

5 WAYS TO

PRACTICE JUSTICE AND MERCY WITH KIDS

Justice and mercy are the tangible expressions of loving our neighbors as God has loved us. They are the ways that we live like Jesus here and now, affirming the goodness of God's image in others. Raising kids who practice justice and mercy is some of the most faith-forming work you'll ever do as a parent. The 5 "L"s that follow are designed to help.

1 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Nurturing a heart for justice and mercy in kids means modeling those qualities daily. Talk with your kids about God's desire that all people will flourish. Let them see you actively loving people in need. Practice mercy in your conversations with and about others. Invite your kids into decisions about the things you buy and the causes you support.

2 LISTEN AND LEARN

Seek opportunities to hear the voices of people who experience injustice and people who work to bring about justice. Nurture diverse friendships. Select books and other media created by people from a variety of backgrounds. Work to identify and resist your own biases. Teach your kids the importance of researching issues well.

3 LAMENT

Pray together about the brokenness of the world. "Mourn with those who mourn" (Romans 12:15). Seek God's forgiveness for the ways in which you have acted unjustly. Ask the Spirit to show you where your heart needs to change and how you can work for justice and show mercy.

4 LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES

Have regular conversations about injustice. Ask questions like "How does this go against God's plan for the world?" and "What might God want us to do about that?" Equip kids with the words and courage they need to speak up when they encounter injustice. Participate in justice-seeking events in your area. Be an encourager when your kids find an issue about which they are passionate.

5 LOVE ALL

Look for the threads of justice that run throughout Scripture as you read it together. Make Matthew 22:37-39 part of your family motto. Talk about what it means; make a list together of what living that love looks like in your daily life. Revisit that list often, adding to it and sharing stories of your experiences as you try to live in tune with God's love for all.

Want to dig deeper? Check out the Faith Practices Project's family resources on justice and mercy at crcna.org/FaithPracticesProject.