

HOW TO  
Help Kids Embrace  
**GRATITUDE**  
(and look beyond themselves)

**Carrie Partridge**  
[carriebevellpartridge.com](http://carriebevellpartridge.com)

# 25

# ways

## Your Family Can Serve Others

1. Bake cookies and deliver them to welcome a new neighbor.
2. Draw pictures or write notes and mail them to those who are sick.
3. Host a hot chocolate and cookies party in your front yard. Invite your neighbors over to enjoy your hospitality. Parents, be sure to involve your kids in the inviting, baking, and preparing processes.
4. Work together in a community garden.
5. Mow the lawn for a sick or elderly neighbor.
6. Bring extra blankets to pass out for others to use on cold nights at your school's sporting events.
7. Take gifts of appreciation to the teachers at your school at times besides the designated Teacher Appreciation Week.
8. Do a household chore for another family member.
9. Make and deliver a meal to a family with a newborn baby.
10. Buy carnations and hand them out to residents at an assisted living home. Take time to talk and listen to them. Ask them to tell you about themselves and their families.
11. Serve at a soup kitchen--especially at a time besides Thanksgiving and Christmas, which is when they tend to have the most help.
12. Participate in **Operation Christmas Child** or **Prison Fellowship Angel Tree**. Parents, give your children opportunities to earn money that they can then spend on gifts for disadvantaged children.
13. Coordinate a canned food drive in your neighborhood and deliver the food to a local food bank.
14. Leave a generous tip and a thank-you note for your server at a restaurant. Parents, be sure your kids write, decorate, and/or sign their names to the note, too.
15. Create a family prayer calendar. Write at least one person's name on each day and remember to pray for that person. Include names of family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, classmates, leaders in the community, and even people you don't know.
16. Hold a children's book drive in your neighborhood and donate the books to an after school program in an underserved community.
17. Gather clothes and shoes that are in good condition and donate them to a local shelter.
18. Sponsor a child through an organization such as **World Vision** or **Compassion International**.
19. Hold a pet food drive in your neighborhood and deliver the bounty to a local pet shelter.
20. Write an encouraging note for someone in your family and leave it in a surprise place for them to find it.
21. Purchase and donate school supplies and uniforms to a school in a low-income area of your city.
22. Invite someone who doesn't live near their family to join your family for a Thanksgiving or Christmas feast.
23. Hold a toy drive in your neighborhood and then deliver the toys to a children's hospital. Ask if you and your children can personally deliver some of the toys to the patients.
24. Parents, give your kids opportunities to earn money that they can give toward purchasing chickens, ducks, goats, etc. through organizations such as **World Vision** or **Compassion International**. These animals provide both nutrition and extra income for families in third world countries.
25. Put a jar on the kitchen counter and have the family collect change for an agreed-upon mission. This can be an ongoing project, and the missions can vary from month to month. Label the jar "Change Is Good."

# 14

## ways to

# Help Your Family Gain Awareness of Others

1. Practicing listening more than speaking.
2. Make eye contact when listening to someone speak. (This includes family members!)
3. Hold the door for other people when entering or exiting a building.
4. Allow people to go ahead of you in line at the store.
5. When shopping, think about what other people would enjoy, not just you.
6. Don't keep your eyes glued to your phone when you are around other people.
7. Challenge each family member to give a sincere compliment to at least one stranger when you are at a store, restaurant, etc. If kids are shy, encourage them to at least make eye contact and smile at people.
8. Take an "awareness drive" together as a family in some of the poorer areas of your city and discuss your observations.
9. Shop at stores in different parts of your city or in surrounding cities.
10. Participate in **The Compassion Experience**, which connects you to some of the realities faced by children growing up in extreme poverty.
11. Look out the windows instead of looking at your phones as you ride from place to place. Look for other people and how they are living their lives.
12. When you see someone with young kids loading their groceries into their vehicle, offer to return their empty cart for them, so that they don't have to leave their kids unattended.
13. Watch documentaries together that raise your awareness of how people live in other parts of the world.
14. Ask people questions about their life experiences and listen intently to their answers.

