

5 Ways To Balance Family and Church Ministry

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For my husband and I, serving in the local church is a regular part of our lives. We're integrated, involved, and intentional about our role in the body of Christ. God has impacted us that we might impact the next generation and we love it.

However, sometimes ~~we~~ *mostly I* have a difficult time balancing family and ministry. It's so easy to become over-committed and under-connected. When there is a lack of presence and priorities, relationships with God, spouses, and children suffer. This is a dangerous place to be.

In February of this year, my husband and I attended the Simply Youth Ministry Conference in Chicago, IL. While there, I didn't hesitate to attend one particular seminar entitled Family First: Raising Your Own Kids in Ministry, led by Jim Burns and Kathy Fields.

Over the course of the last few months, I have integrated many of their suggestions into our own home and relationships. Our lives aren't in perfect balance, but our priorities are certainly more aligned. These are simple reminders, but essential elements of healthy Christian families.

If you serve in children's ministry and have children of your own, please take a moment to consider the following points compiled by ministry veterans.

5 Ways to Balance Family and Ministry:

- 1. Keep the focus on Christ:** We all know it, but as the hymn says, "We are prone to wander." Doing things for Christ in ministry is not synonymous with abiding in Him. Protect your personal time with God above everything.
- 2. Respect the priority of your marriage:** Set a non-negotiable date night. Communicate. Do devotions together. Honor one another above yourselves. Surprise your spouse. Love him/her according to their personal love language.
- 3. Set boundaries:** Set a limit to how many nights you are out a week doing ministry. Give your spouse veto power over your schedule. Do not miss your own kids' events for ministry purposes. Allow ample time for rest at home, listening, and fun.
- 4. Set the tone in your home:** Ensure that your home is a refuge of affection, warmth, and encouragement. If you are too busy, you set a tone of stress and chaos. May the Word of God be visible in your home and in your actions.
- 5. Be intentional with your own children:** Include your kids in ministry. Allow them to enjoy the perks about serving at church. Be present when you are home. Find unique ways to encourage and celebrate them. Be creative and fun!