

Everyone can do something positive with their family history: Don't Become Discouraged Because. . . . Part 2

In a sequel to the previous post, this art image below has important ingredients to consider with reference to the family unit, family history, temples, and President Oak's opening comments of Part 1. President Dallin H. Oaks taught: "In the work of redeeming the dead there are many tasks to be performed. . . . Our effort is not to compel everyone to do everything, but to encourage everyone to do something" ("[Family History: 'In Wisdom and in Order.'](#)" *Ensign*, June 1989, 6).



The Family Unit Is Important Because. . . .

The family unit is fundamental not only to society and to the Church but also to our hope for eternal life. We begin to practice in the family, the smaller unit, what will spread to the Church and to the society in which we live in this world, which will then be what we practice in families bound together forever by covenants and by faithfulness. The family isn't just the basic unit of a functioning society, our culture, and the economy; it's also the most special unit formed by God. God created the first family on earth when He united Eve and Adam and told them to have children. He also commanded them to provide for their children and teach them. The family unit is designed to help us attain eternal life, which means that we live forever as part of an eternal family—the life that God lives. **2 Nephi 2:19–25; Moses 3:16–17; 5:9–11.** The Fall of Adam and Eve was an essential part of God's plan.

Modern prophets and apostles have proclaimed that "the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children" ("The Family: A Proclamation to the World," **Ensign** or **Liahona**, Nov. 2010, 129). This lesson will help us see that by being "more diligent and concerned at home" they can make their families more central in their lives. This proclamation was read by President Gordon B. Hinckley as part of his message at the General Relief Society Meeting held September 23, 1995, in Salt Lake City, Utah. "All human beings – male and female – are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny." This proclamation can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

What Is Family History All About?

Family history refers to identifying and learning about your ancestors. Researching your family history with other family members can strengthen your understanding of who you are and help you feel closer to one another. Doing family history also helps you identify ancestors who need the opportunity to receive saving gospel ordinances. As you learn about your ancestors, you'll be able to feel the Holy Ghost confirm the eternal nature and importance of families.

In the **Old Testament** there is a quote from Malachi in chapter 4, verses 5 to 6 that ties families together for the eternities. Otherwise, the purpose of life is utterly wasted if we were not destined to be in families with our Father in Heaven and with his son, Jesus Christ!

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, **lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.**"

Everyone has stories from their family history. And wonderful things can happen when you start searching for and finding them. Through the Church's Temples, it is possible to provide ordinances for our own deceased family members which begins with researching our own family history. When you join the church, you may feel the increased love and concern for members of your family who have died without knowing about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your fellow church members can help you prepare to be baptized in the temple on behalf of your deceased family members. The church collects historical and biographical records from all over the world to help people identify their ancestors. You can get started by writing down what you already know about your family.

- Our prophet, Thomas S. Monson stated: "We discover something about ourselves when we learn about our ancestors."
- Elder David A. Bednar [quote](#) with a 1:16 video clip: *"By the power of the Holy Ghost, thoughts come to my mind and feelings to my heart that can help me to see things that are going well and the things that I need to improve and do better."*



What Is the Purpose of The Temple?

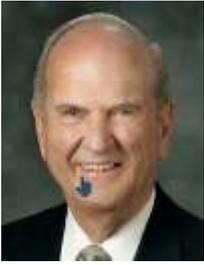
Some gospel ordinances and covenants are so sacred that God permits us to receive them only in special places called temples. A temple is literally a house of the Lord – a holy place set apart from the rest of the world. In the temple, you can learn more about the plan of salvation and how to follow Christ is perfect example. God's greatest blessings are available in his temples. The scriptures teach us that God has commanded his people to worship in temples since ancient times. Everything in the temple testifies that God is our father and that Jesus Christ is his son and the Savior of the world. For members of the church, a temple is the most sacred place of worship on the earth. It is unique from all other places of worship. It is designated as the only place where families can be united forever and where the most sacred gospel ordinances are performed. Although all people are invited to attend worship services in church meeting houses, a temple is different. After a temple is dedicated visitors are welcomed to enjoy the beautiful and peaceful temple grounds, but entrance into the temple is reserved for the faithful members of the church. In addition to receiving your own temple ordinances, in temples you can receive ordinances on behalf of your ancestors and others who have died without the opportunity to receive them. These include baptism, confirmation, and every other ordinance necessary for salvation.

Closing Comments

After 48+ years of marriage, I can confidently say that the family unit has been the single most important factor in my life after joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Florence Italy on August 6, 1970. While fame and fortunes may be important to the world, life has a greater importance than that. As we all lived and have grown up together, worked together to overcome problems together and worshipped together and in my case, my entire family has been an integral part of helping me do my family history for both past, present and future generations. It's that solidarity that has bonded us stronger than just blood-related but we are a strong family with a purpose for the eternities with eternal goals for our extended families throughout all generations of time. And we are succeeding as my family is extracting entire villages in Poland to be published on FamilySearch's Family Tree as Historical Collections so others can more easily research their family histories.

To quote our Prophet, Russell M. Nelson, I like to think about the spirit of Elijah as *"a manifestation of the Holy Ghost bearing witness of the divine nature of the family."* According to the Bible Dictionary, *"The power of Elijah is the sealing power of the priesthood by which things bound or loosed on earth are bound or loosed in heaven"* (*"Elijah"*). President Nelson also taught us, *"Our ultimate security comes as we yoke*

ourselves to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ! Life without God is a life filled with fear. Life with God is a life filled with peace.” Thus, our family unit within the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the opportunities to be sealed to our ancestors for eternity are momentous opportunities to cherish our Church membership and our family unit.



Brothers and Sisters: Just as no two people are the same, every personalized family history experience should be unique. Each should be based on the interests of the person or family. Seeking inspiration from the Holy Ghost is key. **When effort and attitude are applied together, it can make life more successful. Our present-day prophet, Russell M. Nelson, said:** “Be patient with yourself. Perfection comes not in this life, but in the next life. Don't demand things that are unreasonable, but demand of yourself improvement. As you let the Lord help you through that, He will make the difference. The Lord loves effort.”

Without any reservation, President Dallin H. Oaks has it right: **“In the work of redeeming the dead there are many tasks to be performed. ... Our effort is not to compel everyone to do everything, but to encourage everyone to do something”** ([“Family History: ‘In Wisdom and in Order,’”](#) *Ensign*, June 1989, 6).





Find Family History Hidden in Your Photos!