



## **Building Family Traditions**

Family traditions are an essential part of your family's heritage. They are an invaluable tool for future generations to understand your family's principles. Every family has traditions, some good and others bad. Our hope is that you will continue your family's good traditions. If you lack traditions, then it is important that you work create new ones.

### **Special Events**

Family traditions are practices and beliefs which bind together a family. These traditions create positive feelings and are repeated at regular intervals. They are more than a daily routine or chores but instead are special events and beliefs which your family makes an extra effort to observe. Some of these traditions are religious observances or events. Others come from ethnic or cultural traditions, such as enjoying certain foods on special holidays.

### **Giving Kids a Heritage**

Family traditions serve as a connection point between older and younger members of your family. These traditions promote a sense of security, emotional closeness and a feeling of belonging. They give family members something to look forward to in the midst of our busy lives and schedules. Plus, it gives kids a sense of their heritage and a sense of where they came from.

### **Be Intentional**

In his book, *The Intentional Family*, noted family expert William Doherty states that "family bonds are weakened by busy lifestyles, families can stay connected only by being intentional about maintaining important rituals and traditions." Family entropy occurs over time and will eventually dissipate a family. It is very important that parents intentionally promote current family traditions or create new ones.

Suggested family traditions could be: Praying together before meals; an annual family barbeque; or selecting favorite foods to enjoy during holidays.