It is He who does the work in people's lives (see John 13:13-16).

2. *Observe and meet the needs of others.* We need to see and hear the needs of others, both in the large and small things. (See Luke 16:10).

3. *Evaluate your serving.* Have you ever failed to serve someone even when you knew the need? Why did you serve one time and not the other? Are you serving in a ministry now? If not, consider serving in Children's Ministry, where your children will benefit from your involvement two-fold.

### **Remember These Points**

\* Jesus Christ was not obligated to become a servant, but did so voluntarily in order to meet people's needs.

\* Because of Christ's work on the cross, the loving response of all believers should be to serve Him and others.

\* Believers must put others first. We are then free to serve others.

\* A servant must be humble and observant in little things as well in the big things.

### **Some Service Ideas For You and Your Family**

\* *Jesus Sneaks.* Identify a family who needs yard work done. Set aside a morning where the whole family goes to their house to rake leaves or whatever needs to be done.

\* *Church Clean-up Projects.* There is always woodwork to polish, windows to be washed, closets to be cleaned.

\* *Cookies for shut-ins.* Bake cookies and deliver them together to our shut-ins.

\* *Encouragement Cards.* Write cards to pastors, teachers, secretaries, and facility crew thanking them for what they do.

\* *Adopt a Missionary*. Support and encourage a missionary together as a family.

\* *Children's Ministry*. Find ways you can involve the whole family in Children's Ministry (OK-a bit of self-promotion).

\* *Community Outreach Center (COC)*. The COC is another place where the whole family can serve those who may be less fortunate.

## CHRISTIAN SERVICE IS:

- \* Helping children want to use their God-given gifts for His purpose.

- \* Helping children understand that everything belongs to God.

- \* Teaching children to serve out of love, gratitude, and obedience.

- \* Helping children recognize and use their spiritual gifts.

- \* Helping children see all the resources God has given to them.

- \* Teaching children to make wise choices with their time, talents, and treasures.

These are just some idea starters for your family. Look for opportunities to serve your neighborhood, community and church body. Look for those one-time events as well as ongoing, weekly commitment ministry opportunities.

God bless you as you serve together. The family who serves together stays together.







## **The Spiritual Growth Issues:**

### **Worship**

- Salvation
- Worship

### **Grow**

- Bible knowledge/Application
- Bible Memory
- Stewardship
- Healthy Relationships
- Using Gifts, Talents and Skills
- Church Commitment

### **Serve**

- Outreach
- Missions Involvement
- Christian Service