



## 40 Days 4 Families

A season of fasting and praying for families



**RIVER'S EDGE**  
FELLOWSHIP  

---

[www.riversedgekc.org](http://www.riversedgekc.org)

## Practical Ways to Fast for 40 Days

For the person new to this idea, it may be overwhelming. I want to share some practical ways you can engage a fast for 40 days. One of the most important things to remember about fasting is that it is not a legalistic engagement. In other words, the church isn't making you do it. We will not view you differently if you decide not to fast. We will not negatively view your decision of how you fast. This is an activity that is between you and God.

### Ways to fast

- 40 days straight. This is the fast for the seasoned saint. Fasting straight through a 40-day period is a challenge, but not impossible. 40 days, with no days off.
- Sunday celebration. Many people take Sunday off from the fast. Use this day off from your fast to reflect on how God has grown you during the previous week. This is suggested, of course. If you can fast the entire 40 days without a break you will certainly be strengthened and encouraged.
- Partial day. For those who are new to fasting a partial day fast may be helpful to gain momentum. This is also good for those who have health issues that shouldn't go without food for extended periods of time. You can fast from breakfast to dinner or fast after dinner. You can decide a time frame, like fasting in the evening after 5:00pm.
- Monday through Friday.

The point to make here again is that there is no set way to do a fast. Surely you can follow Biblical examples for fasting, but those are just that, examples. There is no commandment to us from God to fast a certain way. The only Biblical mandate to fasting that applies is why we do it, not how we do it, or even what we fast from.

### Types of fasts

- Food. This is the type of fast that is represented in the Bible. A food fast can take on different forms; full days, partial days, skipping meals, types of food (meat, sweets, fried, fast foods, etc.), or drinks (soda, alcohol, caffeinated drinks, etc.). Be creative, the choice is yours. If you have medical conditions that prohibit you from fasting foods, please make the wise choice to fast in a way that doesn't compromise your health.
- Media fast. Taking a break from media of some type is a very valuable exercise. You can take a break from a major distraction for many people, not just because of the time it robs you, but because of the negative content it may feed into your soul.
- Activities. Maybe you are too busy and need to fast from certain activities. Things like excessive sleeping, shopping, and working out can be fasted from.

One of the greatest emphasis of fasting is about making sacrifices that counts. 2 Samuel 24:18-25 tells us about how a simple decision led to saving the lives of many. In that passage David makes a grand statement,

*2 Samuel 24:24 The king answered Araunah, "No, I insist on buying it from you for a price, **for I will not offer to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.**" David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for twenty ounces of silver.*

David's heart toward offering a sacrifice to God should shape our attitude toward fasting. Make sure your fasting costs you something. Don't make it so easy that you just skate through it. When you make great sacrifices, you will feel accomplished and position yourself to hear clearly from God during the fast.

## FASTING BASICS

### THE BIBLICAL BASIS AND EXAMPLES

- Moses fasted when he received God's commandments- Ex. 34:28
- David fasted seeking God's forgiveness and guidance- 2 Sam. 1:12, 3:3-5, 12:16-22
- The nation Israel fasted when asking God's forgiveness- Judg. 20:26; 1 Sam. 7:6; Ezra 8:21-23
- Ezra fasted to ask God's forgiveness- Ezra 10:6
- Nehemiah fasted seeking God's favor- Neh. 1:4
- Daniel fasted, seeking God's favor- Dan. 9:3, 10:2-3
- Anna fasted seeking God's favor and guidance- Luke 2:37
- Cornelius fasted seeking God's favor- Acts 10:30
- Paul fasted seeking God's guidance- Acts 9:9
- God' leaders fasted for guidance- Acts 13:2
- Elders were appointed with fasting- Acts 14:23
- Jesus fasted in the wilderness seeking God's guidance- Matt. 4:2
- The manner of fasting is to be sincere, dedicated to God, without a public show- Matt 6:16-18
- Husbands and wives are to fast to make decisions together- 1 Cor. 7:5

