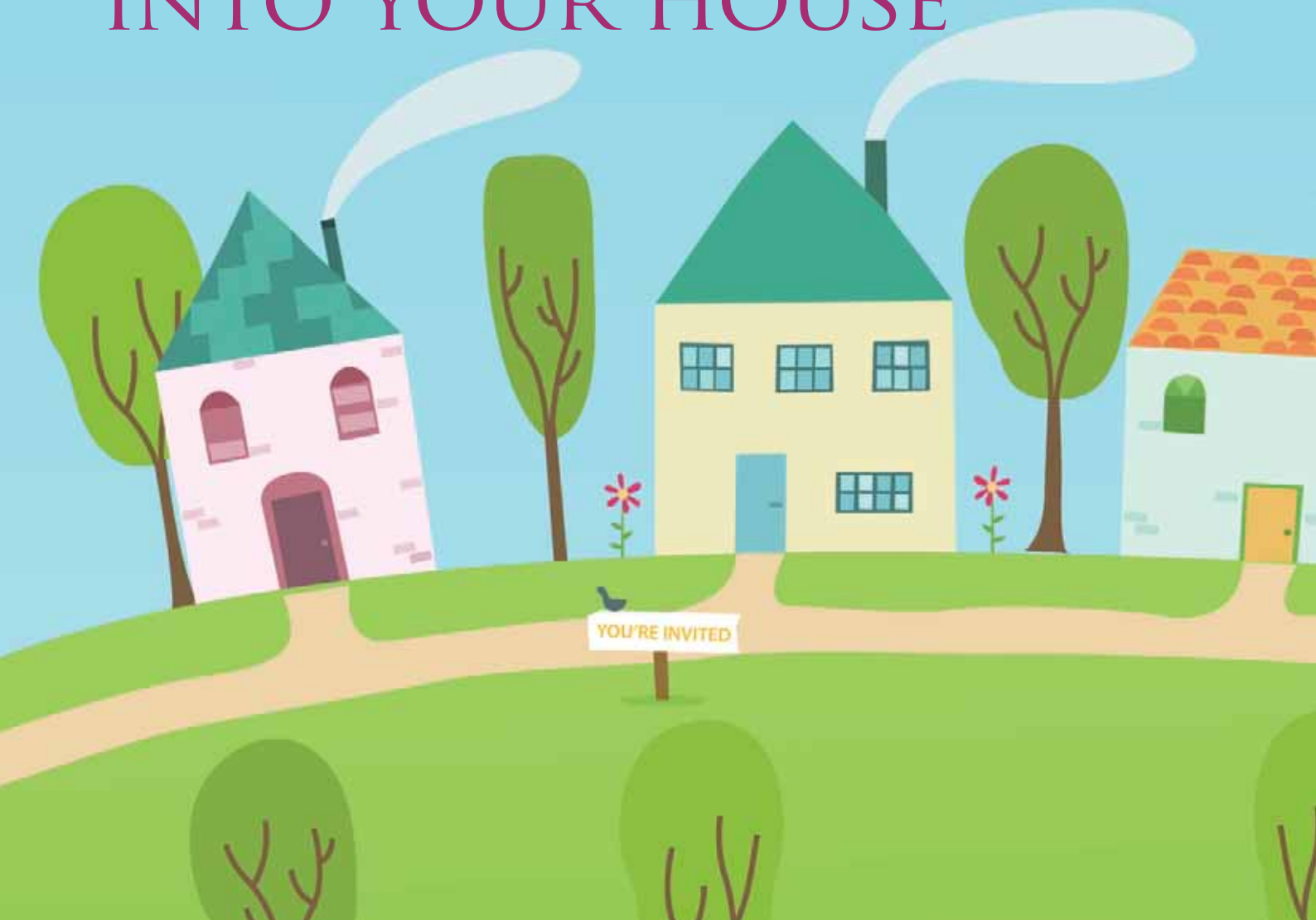


INVITING GOD INTO YOUR HOUSE



Home is where the heart is, and God desires for the family to place Him in their hearts. **Al Troester** shares about the family altar and how to establish it.

