BY JACK FISCUS

SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN A HECTIC SCHEDULE

Parents want to grow their children spiritually, but often struggle to squeeze it in between school, dance, baseball, gymnastics… the list of activities just goes on and on. From the moment we get up until we finally get home, it seems we run, run, run with extracurriculars and outside events constantly competing with God for our attention.

It doesn't have to be this way.

As parents, we need to adopt the eyesight of Jesus. In *Luke 10:2*, Jesus said, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."* Jesus saw lost people that others didn't. He saw ministry opportunities that others didn't. With the Holy Spirit's help, we can see life through the same lens.

When both parents and students view the world as Jesus does, spiritual growth moments abound. Football, academic decathlon and orchestra become mission fields. Parents can pray with their child in the car on the way to events. (Possibly pray that their gift glorifies God and not themselves.) Your child could also write a scripture on the underside of their hat brim, on their shoe, or taped on their instrument for the semester or each team they join. Imagine searching with your child for a verse that becomes their theme for the year. Think of the potential conversations as peers spot the verse and ask, "What's that about?" That's creating spiritual growth and seeing others the way Jesus sees them.

You can actively model this spiritual viewpoint for your kids by building relationships in the stands or while waiting at pick-up with other parents. Don't become so consumed and competitive with playing time or who got the lead roles that you alienate others or become blind to potential ministry. Create conversation points by taking pictures of the entire troop, band or team and emailing them to parents. Maybe even prayer walk the field, stands or auditorium where your child performs.

WHEN YOU HAVE THE RIGHT APPROACH AND SPIRIT, YOU WILL DISCOVER EASY, PRACTICAL, KINGDOM-CHANGING SPIRITUAL GROWTH MOMENTS SPRINGING UP WITHIN YOUR HECTIC SCHEDULE.

As a radical example of what I mean, you could stop the next time you see someone broken down on your way to practice – even at the risk of your son or daughter getting in trouble or not starting because they were late. (Stay with me here!) Even if the coach or teacher sits your child, or makes them do extra laps or drills because you stopped, you have taught them following Jesus and obeying His teachings is more important than any sport, activity, grade, etc.

Spiritual growth allows God into our lives – every day, everywhere in everything. Don't become so enamored by the world's agenda of success that you miss the spiritual growth and ministry appointments in your family's everyday life. Then you'll realize you're not busy doing life, but busy doing ministry.

CHECK YOURSELF

What does my student love to do?
How can my child live out *Matthew 5:16* in that area of their life?
How can I minister alongside them?

Jack Fiscus is Pastor of Education at the First Baptist Church of Orlando, Florida. Recognized for his creative approach to ministry and organization, he is a popular speaker, writer and consultant to churches and conventions. Jack is married and has two children.

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