### THIS DISCIPLINE IS FOR YOU TODAY

- Fasting may be the most neglected of all the spiritual disciplines today. It is easy to dismiss as an old and outdated practice, but it is an **important and meaningful** tool for spiritual growth.
- One of the central points of fasting is training for **self-control** (2 Peter 1:6; Gal. 5:23; 1 Peter 1:13). If we are to break the hold of habits and sin in our lives, fasting is essential. Fasting is an effective approach to developing self-control because it deals with a very fundamental concern of human existence: **sacrifice**. For example, we need food to live; however, we can become enslaved by food and other things we need or simply want. If we are able to control things that are essential for life, we will be able to keep the things that are not essential for life in check, as well.
- The practice of fasting fosters **humility, reliance on God, compassion, and gratitude**.
- Fasting from food is the most obvious way to do it. Begin by fasting from food for a short period, such as skipping a meal. Build your fasting time up from there. As much as possible, use the time it takes to get, prepare, and eat food and substitute it with prayer, Scripture reading, memorization, and meditation. If you rely too much on caffeine for energy, it may be a good idea to fast from those beverages. This is true for any substance that we have become physically addicted to.
- Anything that you feel is "impossible" to give up is a good candidate to fast from.

40 Days 4 Families Devotionals  
2024

**The Family Journey**  
**Ephesians 5:21**

The life of a family is a journey. Whether it is marriage or childbirth, things start pretty simply with high expectations and can quickly start to change. We have to be ready to change as circumstances change. The best way to not become too stiff to not change is to practice mutual submission. When each of us are focused on how we will serve each other, we are more open to doing what is needed to serve the other person instead of looking for others to serve us.

**Week 1**

Monday (8/12) Day 1      Give yourself to each other. (Philippians 2:2-4)

Submission places each of us in the service to one another. It requires a level of love, sacrifice and respect for others that places their needs before your own. When you put the needs of others before yours, you will nurture an environment of service that will make things easier instead of harder to accomplish as a family.

- What does it look like to submit to your family members?
- Is it hard to submit to your family members?

Tuesday (8/13) Day 2      Submit in love. (1 John 3:10-15)

Submission is an act of love. When you submit yourself to each other, the love you have inside will be displayed in that interaction. Make the level of your love clear by giving your family members prominence in actions, conversation, and decisions. When you submit to others, they will not have to wonder where they stand with you.

- How does submission display love?
- What does it say about love that refuses to submit to one another?

Wednesday (8/14) Day 3      Bearing with one another. (Ephesians 4:2-3)

No family is perfect. As a matter of fact, every family has some kind of challenge to work through. Working diligently, prayerfully, and consistently on problems will not only reveal answers to problems but will help you see how much each of you love for each other. Love helps us fulfill the directive of this passage. To bear with one another is not to “put up with” but to endure the pain for the benefit of all.

- Why is it hard to address the problems in your family?
- How can you work on the hard spots?

Thursday (8/14) Day 4      Encourage one another. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Encouragement is a verbal thing. You can encourage someone with a gift or a helping hand, but the most significant way is to say something uplifting to them. Encouragement is an expression of love that speaks volumes to your family members. Encouragement says to your loved ones that their heart matters greatly to you.

- Say something encouraging to each of your family members right now.

- How does being encouraged make you feel?

Friday (8/15) Day 5                      Be there (1 Corinthians 12:26)

When we are together, we are better and stronger. When we stand together, we can endure any attacks and overcome any obstacle. Sometimes it doesn't require a lot of activity, just be there. When Job faced the attacks of Satan upon his life, his friends came and were just there for 7 days. Oftentimes we don't have to try to give answers or solutions, just be there. Be there in mind, body, and spirit.

- What prevents us from being there for one another?
- What can you do to be more present with your family today?

Saturday (8/16) Day 6                      What does love look like? (John 13:14-15)

For some of you, building togetherness is a new thing in your family. You must be intentional; you will not have new togetherness by accident. Continue to look for ways to build togetherness in your home. Spend time with each other, listen to one another, put each other's needs before your own. The foundation for a new togetherness is Jesus, and he calls us to serve one another.

- How can you be intentional building togetherness?
- What do you need from others to build togetherness?

