

Building a Temple-Centered Family

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I. What is a temple-centered family?

A necessary but not totally sufficient requirement of a temple-centered family is one in which the parents have been sealed to each other for time and eternity . . . a temple-centered family is based on love and unselfishness. . . . The focus of the parents of a temple-centered family is on building each other and then together building each member of the family unit. . . . Each member of a temple-centered family should feel special, wanted, loved and accepted for who they are.

II. Why is a temple-centered family important?

Latter-day prophets have clearly stated that the family is the most important organization of our pre-mortal, mortal, and post mortal existence. . . . The crowning ordinance of the temple is the uniting of man and woman together for time and eternity. . . . By focusing family-life around the temple, individuals in the family will be taught the importance of using their agency to choose the course of life that will provide a way for them to return to the presence of their Heavenly Father. . . . “We go to the temple to make covenants, but we go home to keep the covenants we have made” (J. Ballard Washburn).

III. How can we build a temple-centered family?

See the list below for ten ways to build a temple-centered family.

IV. When should we spend time building a temple-centered family?

If we make something the center, it means that everything else must revolve around that object. . . . Children do not suddenly decide to go to the temple. . . . These desires

and testimonies come step by step and are best taught naturally. "Out of small things proceedeth that which is great" (D&C 64:33).

Ten Ways to Build a Temple-Centered Family

1. Teach your children the doctrine of gospel of Christ and relate it to the temple. 2 Nephi 31:16–21; Mosiah 27:24–26; Alma 34:32; Mosiah 2–5; Alma 5. *The endowment is the step-by-step ascent into the Eternal presence. If our young people could but glimpse it, it would be the most powerful spiritual motivation of their lives* (David O. McKay).
2. As parents, demonstrate through words and actions the importance of the temple. Attend the temple on a regular basis and bring the spirit of the temple into your homes. Become a temple-motivated family. *Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people. Let us hasten to the temple as frequently as time and personal circumstances allow. . . . Let us share with our children the spiritual feelings we have in the temple* (Howard W. Hunter).
3. Have pictures of temples and temple books in your homes. Help children understand that a temple is the “the house of the Lord.” *Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it* (Howard W. Hunter).
4. Take your family to visit the temples. Walk around the grounds. Go into the visitors’ centers where available. Let them feel the spirit of these holy edifices. *Let us prepare every missionary to go to the temple worthily and to make that experience an even greater highlight than receiving the mission call.* (Howard W. Hunter)
5. Introduce children to the prophet Elijah and the sealing power he restored to the earth. Help them understand that families can be together forever, but only if they are sealed as such in a temple. Teach them what it means to “be born in the covenant.” *Everyone in the Church who has been married in the temple has received exactly the same promise that God gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Everyone who is married in the temple and who keeps the covenant has the assurance that he or she will have eternal increase, that his posterity will be like the dust of the earth and the stars in heaven in number* (Bruce R. McConkie).
6. Turn the hearts of your children to their fathers by sharing with them information about their ancestors. Visit living relatives. Gather oral histories, journals, and letters and help them to know whom they come from. *The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us is to seek after our dead.* (Joseph Smith).
7. Let children assist in gathering information about ancestors so they can have temple work done for them. Take your children at least annually after their 12th birthday to do baptismal work for the dead for their ancestors. *Every hour spent on genealogical research, however unproductive it appears, is worthwhile. It is pleasing to the Lord. . . . It draws us close to those who have gone before* (Boyd K. Packer).
8. Include in birthday and Christmas giving items that focus on family history and temples. Family calendars with temple and ancestor themes, books of remembrance, temple books, personal histories, photo and video memories. *It remains the responsibility of each individual*

to know his kindred dead. . . . Even if the work is done, then it is still each person's responsibility to study and become acquainted with his ancestors (Joseph Fielding Smith).

9. Use family home evenings and family reunions as a time to emphasize family history and temple work. Include a temple session in a family reunion for adults and a baptismal session for older youth. *No work is more of a protection to this Church than temple work and the genealogical research which supports it. No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness. Our labors in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection, both individually and as a people (Boyd K. Packer).*

10. Attend temple open houses and temple dedications with your family. Use these special times to build a desire to “go there someday.” *The temple is a place of light, a place of peace, a place of love where we deal with the things of eternity. If you are not worthy to go into that holy house, I urge you to put your life in order so that you may go there and partake of unique and wonderful blessings (Gordon B. Hinckley).*