

FAMILY FAITH BUILDER

Character Lessons for Practical Application of Faith

Availability



Willingness to change my schedule and priorities to meet a need

If you look at the opposite quality of self-centeredness you can better understand Availability by thinking of it as “other-centeredness”. When a faith community works together to maintain the building and grounds and to fulfill all of the ministry roles they accomplish something that they could not do alone. The active members are available to the active ministry of the faith community.

This month, look for ways to be available to the “others” in your family, faith or community.

To Practice Availability I Will:

- Put others ahead of myself
- Find a way to help, not a way to hide
- Be ready when I'm called
- Be glad for the chance to serve
- Check with the right person before I make commitments

Any others appropriate to your family?

God's Word on Availability

“And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me.’”

Isaiah 6:8

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Joshua 24:15

Put them in a mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.

Titus 3:3

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

Philippians 2:3

For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

James 3:16

I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

Luke 18:14

Jesus said, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”

Matthew 16:24

Samuel Teaches Us about Availability

Samuel was just a young lad when God called to him. Samuel had been sleeping in the temple when he heard someone call his name. He got up and went to his mentor, Eli, whom he thought had called to him. Eli responded that he hadn't called him and sent him back to bed. Once again, he heard his name being called so he went to Eli again. This time, Eli realized that it was God calling Samuel so he told him that if he heard it again to answer the Lord. So, Samuel went back to sleep. When he was called a third time, he replied as Eli suggested by saying “Speak, for your servant is listening.” God then told Samuel what he was going to do to those who had blasphemed.

By answering God's call, Samuel made himself available to be God's servant. He was available to do God's work during his whole life. One of the key's to answering God's call is listening. Samuel constantly put himself in “listening mode” so that he could hear what God wanted him to do.



Be Like Samuel

Begin by reading the story in the Bible where Hannah chooses for her son to be raised by priests of the temple so that he can rise to greatness. After the story, give each family member of the group a ball of clay or modeling compound. Explain that your choice of friends helps to mold you into the kind of person you will become much like we can mold this clay. What happens if you hang around rough and mean people? Demonstrate the answer by being rough with the clay and flattening it. Ask the family to do the same. Ask what kind of person you become. Then mold the clay back into a ball. What happens if you hang around people who don't really care about anything. Do nothing to the ball. Ask the group how easy it is to become a better person around those types of people. Now Samuel hung around intelligent, spiritual people - people who prayed to God and talked to God but most importantly listened to God. While you are describing these people, begin to shape your clay into a bowl. These people lived their lives being open to the Word of God. Now instruct them to shape their clay into a bowl. Let each person display their bowl somewhere as a reminder to make room in their lives for God.



POSTER IDEA:

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and priorities to meet a need



“As for me and my house, we will serve
the Lord.”

Joshua 24:15

**Are you available to
serve the Lord?**

Dear Jesus,

We praise you for your goodness and mercy and thank you for the example of availability in your life. You were always available to God's people to answer their questions and to heal their sick. Help us to put others ahead of ourselves, and to find ways to help, not hide. Teach us to be ready when God calls us to do something and be glad for the chance to serve.

Guide us to check with the right person before we make commitments so we can follow through with a promise. Help us to act in all things in harmony with the will of the Father.

Amen.

Other ways to teach character in the home:

- Display the character quality and definition in a prominent place such as on the refrigerator or let each child decorate it for their bedroom door.
- At the dinner table ask if anyone noticed anyone (not just family members) demonstrating the character quality (or not demonstrating it).
- Point out news stories where character was or was not involved.
- During car trips, challenge the kids by describing scenarios and having them identify if it describes being the quality or being the opposite.
- Praise with character by recognizing the character quality involved rather than the achievement.

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For more activities that can be adapted for family use, visit
www.charactercincinnati.org/quality_resource.php?q=availability