

## **When Service Isn't Fun – October 2010**

By Melissa, IA

Sometimes service isn't pretty. Sometimes service isn't fun. Do we avoid it during those circumstances... waiting for an opportunity where it is "fun" to serve? I hope not.

Service develops our characters and enables us to put our faith into action. What does it say if we only do the "fun" service activities? What? You want me to do the grunt work? If your child, or even your own reaction, is that way... think again. We do not have a servant's heart if we are only going to serve when it feels good.

We recently had Mark Anthony come for a one night cooking program at our church. He was to arrive on a Monday at noon. At that time of day, not many in our small church were available to help out. The bulk of the help needed fell to my family, due to us being available. We needed to move many chairs from one building across a parking lot into another building. The chairs were not fold down chairs, so we were only able to carry 2 at a time (they stacked). My girls were not excited to be toting chairs from one place to the other, but they understood that it needed to be done and they did not complain.

I'd love to say that my children have always had a "servant's heart", but that is not so. I've dealt with days of grumbling, complaining, whining and even some stubborn refusals. I guess it would have been easier to just tell people, "No, we cannot help," rather than dealing with some ugly character traits, however I knew that God did not want this trait to continue to grow in my children's hearts.

Time and time again when asked for needed grunt work, for needed messy work, and other not so friendly chores, I volunteered our family and brought the girls along. I prepared myself with prayer and sometimes with study before-hand on how to answer my girls when they began to complain. I also feel that our parental example is so important. I found I needed to monitor myself and also participate as well.

As time went on, it began to get easier and my girls learned that hard work did not kill them. They also learned that the work they did was often highly appreciated. Not always did they get a thank you, but you could tell that they were truly needed and had they not been there, the setting up or taking down might not have happened or it would have been miserable for the one or two others that had

volunteered. (Many hands make light work!) They realized the worth of a good honest humble worker.

I encourage all of you to keep working at building “servant’s hearts” in your children. The selfish tendencies may reappear from time to time and need attention once again, but that is not a reason to give up and feel it is impossible. Satan works hard with our children’s hearts and our job as parents is not to give up in exasperation, but to keep loving, keep praying, and keep training. Remember the end reward is worth all the trials this earth has to throw at us.

But such a character is not the result of accident; it is not due to special favors or endowments of Providence. A noble character is the result of self-discipline, of the subjection of the lower to the higher nature--the surrender of self for the service of love to God and man. {Ed 57.4}

The true teacher is not satisfied with second-rate work. He is not satisfied with directing his students to a standard lower than the highest which it is possible for them to attain. He cannot be content with imparting to them only technical knowledge, with making them merely clever accountants, skillful artisans, successful tradesmen. It is his ambition to inspire them with principles of truth, obedience, honor, integrity, and purity--principles that will make them a positive force for the stability and uplifting of society. He desires them, above all else, to learn life's great lesson of unselfish service. {Ed 29.2}

Colossians 3:23, 24 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

1 Peter 4:11b ... if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

--

© The Adventist Home Educator, [www.adventisthomeducator.org](http://www.adventisthomeducator.org)