



# Parent Pages

## Preparing the environment of the Domestic Church\*

\* The term "Domestic Church" refers to the family, the smallest body of gathered believers in Christ. Though recovered only recently, the term dates back to the first century AD. The Greek word *ecclesiola* referred to "little church." The early Church understood that the home was fertile ground for discipleship, sanctification, and holiness.

## Biblical Geography

On my eleventh Christmas, I received a thirty-four year old globe. I recall thinking it was an unusual gift from my Dad. It was old, faded, and some of the countries now had different names or new borders. Obviously, it was a treasured item from his own childhood, and he wanted me to share in his enjoyment of geography. I loved to draw, and he probably noticed the maps that I had been making for the past year, the details of my drawings, and the use of scales and spatial perspective. Thirty some years later, I noticed my own daughter began to draw maps, to create her own "worlds", sometimes on paper, or via Club Penguin or Minecraft on her computer. As I look at that old globe sitting on a shelf, it seems so obsolete in this digital age of GPS and google maps, but map skills are so important for our young people in special thinking and being able to picture the location of objects, shapes, places, cities and countries in relation to one another. Maps help the child figure out their place in the world.

– Mary Heinrich



*My father's globe*

We begin with giving the child a perspective of the global (staring with a globe) and move to local (looking at the Land of Israel and then the City of Jerusalem. Moving on to other cities, mountains, deserts and waterways in Israel.) The material is sensorial and concrete.

The purpose of geography in the atrium is

- to see Jesus as a historical figure, a real person,
- to see salvation realized in time and space, and
- to nourish the child's sense of order, that everything has a place.

The material sows the seeds of understanding of the small / great aspect of God, who tells us through the prophet Micah, "I choose you, Israel, not because you are great, but because you are small." (Micah 5:1)



### Geography at Home

**Draw a map:** Do your children enjoy drawing maps? As a child, my brother and I would draw maps of our neighborhood, including those important places in our community, like stores, the library, our school, and church. We then drew maps of the rooms in our house, those places we knew well.

**Explore the Globe and Map(s) of Israel:** The children know about the land of Israel. A globe, an atlas, or perhaps there are maps in your family Bible. The older child may want to look up stories about Nazareth, Bethlehem, or Jerusalem in your family Bible.

**Look at photos from the Land of Israel:** CGSUSA offers a series of books that share images of the regions and cities that the children have come to know about in the atrium. [Visit the online store at www.cgsusa.org](http://www.cgsusa.org).



**Nature Walk:** Take a nature walk. See what you can discover walking in your neighborhood or around the block. What elements from nature do you notice? Are there any items that could be collected and placed on your prayer table? Or maybe the children can draw a picture of the favorite item they found on their exploration. How can we thank God for these items that are found in our own neighborhood?

**He's Got the Whole World In His Hands:** Share this song with your children, sung to the tune of *He's Got the Whole World In His Hands*.

*He's got Nazareth in his hands he's got Nazareth in his hands  
He's got Nazareth in his hands he's got the whole world in his hands  
He's got the whole world in his hands...*

*He's got Bethlehem in his hands he's got Bethlehem in his hands  
He's got Bethlehem in his hands he's got the whole world in his hands  
He's got the whole world in his hands...*

*He's got Jerusalem in his hands he's got Jerusalem in his hands  
He's got Jerusalem in his hands he's got the whole world in his hands  
He's got the whole world in his hands...*

The children may want to include the names of the regions or names of other cities they know.



*Children working with planisphere puzzle and Land of Israel Regions Puzzle Map*