



Building Closeness Through Traditions



Traditions are a big part of passing faith from one generation to the next. Our family does *this* and *this* and that's what makes our family unique. God instructed the Israelites to observe the Passover every year and Jews continue to celebrate it every year. Traditions can draw your family together and bring a sense of comfort and security to your children.

Here are some suggestions for creating happy memories:

1. **Repetition** helps build family memories. You may have a special way to celebrate birthdays, plan a cookout every Fourth of July, celebrate a birthday party for Jesus every Christmas. Traditions are formed delicately, sometimes without even realizing it. Create experiences that bring joy and your kids will want to repeat them.
2. **Record** the events in words and pictures that will serve as reminder of happy times. (Christmas albums, journals that can be re-read, etc.)
3. **Tell stories** over and over again. Tell them your stories, the stories of when they were little, your parents, and your extended family.
4. **Be creative** with everyday experiences. The secret of building memories is not doing extraordinary things, but to make ordinary activities special. (For example: Be mysterious about a destination and the surprise will enhance the memory.)
5. **Special seasons and holidays** are ideal times to start family rituals or traditions. (Valentine's Day treasure hunt, fireworks and ice cream every July 4th, etc.)
6. Don't think you need to spend money—some of the best times can be simple ones. Give kids **experiences** rather than things. It is the sharing of self and showing love that really matters. (Take a night hike at a park, sleep out in a tent, go to the zoo, take a day trip to a museum, etc.)
7. Do what **fits** you. Don't bake gingerbread houses if you hate to bake. Instead, build something (or whatever else you like to do) together.



8. **Take the best** of your and your spouse's traditions to create your own.
9. Special moments don't usually just happen, they must be **planned**. Life will zip by if you don't plan what is important. Put those on calendar first.
10. **Set priorities** for your family and don't be afraid to say "no" to other things.