Sunday (8/17) Day 7                      Recap: Grow together. (Ephesians 2:21-22)

The family is a single unit comprised of different parts. Just like a machine, when each part works together as designed, the family will run like a well-maintained machine. Each of you will be challenged in certain ways throughout the year. That is normal. My encouragement is to communicate well with your family. Tell them when you are struggling, let them into your world regardless of how hard that may be. Your togetherness is used by God to grow all of you. It may be hard to do, but you will be better for it.

**Week 2**

**The Marriage Journey**

**Ephesians 5:22-33**

In an age where marriage is under attack from the surrounding culture, we must be sure about God's design for marriage. It is only when we understand properly and apply loving the biblical standards for marriage where we will experience the kind of peace and joy that Jesus has assured us of. Because He is the author of it, He knows what's best.

**Note:** *You might be using this devotional and not be married; it is still beneficial for you. You may have to re-word some of the content to say "family" instead of spouse. Take the time to read the devotionals ahead of time to adjust it for your use.*

Monday (8/19) Day 8            A woman's journey (Proverbs 31:10-31)

This passage is the high-water mark for women. This is a list of qualities that may not be easy to achieve, but it is. What does it take for a woman to be a Proverbs 31 woman? Intentionality, consistency, attention, and mostly prayer. A woman that resembles this is a woman that stays on her knees. She prays for strength each day because she doesn't always feel so industrious. She prays for patience because her family isn't always appreciative of her hard work. She prays for opportunity because the world is a hard place. Keep praying woman of God. Keep growing toward this high mark.

- What part of this passage can be the most challenging for you (for women)?
- How can you be supported in your work in the family?

Tuesday (8/20) Day 9            A man's journey (1 Corinthians 16:13)

This verse speaks directly to the life of men. Some translations have the phrase "act like men" where brave or courageous is included in others. The implication is that men must be courageous and brave, they must display qualities that are critical for their families. Men are designed by God to be manly. Men have a calling from God to stand in areas where others will not. Men are commissioned by God to be solid when others are failing. How do you grow in this, men? By staying close to Jesus. Remember, the one who called you is able to keep and equip you for the work.

- What obstacles do men face in the home when living out their calling by God?
- How can you be supported in your work in the family?

Wednesday (8/21) Day 10    Growing in the journey (1 Peter 2:2)

We have a lot of desires, don't we? We desire to be happy, free, healthy, etc. We also desire safety, food, shelter, etc. There is one main thing to place at the front of the list- growing in the spirit. That's right, the Bible tells us to desire to grow as Christians the way a baby desires milk. What does that look like? A baby will wake up in the middle of the night to eat. It will stop all events to eat. A baby doesn't care what is going on, when it is time to eat it is time to eat! That is the idea behind this verse. When your desire for the things of God reaches this level, you will grow. And then you will desire more and more and more.

- How does each person's spiritual growth add to a healthy marriage?

- What are the potential negative effects of not growing in the Lord?

Thursday (8/22) Day 11 Praying together to seek God's direction? (Acts 1:14)

Praying together will make the journey clearer. In our text, the disciples gathered together after Jesus' ascension to hear from God about the next steps. This verse provides a clear picture for us- everyone came together to pray. Bring your needs to your family and pray together over them. Don't be tricked into thinking it that what is important to you isn't important to them. When you pray together, God can speak to you all about what is needed to help your family be whole and well.

- Have you set a specific time to pray together?
- Allow everyone an opportunity to pray when you come together.

Friday (8/23) Day 12 R-E-S-P-E-C-T (Matthew 5:37)

How do you gain the respect of your loved ones? Is it by showing respect? I would say that may be true, but it is only a part of the equation. The reality is that when we show respect to others, we may not receive respect in return. So, what is the answer? Consistency. Be consistent in how you deal with your family. Stand on the Word of God without wavering. Keep a Biblical worldview before your family. They may not always like it, but they will respect you and appreciate you because they will always know what to expect.

- How can consistency in our decisions help to build our marriage?
- How can inconsistency hurt our relationships?

