

When Children Pay For Our Success

I am guilty of pursuing other endeavors outside my home. I can get passionate about other things besides my children, but it simply is not worth it.

I get tired and bogged down by the daily chores in my home. The laundry, dishes, groceries, and meals. A constant song of "I want," "I need" "Help me," "Mommy please." In the business of it all, I lose focus of my role as a mom beyond those tasks, and my heart begins to look in other places.

I start to dream about big things outside my home. Maybe writing, maybe a part-time job now that all girls are in school, or maybe a place where I can give myself and feel useful. In no time, I lose focus, and my enjoyment in life seems to come not from my role as a mom, but by the accomplishments I gain. I begin to look at my "resume" of how many published articles I have, how many people attend my Zumba classes, or how well our ministries at the church are going.

But at the end of my day, when I look at the things that really matter in life, and when I put my priorities into place, nothing is more important than my children. No writing contract, no part-time adventure, and not the success of a children's ministry. Because at the end of the day, if I have sacrificed my children in order to gain the world, I have lost the most precious treasures entrusted to me.

I would do anything for my children. No sacrifice is too big. Yet I often sacrifice them by giving my time, energy, and affections to my other pursuits. And so today I am reminded of what my husband once said, **"You don't want to sacrifice your children on the altar of success."**

My girls bring me great joy. I cherish them and delight in them. They give me life, they fill my heart and soul. They are my treasures, and it is my greatest desire to love them well, and be always present and available in their lives.

Parents, let's keep our focus, let's love our children well. Let's not sacrifice them on the altar of success, it isn't worth it.

*Adapted from **Ellen Stumbo's** blog at . Ellen is a pastor's wife and she writes about finding beauty in brokenness with gritty honesty and openness. She is passionate about sharing the real—sometimes beautiful and sometimes ugly—aspects of faith, parenting, special needs, and adoption. She has been published in Focus on the Family, LifeWay, MomSense, Not Alone, and Mamapedia among others.*