

# Invest in Buying Your True Home

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I have finally reached the stage where I am thinking more about buying a house, probably a bit later than many people do.

I spent a lot of my savings during my twenties and thirties on travelling, which I don't regret at all. But the issue of owning a home seems more pressing now as I think to myself, "Why am I paying rent so that someone else can pay off their mortgage?" I hear other people talking about houses they own and properties they've invested in, and despite my belief that I never sheepishly conform, at times I find myself wanting to emulate them and make a lasting investment in real estate.

This has made me reflect a lot about what it means to buy a house and how it relates to the meaning of life. If you look at people, you'll see that many devote themselves to the idea of buying and owning a home. People work all week at jobs they often resent, just so that they can pay off the large mortgage they have—and it's not just that. People's aspirations, time and care go into maintaining a home, often to the exclusion of other pursuits. People seem to spend their lives buying and perfecting a home as if it were going to be there forever.

As a Baha'i, I've wondered—does this make sense? The writings of Baha'u'llah offer some perspective on the matter:

**The generations that have gone on before you—whither are they fled? And those round whom in life circled the fairest and the loveliest of the land, where now are they? Profit by their example, O people, and be not of them that are gone astray.**

**Others ere long will lay hands on what ye possess, and enter into your habitations. Incline your ears to My words, and be not numbered among the foolish.**

**For every one of you his paramount duty is to choose for himself that on which no other may infringe and none usurp from him. Such a thing — and to this the Almighty is My witness — is the love of God, could ye but perceive it.**

**Build ye for yourselves such houses as the rain and floods can never destroy, which shall protect you from the changes and chances of this life. This is the instruction of Him Whom the world hath wronged and forsaken. – *Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah*, pp. 260-261.**

It's a sobering reality: the homes we so eagerly earn money for and devote all our energies towards will one day no longer belong to us. Other people will live inside them, whether our children or not. What's more, we cannot take a house with us when we leave this world. We will leave all our possessions behind, even our physical bodies. So, Baha'u'llah reminds us, we shouldn't devote all our energies to this one material goal.

Our true identity is spiritual. Our true purpose is spiritual. Our creator is God. Our task in life is to love God and let this love emanate throughout all our endeavours and activities. Through this divine love our interactions with people will be loving; our treatment of animals will be caring; our relationship with the environment will be harmonious. The house we live in, whether we own it or not, will be a house of love, where people are welcome and God is celebrated. This love of God, and all its manifestations, forms the foundations, brickwork and rooftop of our true home.

The words Jesus said about his own teachings, apply equally here:

**In a word, loving God and living a virtuous life builds the foundations for our soul's true and lasting abode. Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. – Matthew 7:24-27.**

Does this mean that it's wrong to own a home or save to buy a home? No. It's perfectly in-line with living a spiritual life to make that investment—as long as it doesn't imply a lack of perspective by making owning a home the *primary* focus of life. Also, it seems quite sad to think of spending much of a lifetime paying off a house which often only belongs to a person for a few decades.

When we devote ourselves to building a spiritual home in the love of God, we invest in eternity.