

Draw Nearer to Christ



The Temple is Centered in the Savior

Everything in the temple points us to Jesus Christ. As we participate in temple ordinances, we are assured that He is mindful of us. He is involved in our lives and He is dedicated to our eternal happiness. His presence can be felt as we strive to follow Him in our daily lives. As we draw closer to the Savior, we learn more about Him. His life provides a perfect pattern of righteousness and happiness for all of us.

In the scriptures, many names and titles are used when referring to the Savior (*Christ, names of* in the Bible Dictionary). These designations help us understand His divinity, His character, His mission, and His love for all humanity. We may also begin to see a connection between the temple and the Savior's desire to bless us individually and in our families.

The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6)

Perhaps more than anything else, we long to feel peace. Peace comes as we remember that we are children of a loving Father in Heaven, that His Son Jesus Christ is our personal Savior, and that He will sustain us at all times—especially during hard times. This is why the prophet Isaiah refers to Christ as the Prince of Peace. Peace reminds us that we can ultimately be “lifted up at the last day” even as we endure pain, anxiety, and anguish. (D&C 17:8) Once we have that reassurance, we can face our challenges with renewed energy and determination.

President Russell M. Nelson experienced a near-tragedy that illustrates the lasting peace available through the temple. When an engine fire on the propeller-driven plane he was flying in lost power, it began a spiral descent. Death seemed inevitable. Miraculously, the fire was extinguished and the pilot was able to regain control, eventually landing the plane safely in a field. Elder Nelson related:

“Throughout that ordeal, though I “knew” death was coming, my paramount feeling was that I was not afraid to die. I remember a sense of returning home to meet ancestors for whom I had done temple work. I remember my deep sense of gratitude that my sweetheart and I had been sealed eternally to each other and to our children, born and reared in the covenant. I realized that our marriage in the temple was my most important accomplishment. Honors bestowed upon me by men could not approach the inner peace provided by sealings performed in the house of the Lord” (“Doors of Death,” *Ensign*, May 1992).

The peace experienced by President Nelson came as a result of the promises he had

received in the temple. When we make covenants with the Lord in the temple and then live as we have promised, this same peace can be ours—a peace that allows us to face difficult circumstances with faith instead of fear. The same promise the Savior gave to His apostles just before He was crucified is available to us today: “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” ([John 16:33](#)).

President Thomas S. Monson testified that the Savior’s promise of peace is realized in the temple. He taught: “As we attend the temple, there can come to us a dimension of spirituality and a feeling of peace which will transcend any other feeling which could come into the human heart. We will grasp the true meaning of the words of the Savior when He said: ‘Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid’” (“[Blessings of the Temple](#),” *Ensign*, May 2015).

The Holy One ([Isaiah 48:17](#))

At the entrance of every temple, we see the phrase, “Holiness to the Lord—The House of the Lord”. Anciently, the word *holy* referred to something that was set apart for a sacred purpose. In other words, holy refers to something reserved for and devoted to God. As the One appointed by Heavenly Father to be the Savior of all humanity, Jesus Christ came to earth with a unique purpose. Everything He said and did was done to obey His Father in Heaven. He Himself stated that He obeyed the “will of the Father in all things from the beginning” ([3 Nephi 11:11](#)). His life is the perfect example of how to treat others, how to face adversity, how to forgive, and how to lift and support those in need. The Savior dedicated His time, His energy, and His very existence to obeying and honoring His Father in Heaven. In every sense of the word, He is holy.

Anciently, the Lord instructed the Israelites to build the tabernacle, “that I may dwell among them” ([Exodus 25:8](#)). The finest materials that could be obtained were offered by the people for the construction of the tabernacle. Before its dedication, the Israelites had to make holy (or sanctify) the very materials that were used inside the tabernacle. More importantly, the people themselves went through specific

ceremonies of cleansing and preparation in order to be holy in the eyes of God.

In our day, we too prepare to enter the temple by participating in the ordinances of baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the sacrament. Through the Savior's Atonement and the gift of repentance, these ordinances help us become clean from behaviors and thoughts that are unholy, and give us confidence that we can be worthy of His approval. The covenants we make and the ordinances we receive in the temple help us become more holy—in short, to become more like Him. In the temple, we learn how to “[put] off the natural man, and [become] a saint through the Atonement of Christ the Lord” ([Mosiah 3:19](#)). As we return to the temple and continue learning of Him, we deepen both our knowledge of Jesus Christ and our ability to obey His commandments. In time, we begin to receive “His image in [our] countenance” ([Alma 5:14](#)).