Saturday (8/24) Day 13 Growing together. (Ephesians 2:21-22)

When God created marriage, He joined man and women together in a special way. Nothing else in creation had the privilege of marriage. Marriage is an excellent environment for two very different people to grow together. As believers in Jesus Christ, the relationship between a man and women in marriage is unique to any other in that you are also a part of the family of God. Remember that your growth is a benefit not just for your family, but also for the family of God.

- What things do you need most from your spouse to help you grow?
- What ways can your family stretch to help you grow?

Sunday (8/25) Day 14 Recap: For a strong marriage build on the right foundation (Hebrews 11:10)

In most areas of life, establishing solid foundations is essential. From education to athletics to our Christian life, how a person starts is critical for future success. We can apply that knowledge to our marriage as well. Just as Jacob was looking forward to a city whose architect is God, our marriage must look with the same view. Always remember that the solid foundation of your marriage is built on the architect and builder- God Himself. If you try to build on anything else, your marriage will be shaky and susceptible to failure.

## 40 Days 4 Families Devotionals

2024

### Week 3

#### The Parenting Journey

##### Proverbs 22:6

Have you heard someone say, “these kids these days...”. Each generation has said the same things. Parenting children has always had its challenges. Thankfully we have a great instruction book to aid us in the journey—the Bible. Possibly the most important tool we have for raising children is discipline. Teaching them to be disciplined by training them in discipline will help them to become self-sufficient adults. We don’t raise children primarily to be the kids they can be, we raise them to be the best adults they can be.

Monday (8/26) Day 15      We need discipline to obey consistently (1 Timothy 4:7-8)

Discipline is one way to describe training. Every aspect of it is designed to direct a person to a desired outcome. As this passage shows us, children aren’t the only ones who need discipline. Discipline takes sacrifice, it takes making right decisions, it takes learning from mistakes. Discipline is designed to make obedience a habit.

- Why is discipline so hard?
- How can we help each other to be more disciplined?

Tuesday (8/27) Day 16      Guard against covetousness (Luke 12:15)

What does covet mean? It is a selfish and ungoverned desire for things you don’t have. We can covet just about anything: stuff, money, relationships, education, etc. The list of things is endless that people may covet. Covetousness is a sin that creeps in on us usually. It can disguise itself as a natural desire or a basic need. When it goes unchecked, it can grow into an unhealthy desire that causes you to make poor decisions. Guard your children to help them carefully examine the things they love too much.

- Examine the things you enjoy the most, is there any covetousness toward them?
- How can you fight against covetousness?

Wednesday (8/28) Day 17      Guarding my children’s hearts (Colossians 3:21)

How can a parent help his or her children have a better life? By not being too harsh on them. Parenting does not require anger. Having to give them the same instructions often can be challenging, but you have to remember they are children. Believe me, if you ask your parents, they will tell you they had to do the same thing with you. Focus on how you can discipline your kids with kindness, gentleness, and in a loving way. Don’t yell at them unnecessarily, don’t demean them or belittle them. Your words and attitude toward them will go a long way toward guarding their heart from hurt and harm. It may be a stretch to protect your kids’ heart, but it is worth it.

- What does it mean to guard something?
- How can you practice kindness and gentleness toward your children?



Thursday (8/29) Day 18 Giving them the best (Ephesians 5:15-17)

This passage gives us a good picture of the aim of discipline. Helping our children to be aware of how they live and to develop practices to live according to God's way is accomplished in discipline. The Bible's description of a fool should motivate us; no one wants to raise a fool.

- How can you help your children make the best use of their time?
- Explain the benefits of using time wisely to your children.

Friday (8/30) Day 19 Making wise decisions (Proverbs 3:6-7)

The basis for protecting our lives is to make wise decisions. Wisdom is the right application of the right information in the right way. God gives us the tools to be wise, His Word and His Spirit. God will protect you when you look to Him first in decision making. Trust God's direction for your life. Don't let the culture or your own ideas sway you from His path for you. Help your children to seek wisdom and to use it. Use your own examples as a basis to help them understand the value of wisdom.

- What obstacles may you face when seeking God's direction?
- What kind of decisions are the hardest to follow God's direction?

