

Home Dedication: Devote Your Home to the Lord...Literally

The Bible describes a wide variety of ceremonies, including dedications, rituals, establishing landmarks, and the use of points of reference. From water baptism to wearing tassels, these were all designed by God for a reason. They dually serve as meaningful starting places for believers to grasp important spiritual meanings, as well as life-long reminders of God's presence and activity in the lives of His people.

In that same vein, here is a very meaning activity that can serve as a memorable beginning of your family's entire spiritual experience: The Home Dedication Ceremony. This ceremony gives all family members a "landmark" reminder that their lives, home, and all possessions are to be set apart for God's special use. Our family, and many others we know, performed our own home dedication ceremony, complete with song, prayer and special anointing oil.

Planning a home dedication ceremony

Related scriptures: 2 Samuel 7:29, Psalms 91:9-11, Proverbs 24:3,4, Psalms 119:54

Your dedication ceremony should have a main focus, which is to offer your home, all home activities, and all possessions as instruments for the glory of God, to be used as He leads you. Many of the ceremonies we have seen use anointing oil, similar to the Bible's temple dedication ceremony. (**See below for more on anointing oil.)

Below is the home dedication ceremony format that we have most often.

Family meeting:

Call a special family meeting. Dad, lead the meeting, beginning with a brief prayer asking God to bless your time together. Set the tone...this is a serious meeting. If you have already built a decent spiritual connection with the kids, then it will be easy to introduce the subject of dedicating your home to the Lord. If, however, you have not yet begun developing your family's spiritual life, you'll need to lay a foundation.

Lay the foundation:

You can say something like, "God wants more from us than just an hour at church on Sunday. God wants a relationship with each of us, and wants us all to know and understand Him. God also wants us to be part of His family. Since He is our Father and we are all his children, we want to act like children of God. We also want our home to be a home that pleases our Father. So, as a family, we are going to spend time together getting to know God and learning what pleases Him. Everyone understand? Let's begin by dedicating ourselves and our home to God."

Dedicate yourselves to God:

Teach your kids what it means to dedicate yourself to God. (Your life is meant to be lived for a reason. That reason is to know God. John 1:12, Philippians 1:21, Psalms 37:5, Proverbs 16:3.) If you had your children baptized or dedicated as a baby, remind them that you dedicated their lives to God at that time, and promised to lead them spiritually. Lead the family in prayer, dedicating each person by name to God. (You could make this a little more memorable by actually anointing the foreheads of each person with the anointing oil...just wet your thumb with the oil and make a little cross on their foreheads as you pray for each one.) Ask for God's special blessing on all, by simply saying something like, "God, I anoint _____ to be a blessing to You and for You. Amen."

Dedicate Your Home to God:

1. Explain: Tell the family that, since God gave you a home, you should dedicate it to God.
2. Bible: Read a meaningful verse for the family (we read Joshua 24:15...we even bought a plaque etched with that verse at a Christian bookstore and hung it over the door.)
3. Anoint the home: You can then bless one room at a time together as a family. You can give everyone a cotton ball lightly soaked with the anointing oil and whose ever room it is could anoint the bottom corner of windows and bathroom mirrors making a cross; recite the verse you chose as they anoint and dedicate each area of the home, asking for God's blessing. You could simply say, "God we ask you to bless this living room. May everything we say and do in this room glorify You!" (By the way, the little oil crosses will remain on the mirrors and windows for a long time, reminding everyone of this important family event.)

4. Close: At the end, lead the family in a worship song or prayer. Again, ask for God's special blessing.

This dedication service will always be remembered, and may become a favorite family tradition for all new homes for yourself and your children. Amen!!

****Anointing oil:**

You can buy anointing oil at many Christian bookstores or church supply companies, or you can make your own (very easy). Anointing oils are usually olive-oil based, mixed with some aromatic spices. Cinnamon (and its close cousin, cassia) were two spices commonly used in biblical times to scent oil. To make your own oil, put a half cup of olive oil in a small pan on very low heat and add a raw cinnamon stick for about an hour (buy cinnamon sticks from any grocer, less than a buck for five. They look like rolled up pieces of tree bark.). To make it special, you can make a container to store the oil. Find a small sealable container, like an empty medicine bottle or eye dropper, decorate it, and dress it up with a small ribbon around the top. You can buy very small glass bottles at most craft stores that work well for long-term storage.