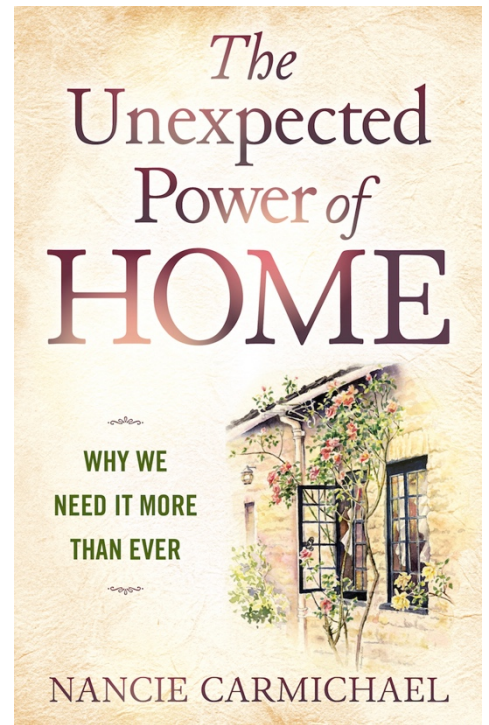


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THE UNEXPECTED POWER OF HOME

WHY WE NEED IT MORE THAN EVER

NANCIE CARMICHAEL



Home is where the gospel gets personal. Nancie’s passion is that this book will inspire the reader to see with fresh eyes the potentially powerful and life-shaping place that home is. Through home, we have the power to create an atmosphere of safety, of beauty, of hospitality, and of celebration.

While this is a **practical** book, it’s also a **spiritual** book. Home starts with us, of course. Through making room for the sacred in our home, we learn to make room for the sacred in our lives. This book on home addresses these questions:

- *Have I really left home?*
- *Am I content where I am now?*
- *How can I be a person of hospitality and yet have solitude?*
- *Why do I have so much clutter? What does it say about me?*
- *Does my home inspire a sense of celebration in each season?*
- *Is there joy in each season of my life?*

As a mother of five children, Nancie experienced with her family what it meant to have a place to grow and learn the most important things in life. Home is a place all of us eventually leave – and then look to find again. Home is a living, spiritual place that is reflective of who we are.

At the end of each chapter are questions to facilitate small group discussion and personal growth.

An accompanying study guide is available for individuals or groups who wish to further explore the topics in *The Unexpected Power of Home*, beyond the questions at the end of each chapter (*The Unexpected Power of Home: An Eight-Week Study Guide*; ISBN: 9781632695031; retail: \$7.99).

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About the Author

NANCIE CARMICHAEL

Nancie Carmichael has been involved in writing and publishing for many years, including at *Virtue Magazine* and *Christian Parenting Today Magazine*, where she was co-publisher with her husband, Bill. She has edited and written many articles, Bible studies, and magazine columns.

The Unexpected Power of Home is Nancie's tenth book. Her other nine include two coauthored with Bill: *Lord, Bless My Child* and *Lord, Bless this Marriage*. Among her most treasured solo endeavors are *Selah: Your Moment to Stop, Think, and Step into Your Future* and *Surviving One Bad Year*. Bill and Nancie now

own a book publishing company in Sisters, Deep River Books. Nancie has spoken in many places throughout North America and served on various boards.

Nancie graduated with her MA in Spiritual Formation from George Fox Evangelical Seminary and, in addition to writing, does some counseling through Westside Church in Bend, Oregon. Nancie is also a licensed minister with the Oregon Ministry Network.

Nancie will tell you her greatest joy is her family – her husband Bill, five married children, and fourteen grandchildren. Her favorite thing to do is walk along the Metolius River or find a beautiful path through the woods near her home in Sisters, Oregon.

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What Others Are Saying About **The Unexpected Power of Home**

“The Unexpected Power of Home is the blueprint for a safe, serene, and sanctified place where love can live.”

– Pam Farrel, author of 45 books, including bestselling *Men Are Like Waffles, Women Are Like Spaghetti* and *A Couple’s Journey with God*

“Through memoir, exquisite quotes, and practical application, Carmichael is a master host in welcoming each of us into a dwelling that fits perfectly. Highly recommended wisdom for every wanderer.”

– Lucinda Secrest McDowell, author of *Dwelling Places* and *Ordinary Graces*

“Nancie Carmichael writes with wisdom, depth, and tenderness. The questions at the end of each chapter make this book ideal for small group discussions or for personal use. Don’t miss it!”

– Carol Kent, speaker and author of *He Holds My Hand: Experiencing God’s Presence and Protection*

“Carmichael writes that we are all refugees needing a place of refuge and restoration, a place where we can learn and then give. ... Carmichael is right that home is powerful, because it embraces us and can fill us what we need most: love.”

– Janet Holm McHenry, author of 23 books, including *The Complete Guide to the Prayers of Jesus* and the bestselling *Prayer Walk: Becoming a Woman of Prayer, Strength, and Discipline*

“While acknowledging that home isn’t always all that it should be, she gently challenges each of us to take the initiative to create a safe, sheltering place for ourselves and those we love, even as we look forward to the love, joy, and peace that await us in our eternal home.”