Saturday (8/31) Day 20 Take a day off (Deuteronomy 5:14)

How do you observe a Sabbath? Is your family taking any day's off to rest? Working hard is important; there is so much to do and so little time to do it. The number of things that need to get done should not affect your ability to take a day off. The Bible tells us of God's original design for man, "work six days and take the Sabbath off." (Exodus 20:10-11). Don't get trapped into running every day. When you take a day off you will find that your energy, patience, and endurance are improved. One great way to protect your family is to enjoy some downtime together.

- How does your family rest together?
- What ways can your family improve in this area?

Sunday (9/01) Day 21 Recap: Discipline for everyone (Proverbs 12:1)

Living a disciplined life is a life of wisdom. I don't believe balance is possible the way we expect balance. We may say, "I will enjoy a little of this and little of that" in seeking to balance things, but before long we are having too much of something. I believe we like the idea of balance because it allows us to let things in our life that we should leave out. What we should all strive for is a disciplined life. One that restricts us in ways that bring true health to our life. Discipline is sustainable, balance is not. Teach your kids disciplined living. You may have to set the boundaries in their life. They may not appreciate it at first, but one day they will.

40 Days 4 Families Devotionals  
2024

**Week 4**

**The Communication Journey**  
**Deuteronomy 6:6-9**

Communication is a multi-faceted thing. It involves talking but is much more. It requires good listening. It includes body language and facial expressions. How we communicate is important, possibly just as important as what we are communicating. We could be saying the right thing the wrong way and causing confusion in our homes. Likewise, we may be communicating correctly but saying the wrong things. The bottom line is that we have to be aware of all aspects of communication to ensure that our family gets what they need in the ways they need it.

Monday (9/02) Day 22      Honesty is the best policy (1 Samuel 12:24)

When my children were small, there was one main criterion I used for spanking: honesty. I believed it was essential for them to understand this foundational Biblical truth. When honesty leaves a relationship, everything else crumbles. It is difficult to rebuild trust after a lie. When the strain of dishonesty enters a family, it causes separation and pain that can take years to repair. Set high standards of honesty with your family. Abide by them and enforce them. It will make your home richer.

- What kind of problems arise when we aren't honest with each other?
- Honest can be hard, especially when we did something we shouldn't have. Now may be a good time to be honest about something.

Tuesday (9/03) Day 23      No one is perfect in your family (Romans 3:23)

There is a common critical spirit among Christians. We may call it accountability and challenge, but I believe it has more to do with comparing others to ourselves than with Scripture. We must have accountability in our families, but when accountability becomes ammunition *against* someone rather than an avenue to join *with* them, we have lost sight of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We all stand before a perfect God with imperfections. Be careful to assist your family in addressing weaknesses and sins instead of using them as weapons for a personal agenda.

- Practice how you can hold someone accountable to a Biblical standard without criticizing them.
- How does that make you feel?

Wednesday (9/04) Day 24      Help that doesn't hurt (Romans 12:9)

Have you ever tried to help someone only to find that you hurt him or her more by your actions or words? Maybe you did something for someone that enabled them to sin. Maybe you were harsh or hard in how you told them the truth. In order to provide help that doesn't hurt our family members we must have a Biblically focused perspective on how to give them what God wants them to have, not just what we think they should have.

- Tell about when your help may have hurt someone.
- What can we learn from those experiences for the next time?

Thursday (9/05) Day 25      Listening for the benefit of others (James 1:19-20)

Sometimes in a heated discussion with loved ones we will spend more time thinking about what we are going to say instead of listening to them. When we do this the source of our response is typically selfish and defensive instead of sacrificial. When you listen carefully and prayerfully you are in the best position to respond the way God wants you to and to provide them with what they need from you. Also, your response will position them to hear from God.

- How easy or hard is it to listen when you are mad?
- What can you do to prepare for those tough interactions?

Friday (9/06) Day 26      Communicate to handle problems (Ephesians 4:2-3)

No family is perfect. As a matter of fact, every family has some kind of challenge to work through. When we ignore the problems, they only get worse. Communicate with one another about those things. Begin in prayer and talk it out. Working diligently, prayerfully, and consistently on problems will not only reveal answers to problems but will help you see how much each of you love for each other. Truly, the quality of love you have is discovered in the trials, not in the good times.

