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GOSPEL FOUNDATIONS FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

# Temple Work and Family History



THE CHURCH OF  
**JESUS CHRIST**  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



# Temple Work and Family History

## Heavenly Father Wants Us to Return to Him

The Atonement of Jesus Christ makes it possible for each of us to be resurrected and live forever. But if we want to live forever with our families in Heavenly Father's presence, we must do all that the Savior commands us to do. This includes being baptized and confirmed and receiving the ordinances of the temple.

But many of God's children have not had the opportunity to accept these ordinances during their lifetime. They lived at a time or in a place where the gospel was not available to them. Heavenly Father wants all of His children to return and live with Him. He has provided a way for those who died without these ordinances to receive them. He has asked us to perform these ordinances on behalf of our ancestors in His temples.



## Temples of the Lord

Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are special buildings dedicated to the Lord. Worthy Church members may go there to receive sacred ordinances and make covenants with God. Temple ordinances include being baptized, confirmed, and sealed (married) on behalf of our deceased ancestors.

All temple ordinances are performed by the power of the priesthood, which allows the ordinances to be sealed (or bound) in heaven. The Savior gave this same power to His Apostles when He taught, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (Matthew 16:19, page 1216).

## Our Ancestors Need Our Help

Many of our ancestors are among those who died without hearing about the gospel. They now live in the spirit world and wish to follow Jesus Christ. They are waiting for their descendants to perform the ordinances of the gospel. As we serve them in this way, we can share their joy. You can begin to learn about and serve your ancestors by following three basic steps:



### *Identify Your Ancestors*

If you have access to a Family History Center in your jail or prison, then use your opportunity to study your own family lines. First, go to FamilySearch.org and set up an account. Then begin building your family tree online by entering the information you have about your family. You can use birth, marriage, or death certificates to fill out information, and you may also find more in obituaries, family histories, or diaries and journals. Write to or ask your relatives for information they have.

### *Find the Ancestors Who Need Temple Ordinances*

Temple ordinances have been performed for the dead since the early days of the Church. Consequently, some ordinances for your ancestors may have already been done. When you view the personal records of your ancestors on FamilySearch, you can see whether they need temple ordinances.

### *Request Temple Ordinances*

As soon as you identify those ancestors who need ordinances, you can request that ordinances be performed on their behalf. If it is not possible for you to go to the temple, the temple will arrange to have the ordinances performed by other Church members.

As we participate in this great work, we will be protected against the influence of the adversary, and we will build stronger relationships within our families.



“Thus was the gospel preached to those who had died. . . .

“And so it was made known among the dead, both small and great, the unrighteous as well as the faithful, that redemption had been wrought through the sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross.”

D&C 138:32, 35, page 289

### Additional Scriptures

- **Malachi 4:5–6, page 1184; D&C 110:13–15, page 229** (the mission of Elijah)
- **1 Corinthians 15:29, page 1457; D&C 128:15–18, page 261** (work for the dead)
- **1 Peter 4:6, page 1549** (the gospel was preached to the dead)
- **D&C 138, pages 286–91** (the redemption of the dead)

LOOK  
THEM  
UP



## Personal Experience

What is wonderful about our Heavenly Father's plan is that it provides opportunity to all of His children to receive eternal blessings and become like Him. The blessings of the Atonement of Christ are not lost to those who never knew or never had the opportunity for the fulness of blessings in this life. I can't begin to imagine the great work of teaching and blessing that occurs in the spirit world.

I know that my righteous mother and three sisters are engaged in identifying individuals and families who have passed on. They go to the temple in behalf of these people. My wife and our married children are likewise involved in that work. They have been richly blessed with increased testimonies and peace. Many individuals in the spirit world have had their prison doors opened and been set free.

While I am incarcerated, I am limited in how much I can learn about my ancestors. It is my fervent hope that when I am set free I will be able to do more family history work and get back to the temple of our God.

"It is my fervent hope that when I am set free I will be able to do more family history work and get back to the temple of our God."





What can you do now to help your ancestors receive temple ordinances?

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What blessings are available to us because of temples?

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

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Offender # \_\_\_\_\_