– Christin Ditchfield, internationally syndicated radio host, conference speaker, and author of *What Women Should Know About Letting It Go*

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“Nancie’s book is a wake-up call for individuals and the Church to the power of home and the importance of home for now and for future generations. We must take heed.”
– **Leslie Vernick, relationship coach, speaker, and author of seven books, including *The Emotionally Destructive Relationship* and *The Emotionally Destructive Marriage***

“I love home and I love this book! *The Unexpected Power of Home* is a beautiful mix of the spiritual and practical.”
– **Lila Pearson, interior designer and home specialist**

“In *The Unexpected Power of Home*, Nancie Carmichael weaves a beautiful tapestry that – as all tapestries – celebrates warmth, artistry, strength, durability, and purpose of Home.”
– **Cynthia Ruchti, writer and producer of long-running radio broadcast *The Heartbeat of Home* and author of more than 20 books, including *As My Parents Age* and the novel *Miles from Where We Started***

“Nancie Carmichael had me at ‘Chapter One - Home: Where Your Story Begins.’ ... Each chapter overflows with significant reflections, guidance, and encouragement. I found myself nodding in agreement and making note of the many friends and family members who would enjoy reading *The Unexpected Power of Home*.”
– **Kendra Smiley, speaker, radio host, and author of several books, including her latest, *Mother of the Year – 365 Days of Encouragement for Devoted Moms***

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Suggested Interview Questions

For Nancie Carmichael, author of

The Unexpected Power of Home

Why We Need It More than Ever

Q: What is the “unexpected power” of home?

A: Our earliest home shaped us, and in turn, shapes how we do home. Our expectations of home start with what we first learned; and some of us must un-learn some negative patterns to build new ones. The power of home is lifelong, and life shaping.

Q: Is there anything that surprised you as you wrote this book?

A: Yes! I started out writing about home as a fixed place. My house – that, for better or worse, I am responsible for. I love home. I love having an actual place to nurture my family, a sheltering place for all those who come here. A beautiful place. But what surprised me as I wrote this is how strongly I see that Home is a metaphor for who we are. For our own selves.

Q: You write about what it means to leave your childhood home, and then what it means to “find” your own home. What lessons are there in leaving home?

A: I believe that leaving home is symbolic with leaving childhood; with growing up in order to become the person that God is shaping us into. In order to grow, we must let go and become our own person. It is assuming responsibility for establishing a new home, a new family, a new identity, all fashioned out of the material that we have been given to make something original and good. Finding and making your own home is a process, and takes time. It’s not just about material things; it’s about people, about relationships.

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Q: You say this is a practical book, yet a spiritual one. how so?

A: There is actual, physical work to having a beautiful, influential home of substance. It takes organization; it takes discipline. The work of home can often feel like mindless drudgery. You have to sort of play with it; trying a certain color here; moving that sofa over there. Cleaning! Hauling out the clutter. Taking care of a home is so *daily*. But we can't miss the spiritual metaphor: Becoming a beautiful, influential person is a daily discipline. It takes intention, thoughtfulness. It's not being lazy, or wasting time on mindless activities. Purposeful learning, making mistakes if necessary to see something work.

The actual work of home accomplishes something good, and lasting. And the actual work of our lives accomplishes something good and lasting, as well.

Q: Why is hospitality important? How is it possible to grow in this area?

A: Hospitality makes a house come alive! It means having an open place – a place to invite others *in*. Hospitality means to offer a welcoming place in the world. How we all need to be welcomed at times! But hospitality is intimidating to some people, because we get it confused with “entertaining.” We don't feel adequate; our house is a mess. We may not feel confident in our cooking skills. Hospitality is about making others feel good; entertaining is about making yourself look good. There's a big difference.

We can start small, though. Simply giving someone a smile, noticing them, is part of hospitality.

Q: What does it mean to have sacred space in your house?

A: In order to face the world, we need to continually replenish ourselves. The world just takes it out of us, and we need to be restored. Home can do

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this for us. We all need that private space – a place to pray, to think. To be creative. We can create actual sacred spaces: A chair, a table. A lighted candle. An open journal, a scripture reading. A room of one's own. Music. Art. These are things that feed our souls, and we can make choices to see that this happens.

In order to have sacred spaces, we must at times shut the world out – turn off the mindless TV; turn off the electronics. It takes assertiveness and planning, but we can do it.

Q: What would you like your book on home to do for the reader?

A: This is a personal book, and what I want to do is to take the reader along with me into my own home – my own view of home – and inspire the reader to see his or her own home. See what shaped your idea of home. See the miracle of having your own place, and to set your imagination free as to what you can do with it. It does not matter so much the style, or the assessed value; it's the possibilities that make it exciting.

That is the unexpected power of home. Through your choices, you make a place that has a profound influence on many.

At the end of each chapter are interactive questions and quotes to help you think about the various concepts of home. This could facilitate a small-group study, or could simply be for your own further insight.

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