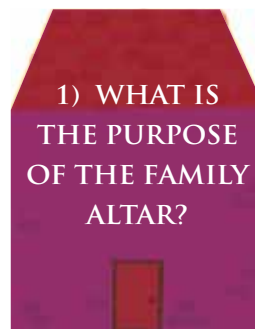
A “family altar” simply means family Bible study and worship time. It is the best guarantee to have Christian children with good moral standards that do not drift through their teen years, to have a family that has a witness for Christ in the community, and to have a family that takes the church seriously and enjoys going to all the services.

It is well to remember the great command that the Lord gave to Israel. “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 strength. These commandments



that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. **Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.**" (Deuteronomy 6:4-7)

Worship of the Lord is first of all vertical and then horizontal, and begins in the home and takes in the whole family.



- A. To worship God together and learn more of His ways.** What could be a better purpose? Children should learn to worship God in their early years that they might have respect for Him in the later years.
- B. To honour God's Word, develop respect for it, and to live by it.** In these days when we have put the Bible out of our schools, we need to put it back in our homes and teach our children from it.
- C. To establish the family in the faith, personal convictions, and doctrine.** Children and young people need convictions to stand up against their peers.
- D. To pray over family problems and needs,** burdens the children may have, and that they may have confidence in the God that answers prayer in the everyday things of life.
- E. To pray and intercede for others.** Children who can learn to pray openly at home will have no problem praying publicly in the church weekly prayer meetings as they grow.

2) PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS THAT MAY BE OF HELP

A. Search out methods that will appeal to all age levels in the family. Different ages have different interests and what may appeal to one may not appeal to another.

B. Vary the methods so as to keep family time from

being boring and from being a cold routine.

Interest for all should be maintained so monotony does not kill it.

C. Do not make it a time of forced listening to the Bible, of bitter participation, or unhappy endurance while you drone through whole chapters of the Bible beyond family comprehension and then drag the family through a long dry, routine prayer. If they participate in bitterness, they will abhor the family altar time.

D. Make it a delightful, happy, interesting time filled with enthusiasm so that the whole family looks forward to it with real expectancy.

E. Do not make it so long that the children despise the time it takes. Better

have it short and sweet, vital and satisfying, so their appetites hunger for more.

F. Let all participate and become involved. Those that can read should take turns in reading as well as in prayer. Even the little tots can say a few words in prayer even if they cannot read. They can be taught songs in which all can take part.

G. Take time for discussion, answering questions, solving problems, and for self expression. Children especially are inquisitive and want to know.

H. Do not spend time in criticising or gossiping. There is nothing that will sour the whole thing more



than engaging in tearing something or someone apart. Remember it is a worship time.

- I. Let the children that are old enough conduct the family worship time some time either in whole or in part.** Let them do it their way and express themselves. It will create interest in it for them. This is also a good way to develop them spiritually and in self-confidence. They should be encouraged in what they do or say and not be belittled.
- J. Have the family altar when it is most convenient for all.**



A. Read God's Word together.

Select a book of the Bible appropriate for your children's ages and have each family member read two to three verses as you go around the room. You can read anywhere from

one to two chapters to an entire chapter each night. Let the children help choose what book of the Bible to read.

- B. Bible games.** This can be very interesting and add challenge to the family altar and can be very appealing to the young folks and keep the family altar time from being boring. Use Bible games that teach a



lesson and from which you may learn something helpful for Christian living.

- C. Worship together.**
- D. Study Bible characters.** Read about the character in the Bible and study his weak and strong points and discuss how you may learn something from him or her. You can see yourself in Bible characters and learn many precious lessons.
- E. Major verses.** This is a good method for variety. Take a series of verses on great promises in the Bible such as on prayer and victorious living. Memorise the verse.
- F. Use pictures.** This is a wonderful way to interest children. Many Bible story books have pictures in them that tell a story for the child.
- G. Object lessons.** Visual aids of all kinds can be used. Be creative and use whatever object you may have handy to teach a Bible truth.



Christ readily used object lessons such as the sheep and goats, the rock, water in the well of Samaria, etc. There is no end to object lessons.

- H. Read Bible stories.** They supply answers to different family needs and give a challenge to spiritual living.
- I. Go through the miracles of Christ.** Study the miracle as to where it was, the occasion, what happened, who was involved, and then personal lessons.
- J. Listen to sermons together.**