- Why can it be really hard to address issue in the family?
- How can you work on the hard topics?

Saturday (9/07) Day 27      Cast your cares on Him (1 Peter 5:7)

Communicating better with each other starts with communication with God. This is one of the greatest benefits of prayer for the believer- we are able to lay our burdens down when we give them to Him. You can give Jesus your burdens because He cares for you. His care for you is not just in answering your prayer requests, but in removing your anxiety and concerns. Go ahead, give your burdens to the Lord, He can handle it.

- What things are you having a hard time giving to Jesus in your life?
- Take some time and pray for each of those concerns.

Sunday (9/08) Day 28      Recap: Proper communication leads to a healthy journey (Colossians 4:6))

Communication involves two people having a mutual interaction with each other. It demands that we focus on communicating in the way that best fits our loved ones. We often are satisfied with making a point according to how we want to express it, not being concerned if we were clear, accurate, or loving. Pray that God would show you how to communicate in the way that is best for your family.

## 40 Days 4 Families Devotionals

2024

### Week 5

#### The Journey Together

##### Matthew 12:25

A divided house cannot stand. What a statement by Jesus about the state of kingdoms and cities. The principle applies to families, as well. When we are on the journey together, it is not just beneficial, but imperative that we be unified. How can a family succeed if everyone has their own agenda? How can we make progress if each person is going a different direction. My friends, the journey is hard enough, when we are not on the same page, it becomes almost impossible. Seek to have a unified view of where your family is going and what is important in your home.

Monday (9/09) Day 29      Stick like Glue. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

There is Elmer's Glue and then there is Super Glue. Each has its purposes, and each has its strengths and weaknesses. Elmer's glue has lots of applications, but it doesn't bond items tight like Super Glue. Super Glue makes things stick together stronger, but it can be hard to use. Families need some of each type of glue to have a healthy balance.

- Which glue best describes your family?
- What areas do you think your family can be better glued together?

Tuesday (9/10) Day 30      Give yourself to each other. (Philippians 2:2-4)

Submission places each of us in the service to one another. It requires a level of sacrifice and respect for others that places their needs before your own. When you put the needs of others before yours, you will nurture an environment of service that will make things easier instead of harder to accomplish as a family.

- What does it look like to submit to your family members?
- Is it hard to submit to your family members?

Wednesday (9/11) Day 31      Clarify your love. (1 John 3:10-15)

Submission is an act of love. When you submit yourself to each other, the love you have inside will be displayed in that interaction. Make the level of your love clear by giving your family members prominence in actions, conversation, and decisions. When you submit to others, they will not have to wonder where they stand with you.

- How does submission display love?
- What does it say about love that refuses to submit to one another?

Thursday (9/12) Day 32      Encourage one another. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Encouragement is a verbal thing. You can encourage someone with a gift or a helping hand, but the most significant way is to say something uplifting to them.

- Say something encouraging to each of your family members right now.
- How does being encouraged make you feel?

Friday (9/13) Day 33            Rest together. (Mark 6:31-32)

Family life isn't just about hard work and issues to address, it must include time to rest, relax and play. The press of life is hard; work, school, ministry, and serving. Everyone in the family needs alone time, but we also need to spend some down time together.

- What fun thing can you all do together this week?
- How does it make you feel when you do fun things together?

Saturday (9/14) Day 34            Growing together spiritually builds unity (Luke 10:38-42)

When you engage one another around spiritual disciplines it is a special time. Spiritual disciplines are those activities we engage to grow in our faith. Bible engagement (memorization, meditation, reading, and studying), prayer, worship, serving and evangelizing are just a few. There are a number of ways we can grow together: drill one another on Scripture memorization, challenge each other to read and pray daily, or go together to serve someone who is less fortunate. You will find that through those activities you not only grow as a Christian, but you grow as a family.

- How can you start engaging with each other around spiritual disciplines.
- How can we be careful to reach hearts as we serve?