# 14

## ways to cultivate an Attitude of Gratitude in Your Family

1. Say, "Thank you" to family members for doing even the things "they're supposed to do."
2. Send handwritten thank-you notes to people who give you gifts.
3. Purchase a blank journal for each member of the family. Encourage everyone to keep an ongoing list of people, places, and things that they are thankful for. Have each person share a few things from their list from time to time.
4. Place a dry-erase board or chalkboard in a common room in the house and have people write things they are thankful for on it. When people visit your home, invite them to add to the board.
5. Bring it to each other's attention when you observe someone being kind or going out of their way to help someone else, whether it's at home, out in public, or on TV.
6. Challenge each family member to give away at least one item that they especially like.
7. When people are feeling jealous or feeling sorry for themselves because they don't have a certain item that someone else has, encourage them to consider what they do have already.
8. Regularly speak gratitude aloud for things we often take for granted: food, clothes, shoes, houses, cars, electricity, washing machines and dryers, dishwashers, clean water to drink, beds to sleep in, access to schools, employment, etc.
9. When something doesn't go the way you thought it would, look for positive outcomes anyway.
10. Instead of complaining about the weather, point out how different types of weather are beneficial for different reasons. If nothing else, point out that weather changes!
11. Listen to music that encourages thankfulness rather than entitlement.
12. When watching TV together, point out characters who are thankful vs. characters who feel entitled and are ungrateful.
13. When someone complains about the food they are given to eat, take the opportunity to discuss how some people in the world don't even have food to eat everyday, or they eat the same thing over and over again. Be thankful for an abundance of food and lots of variety available to us!
14. Purposely experience some contrasts to help encourage gratitude. Examples:
  - Taking a hot shower vs. taking a cold shower
  - Sleeping in a bed vs. sleeping on the floor
  - Driving to the grocery store vs. walking to the grocery store
  - Having limited screen time vs. having a day with no screens at all
  - Keeping the house at a comfortable temperature vs. not using AC for a day
  - Having a variety of meals vs. eating rice and beans every night for a week
  - Putting dirty dishes in the dishwasher vs. washing everything by hand
  - Drying clothes in the dryer vs. hanging them outside to air-dry
  - Having lots of clothes to choose from vs. being limited to five articles of clothing for a week
  - Listening to music any time vs. having a week without music

# 12

## scripture passages to Encourage Gratitude and Thinking of Others

1. I will give thanks to You, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonderful deeds.”

**Psalm 9:1**

2. “Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the Lord is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations.”

**Psalm 100:4-5**

3. “Let them give thanks to the Lord for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for mankind. Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of His works with songs of joy.”

**Psalm 107:21-22**

4. “This is my commandment: love each other just as I have loved you.”

**John 15:12**

5. “Carry each other’s burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

**Galatians 6:2**

6. “Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to each other, in the same way God forgave you in Christ.”

**Ephesians 4:32**

7. “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”

**Philippians 2:3-4**

8. “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

**Philippians 4:6-7**

9. “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

**Colossians 3:15-17**

10. “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

11. “Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that openly profess His name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”

**Hebrews 13:15-16**

12. “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, Who does not change like shifting shadows.”

**James 1:17**

## Author

Carrie Bevell Partridge has a heart to see families grow in relationship with each other and with God the Father. She and her husband Kevin have been married for 23 years, and they have five children, two of whom they adopted from Colombia in 2016. Carrie is a writer who focuses on words of encouragement and support for marriage and family. Her column, “Growth Spurts: Growing Through Motherhood,” ran in Parents & Kids Magazine for a decade, and she continues to be a regular contributor to the publication. She is in the process of writing a book on seizing teachable moments with your kids in everyday life. You can join the “[As You Are Going](#)” Facebook group to both give and receive parenting encouragement, support, and practical tips.

Read more of Carrie’s work at [carribevellpartridge.com](http://carribevellpartridge.com), where you can also subscribe to her emails.

## Connect with Carrie



@carribevellpartridge