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# Coffee Break

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## Show Me Cheerful

By Andi Hale

When my nephew was about 2, he woke up in a grumpy mood. No matter what we did for him, he wasn't happy. Finally, Grandma had enough of it and firmly told him, "Austin, stop being so grumpy. Now, show me cheerful!" As if in spite, Austin produced a huge, tooth filled grin and stomped off. We couldn't help ourselves, we laughed. Although the response wasn't what we were looking for, all of us, including Austin had a change of heart that day.

Having a bad day? Well, SHOW ME CHEERFUL! I promise, it works!

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# Quiet Time

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## Agents of Grace

by Shelia Walsh

*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. -1 Peter 4:10*

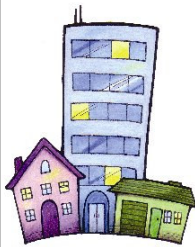
The apostle Peter makes it clear that no matter what personal and spiritual gifts each of us in the body of Christ has been given, we are all called to administer God's grace to each other.

We tend to categorize service in the church. Those in so-called full-time ministry are looked on as the "real" administrators of God's grace and love. I remember a family of four in our church when I was growing up in Scotland. The father had a good job, but the mother had a restlessness for full-time ministry. She believed that the only way to prove to God that she loved him was through evangelism. Several nights a week she would go door-to-door in our town with tracts and invitations to church. More often than not her two sons came home from school to an empty house. Many nights they put themselves to bed while their mother was off "serving God."

When I look into the eyes of my son, I am convinced that one of the greatest callings on this earth is to share the grace of God with our own families. How sad it would be if Christian grew up resenting a God who took his mother away from him to serve God when he was a child!

Whatever you put your hands to today, use your gifts to administer grace to those around you. And start at home with those who need your presence the most.

Father, thank you that you do not categorize worthwhile service, but that you receive all things done in your name.  
Make me an agent of your grace. Amen.



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# News

## from the Nest

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## January 2008

### How can I balance the competing demands of home and work?

***Work during the week - but leave weekends for worship and recreation.***

**Exodus 23:10-13**

Phones, beepers, fax machines, e-mail—these days, work follows you home! There's always one more project, one more phone call, one more important contact to make. But work isn't all there is to life. We all try to balance out work with the rest of life: exercise, housework, grocery shopping, laundry. And those with families have an even more complicated juggling act, combining diapers, Little League, homework, and special nights out with all those other responsibilities.

Whew! With all that to do, how can you possibly justify taking a day off to picnic with the kids, soak in a bubble bath, or have a date with your spouse?

It's helpful to know that both work and "free time" are important to God. In his laws, God affirmed the importance of work to the Israelites. As a matter of fact, he told them to work six days every week! But that's not all. One of God's sacred decrees was that his people take every seventh day off to rest, celebrate, and relax. As a matter of fact, rest is so important to God that he even ordered the Israelites to give their animals and fields time off. Today's culture may push you to work until you drop, but that isn't God's command. In Exodus 23, he says that work, worship, and family recreation are all important to him—and that you must not neglect them. (See also Deuteronomy 6:1-9; 2 Samuel 1; Matthew 14:22, 23.)

***Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest. Exodus 23:12***

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# Kids Room

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## Keeping Your Child On-Time and On-Task

**Make your child a chart to help her build a routine.** You can start at age 3, by creating a simple grid-style chart with a morning, afternoon and evening routine; clip-art images illustrate each step in their routine. Slip the chart in a plastic sleeve & check off completed tasks with a washable marker. Use stickers to track progress & provide small rewards for meeting goals (an extra story at bedtime, a favorite meal for dinner, etc).



**Make it a game.** We all know kids like games, and many enjoy a friendly competition. Be creative and you can keep your child motivated and focused on the task-at-hand, whether it's getting ready for school or helping out with household chores. Play beat the clock or "race" to see who can complete tasks first.

**Use a timer.** For those too young to tell time, buy an egg timer. Set the timer & let them know how much time you are giving them to complete the task. Listening to the ticking timer keeps their little minds on task. When the timer buzzes, it's time to move on to the next (so they can work independently). Reset the timer until they're ready to go.

**Offer a reward after the task is complete.** Let your child watch TV, play on the computer, color or play with a favorite toy if he gets ready early.

**Help your child manage projects.** When your child is assigned his first, long-term project, it's time to teach him project management skills. Sit down with him for a project planning session.

Teaching your child task and time management skills will build his confidence, increase his level of independence and provide him with invaluable tools he will use throughout his life.

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# The Family Room

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## Getting children to listen

**Question:** I frequently find myself telling my kids the same thing over and over again. How can I get them to listen? - Allison T.

**Answer:** Say it once, never more than twice.

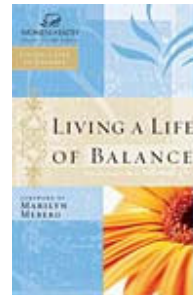
Here is a clear case of "learn from what I do not from what I say." Your children have learned that they do not need to listen the first time you speak. If you sincerely want your children to hear your message the first time you say it, you must stop repeating yourself. Immediately stop whatever it is you're doing, stop talking, and look at your children awaiting their acknowledgement. They probably heard you the first time. If there's any doubt, repeat the message one more time now that you have their attention.

Now, you can start working on compliance. They will know if you're serious without yelling or threatening. Here's where clear messages, your helpful assistance, and setting consequences gives your words the weight they deserve.

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# In the Library

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Living a life of balance is easier said than done. We try so hard to be everywhere at once, to be all things to all people, to our husbands, to our jobs, but before we know it, we're completely worn out and a life of balance seems virtually impossible.

Living a Life of Balance will encourage women to slow down and take a closer look at how they are living their life. It will offer the guidance, hope

and rest women are searching for in their busy lives.

Reaching an audience across racial, socio-economic, denominational, and age boundaries, these guides will enhance the lives of women as they empower them in their weekly devotions. The study guides can be used for both individual and group settings.

Women are asking good questions about their faith. With our study guides, we want to join them in their quest for knowledge and lead them in finding the answers they are seeking.

Check out this resource at [store.womenoffaith.com](http://store.womenoffaith.com)

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# Mom's Kitchen

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We will post favorite recipes here. If you have one you would like to share, let Andrea Hale know.

## PIZZA CASSEROLE

8 oz. cooked macaroni or spaghetti  
1 can tomato sauce  
1 1/2 c. shredded mozzarella  
1 can mushrooms, drained  
1 lb. cooked ground beef or sausage  
1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning  
4 oz. pepperoni  
1 can tomato sauce  
1 1/2 c. shredded mozzarella  
sliced black olives



Grease 9 x 13 pan and layer in order. Be creative, add or replace your favorite pizza toppings. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.