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Today I tasted grace through strangers. Maybe next time I see another mom in over her head ... I can be that kind of stranger.

### Inspire (for parents)

We've all been in line at the grocery store and seen a mom who was in way over her head—her screaming infant; the toddler defying everything in her loudest outdoor voice; a hand-held grocery basket digging into the crook of her arm with a 24-roll pack of toilet paper balancing awkwardly on top of the double stroller.

If I'm not in too much of a hurry, I give her a sympathetic smile. Otherwise, I pretend not to notice her as I rush by. The exchange reminds me of times I've sat in my car and looked straight through someone panhandling on the corner as I wait for my light to turn green. I'm good at pretending the red light is the most interesting thing I've seen in weeks.

Well, today I was her. I was the mom at the grocery store, stressed and unlovely and not sure whether I wanted to be noticed or ignored.

But then the most amazing thing happened. I didn't scream. I didn't cry. I didn't even grit my teeth or bite my tongue. I did what moms everywhere do every day. I took a deep breath and kept going. Then a kind woman stopped and bent down to talk to the screaming Malakye in his stroller. He stopped

crying long enough to flirt with her before she went on her way. Next the teenaged boy at the checkout counter offered to help us out to the car. I accepted.

Today I tasted grace through strangers. Maybe next time I see another mom in over her head or a homeless panhandler sitting at the corner, I can be that kind of stranger. After all, God created me to be in relationship with Him and others.

by Sharron Jackson

### Getting Started

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:26–31; 2:4–25  
(Creation of Adam and Eve)

**Main Point:** God Created Me to Be in Relationship with Him and Others

This resource is designed to allow your family to have time in God's Word **before your children attend church**. Because God's plan is for parents to be the spiritual nurturers of their children's faith, we know that as you grow spiritually, your children will grow spiritually as well.

### Equip (for parents)

God created man and woman in His image—mankind would uniquely bear the likeness of God the Creator. He established the authority we would have with the earth and all other created things upon the earth, in the skies, and in the waters. They (male and female) were to rule over all earthly created things. After God created man and woman, He blessed them. They were to have children and fill the earth.

"Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"—mankind was created in the likeness of God and one from another. We were united from the onset, designed to care for one another as we would care for our own flesh. When asked what was the most important commandment, Jesus said, "The most important one ... is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:29–31). We were created to be in relationship with God and others.

We were created not only to love others, but also to be loved by others. As parents, many of us can get so consumed in loving and caring for our children that we forget to give ourselves the time to be cared for by others. A hug from a friend, a cup of coffee with another parent, or a quick phone call to connect with another person can often be just what we need to gain the encouragement to keep being the parent God created us to be. We were created to be in relationship with others ... let's give ourselves the space to enjoy these relationships and allow ourselves to receive the love we need from others.

### REMEMBER VERSE

"The LORD causes his miracles to be remembered. He is kind and tender."  
Psalm 111:4 (NIRV)

### Support (for parents & kids)

Sometime this week, read with your child the biblical account of the creation of Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:26–31. Before reading, pray together as a family and thank God for the amazing gift of being created to be in relationship with Him. Then think of a question that reviews what you just read such as, "Who did God make mankind like?"

**> JUST FOR FUN**, try helping your children connect with the idea of being created by God. Gather some pictures or mementos to celebrate when God created them. These can be pictures of their ultrasound, of mom pregnant with them, or items from when they were a baby. After reading, explain that God created Adam and Eve as the first people, and He still creates each and every one of us. Show them the items you've gathered and praise God together.

When you're finished, share with your children that what they just heard is a part of The Big God Story in the Bible, and they'll hear it in church. Ask your children if they have any questions about what it means to be created by God. Close your time by praying and thanking God for creating each member of your family.