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Passover Celebration for Christian Families

By Scott Wylie

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A Passover Celebration for Christian Families

I attended my first Jewish Passover Seder about 12 years ago. My wife and I were invited to the home of Jewish friends to participate with them in this special event. Our friends do not acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, but it was clear to us what a beautiful picture of Christ's redemption the Passover Seder is. Since then we have celebrated a "Christian Passover Seder" which emphasizes the correlation between Israel's deliverance from Egypt and the Believers deliverance from the bonds of sin.

A Brief History

Passover is the oldest and most important religious festival in Judaism, commemorating God's deliverance of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt and his creation of the Israelite people. The festival of Passover begins at sunset on the 14th of Nisan (usually in March or April) and marks the beginning of seven day celebration that includes the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The focal point of Passover is a communal meal, called the Seder (which means "order," because of the fixed order of service), which is time of rejoicing and celebration at the deliverance for the Hebrews that God accomplished in the exodus.

Passover has traditionally been celebrated in the home with family and friends as they eat meal together. It is customary to invite guests to share the Seder meal, especially newcomers to the community. The actual Seder meal in most Jewish homes is an elaborate feast, with food, games for the children, and plenty of time to tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt. It is not unusual for Seder to last three to four hours.

The Seder involves everyone present since they all share in reading and singing the story. While the father or grandfather is usually the leader of the service, others have roles as well. The mother of the home lights the festival candles that signal the beginning of Passover, the youngest child asks the four questions, the children help eliminate all Chametz, leaven, from the house, search for the hidden

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Afikomen (symbolic piece of Matzah, unleavened bread) and open the door for Elijah, the parents or the grandparents tell the story of the exodus, and various others are designated to read or lead certain portions of the service.

Passover is really more than festival. It is an elaborate teaching experience, especially for the children, intended to call people to their identity as the People of God. By using all of the senses, the Passover Seder tells the story of God's grace in history and calls the participants to experience and share in the story as their own story.

Christian Passover

There has been increasing interest among Christians in this ancient festival. There are various reasons

for this renewed interest: an increasing sensitivity to cultural and societal problems and corresponding desire to learn about others; renewed awareness of the importance of the Old Testament Scriptures as Christian Scripture; desire or even need in our modern world to recover sense of the sacred through liturgy and sacrament and the willingness to find new and innovative ways to worship. Most importantly, however, is the wonderful picture the Passover gives Believers of what Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb, has accomplished for us.

I encourage Christian families to begin a tradition of having a special Passover celebration. My children love this celebration and look forward to it each year. It is a terrific teaching opportunity and helps us draw our focus toward the eternal significance of Christ's passion. Good Friday would be a good day to consider, but anytime during the Easter season would be appropriate. A Christian Passover Celebration is not difficult, but it does require some planning so begin thinking about it a few weeks in advance.

For more information in a Christian Passover Celebration, visit <http://www.colonialkids.org/parents/seder.htm> . There you will find a complete set of instructions, recipes and an order of service.

Scott Wylie is the Pastor of Children's Ministries at Colonial Baptist Church in Cary, NC

Christian Home Schooling Information

By James Masterson

The principles and reasons for a Christian homeschool is influenced by the child's training based from the Bible, wherein the education of the child should be left in the parents' hands.

As seen in all Christian homeschools, parents teach the word of the Lord, to prepare their children for appropriate Christian wisdom, direction and values essential in their everyday life as well as when they reach adulthood. This aspect of teaching is not found in curriculums of the public schools.

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Christian homeschools are distinct for each family. Some accurately design their home to look like a "school", complete with textbooks, desks, flag salute, and yes, recess.

Others make homeschooling a way of life, choosing not so much in utilizing workbooks, required texts and schedules. Here, both children and parents learn through life experiences; teaching, learning and studying is part of their everyday routine instead of a closely controlled classroom setting.

Whatever is each family's homeschool setup, their objective is all alike, that of giving their children important information while at the same time imparting in them how to become critical thinkers and independent individuals that are aware and conscious of the choices they make.

Families that homeschool adjust its setting to fit both their philosophies and lifestyle; there is no wrong or right way to shape and construct an environment for their home Christian school.

Christian families make the most of all the limitless resources accessible, using the Bible, literature, home economics, nature and every living thing as their principal basis of education, constantly integrating teachings from the Bible in each subject matter.

Christian homeschools allow the parents to impart God's Word to their child. It is an environment of spiritual and moral reinforcement through which kids are being trained seriously in the Word of God, mainly to act and think as Christians.

Typically, the curriculum in a Christian homeschool spends a meaningful and substantial time in the study of the Bible, wherein the focus is God's scripture.

Christians choose to home educate their children primarily because of their faith that God's plan is revealed through parents raising and educating their own children. In fact, Christians firmly acknowledge that it is the way of the Bible; there is no other educational system than this.

Christians actually accept that God did not even suggest schools to be attended by His people; that schools were a product of man. The Bible pages support by instruction, example and principle, a course that resembles closely home education.

It doesn't matter if you just want to explore home schooling possibilities or have made the decision and are looking for a guide to point you in the right direction, "The Parents Guide to Home Schooling" will provide you with the information you require.



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