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GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

The Family Can Be Eternal



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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The Importance of Families

“Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and . . . the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129).

After Heavenly Father brought Adam and Eve together in marriage, He commanded them to have children (see Genesis 1:28, page 2). He has revealed that one of the purposes of marriage is to provide mortal bodies for His children. Parents are partners with our Heavenly Father in His work to allow each of His spirit children to receive a physical body and to experience earth life. When a man and a woman bring children into this world, they help our Heavenly Father carry out His plan.

Every new child should be welcomed into the family with gladness. Each is a child of God. We should take time to enjoy our children, to play with them, and to teach them.



The Eternal Family

Families can be together forever. To enjoy this blessing we must be married in the temple and make the marriage covenant there. When people are married outside the temple, the marriage ends when one of the spouses dies. When we are married in the temple by the authority of the priesthood, we are married for time and eternity. If we keep our covenants with the Lord, our families will be united eternally as husband, wife, and children. Death cannot separate us.

How to Have a Successful Family

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles declared, “Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World”).



All of us want to have happy, successful families. The following things will help us achieve this:

1. Have family prayer every night and morning. Pray together as a couple.
2. Teach children the gospel during informal teaching moments and at least once a week during family home evening.
3. Study the scriptures regularly as a family.
4. Plan and participate in wholesome recreational activities.
5. Hold regular family councils and make decisions together.
6. Learn to be kind, patient, long-suffering, and charitable.
7. Attend Church meetings regularly.
8. Keep a family history, perform temple work together, and receive the sealing ordinances of the temple.

The family is the most important unit in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church exists to help families gain eternal blessings and exaltation. The organizations and programs within the Church are designed to strengthen us individually and help us live as families forever.



“The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave. Sacred ordinances and covenants available in holy temples make it possible for individuals to return to the presence of God and for families to be united eternally.”

“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102

LOOK
THEM
UP

Additional Scriptures

- **Genesis 2:24, page 4** (man is to cleave unto his wife)
- **Ephesians 6:4, page 1487** (nurture children in righteousness)
- **D&C 49:15–16, pages 89–90** (God ordained marriage)
- **D&C 93:40–50, page 183** (bring up children in light and truth)
- **D&C 132:15–21, pages 268–69** (eternal marriage)



Personal Experience

Since coming to prison, I've had some time to think about eternal families. Because of my actions, I've distanced myself from my children. I have just started to get involved again in the life of my family.

I was originally sealed to my children, but I have since been excommunicated from the Church and lost the blessings that the temple gave me. I'm happy to know that not all is lost. I know that I can repent and get my membership back and, eventually, get my temple blessings back. Nothing gives me more joy than knowing I can be with my family forever. I love my family and can't see being separated from them for all eternity.

The LDS lessons on eternal families provided me with inspired talks that explain how it is possible to become an eternal family. Anyone who has love for his or her family would want to read these talks from prophets and apostles. After reading the talks and thinking about my own life, I experienced a feeling of peace and love. I know that these feelings come from the Atonement of Christ and His love for me individually. I hope that I will never forget what Jesus has done for my family. An eternal family would include Christ in our lives. What could be better than that?

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RESPONSE FORM

Why is the family important to our Heavenly Father?



How does the family help to fulfill Heavenly Father's plan of salvation?

How can you begin building the habits of a successful family at this time in your life?



What can you do now to help your family receive the blessings of the temple?

How have you been blessed by your family?

Is there anything else that you have learned from this lesson that you would like to share?

Name _____ **Offender #** _____

Please answer the questions on this response form, detach, and return to the address below:

Correctional Services
50 East North Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150
1-801-240-2644

Please request the next lesson you would like to study: _____