Sunday (9/15) Day 35            Recap: How does mutual submission build unity? (John 13:14-15)

For some of you, building togetherness is a new thing in your family. You must be intentional; you will not have new togetherness by accident. Continue to look for ways to build togetherness in your home. Spend time with each other, listen to one another, put each other's needs before your own. The foundation for a new togetherness is Jesus, and he calls us to submit to one another.

## 40 Days 4 Families Devotionals

2024

### Week 6

#### The Serving Journey

##### 2 Timothy 1:5-7

Serving others is a big part of the journey of Christian families. Jesus calls us to look out of our own homes to see the needs of others and serve them (Matthew 25:31-46). When we serve together as a family, we experience God collectively in ways we never will otherwise. God establishes the faith and ministry habits of our families. There is a lot about the Christian faith that is more “caught than taught” and serving in ministry is a main thing that helps that. Families learn from one another how to serve. The attitude, approach, perseverance; these are just a few of the qualities that our families need to see displayed in serving. Pray this week that God will reinvigorate your heart to serve others. Devotion is a critical part of our relationship with Jesus. Serving has a place, as well. Don’t neglect one for the other.

Monday (9/16) Day 36

Ministry for the whole family (Philippians 2:22)

It seems inevitable that the whole family will get involved in ministry. Now that doesn’t mean that the whole family will do the same ministry, but that serving others will be contagious in your families. Every person should be involved in ministry in some way, young and old. Encourage one another to let God use them in ministry.

- What area of ministry are you serving in?
- How can you give more attention to serving?

Tuesday (9/17) Day 37

Serving together (Nehemiah 4:6)

When the Israelites went back to rebuild the city of Jerusalem, it was a difficult work. They faced opposition and the work wasn’t easy. It *required* them to work together. Even when working together, sometimes you will get discouraged and distracted. When everyone has a mind to work it helps the whole family to serve with passion and perseverance. Even when you are tired, if you have a mind to work, you will pitch in to help. Make up your mind that you are going to serve for God. He will strengthen you when you don’t feel like doing it.

- Tell about a time you worked together with others in ministry.
- What was the outcome of that?

Wednesday (9/18) Day 38

Respecting each other’s ministry (1 Corinthians 3:8-9)

Each family member has their specific role in the home and in the church. We must never diminish the value of what one another does in serving. Everyone has an important role; no one is more important or better than others. Everyone’s work is important. God keeps us humble by assuring us that it is Him that makes it all work not us. Even though you may not understand why someone else serves as they do, encourage them in the ministry. You benefit because of what they do.

- Have you ever wanted to do something you saw someone else doing in ministry?
- Why were you drawn to it?

Thursday (9/19) Day 39

When ministry drains you (Philippians 4:11-12)

It isn't a matter of *if*, it is a matter of *when*. Ministry can be challenging for a number of reasons. It doesn't matter why; the result is the same- we can come away drained. Contentment with our ministry life is an important key to maintaining energy over the long haul. Be content in who you are, what you do, and most importantly, who God is. When you serve for an audience of One, you will serve to your best. When you serve to your best, you will be satisfied at the end of the day.

- Have you ever been tired of serving?
- How did you feel in your heart after serving?

Friday (9/20) Day 40

Serve like it depends on you (Acts 20:35)

Hard work is a good trait, even in the family of God. Working to accomplish the mission God has given you is expected. As the verse quotes the words of Jesus, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." Always remember brothers and sisters, you cannot out give God. The harder you work does not mean you will receive more blessings, but you will give the blessings of God. We are all dependent on each other for the hard work of one another. When any of us does not serve as God has called us, we all are missing out on the blessings of God. Others need you to be the vessel of blessings God made you to be.

- How is your work for the Lord a blessing for others?
- What would be the impact on their life if you didn't serve as you have?

***Congratulations, YOU DID IT!! You have completed 40 Days 4 Families. I pray that The Family Journey has encouraged and built you up for the work ahead. Don't stop now, keep it up. Continue your habit of devotions together and daily interactions that helps your family become a picture of the Kingdom of God.***