Mediator Between God and Men ([1 Timothy 2:5](#))

Our Father in Heaven is perfect. His existence is defined as eternal life—a continuation of the relationships that begin in the marriage of a man and a woman. He yearns to share this gift with each of His children. While His love for us is everlasting, He requires that we obey His commandments in order to qualify for the gift of eternal life. Disobedience to God's laws is defined as sin. All of us, at some point in life, have “sinned, and come short of the glory of God” ([Romans 3:23](#)). Jesus Christ is the Mediator who stands between the consequences of sin and all humanity. A mediator is one who stands between two opposing parties as they seek a resolution. Ideally, a mediator ensures that both parties are satisfied with the outcome reached. Heavenly Father sent Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for the sins of all His children on earth, making it possible for us to receive the gift of eternal life.

Throughout history, God has shown His children that they can return to Him only through the intervention of Jesus Christ. When Moses was directed to institute the Passover, a male lamb without blemish was killed so that the people might be spared destruction. This symbolized the future death of Jesus Christ, who would die to save

all who would repent and believe in Him ([Exodus 12](#)). The sacrifices performed in the tabernacle and later in the temple at Jerusalem continued this powerful symbolic representation and reminder of the need for a Mediator—one who could intervene between God and His children.

The centuries of animal sacrifice, looking forward to a Savior, came to an end with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whom the prophet Amulek taught was the “great and last sacrifice” ([Alma 34:14](#)). His suffering, death, and resurrection constitute His Atonement. The gift of the Atonement makes it possible for all people to become clean again and return to God’s presence. His Atonement satisfies the full penalty of sin in our behalf, and He now invites us to recognize Him as our Lord and Savior. Having satisfied justice, He also offers mercy to those who will repent and follow His commandments.

In the temple today, Heavenly Father continues to focus our attention on our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Every ordinance is performed in His name and by the authority of His priesthood. Every ordinance provides the opportunity to remember Him and acknowledge His saving role in our lives. Baptism and the bestowal of the gift of the Holy Ghost remind us of the Savior’s words to Nicodemus, that all people must be “born of water and of the Spirit” ([John 3:5](#)). The endowment ordinance teaches of the Savior’s role in the creation of the earth, of our absolute reliance upon Him to return to our heavenly home, and of the specific commandments we must covenant to live so we can qualify to receive His power in our lives. The sealing of husband and wife in the temple remind us of the Savior’s words that they should be “one flesh” ([Mark 10:8](#)), and offers the assurance that a marriage entered into by the sealing authority may endure forever. In the temple, we are constantly reminded that there is “one mediator between God and men”—the Lord Jesus Christ ([1 Timothy 2:5](#)).

The Way, the Truth, and the Life ([John 14:6](#))

The many things we face in life can be both demanding and confusing. At one time or another, each of us feels like the Apostle Thomas as we ask ourselves, “how can we

know the way?” ([John 14:5](#)). Jesus Christ is our perfect example. He showed us how to develop our relationship with God, how to forgive, how to persevere in the face of great difficulty, how to serve others, and how to find joy.

Jesus not only demonstrated how to live life to the fullest in mortality, He taught the true meaning of and made possible our eternal life. Just before He atoned for the sins of the world, Jesus met with His apostles in private. On this solemn occasion, He administered the sacrament, blessed them, and prayed to His Father in Heaven. During His prayer, He gave a profound insight into the meaning of eternal life: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” ([John 17:3](#)). With this clear statement, Jesus taught that to receive eternal life is to know Him and His Father. Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained what it means to know the Father and the Son: “We know them, in the sense of gaining eternal life, when we enjoy and experience the same things they do. To know God is to think what he thinks, to feel what he feels, to have the power he possesses, to comprehend the truths he understands, and to do what he does. Those who know God become like him, and have his kind of life, which is eternal life” (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 3 vols. [1965–73], 1:762).

In the temple, faithful Church members receive knowledge, power, and promises to prepare for the greatest gift of God—the gift of eternal life. Everything that occurs in the temple is centered on the Savior Jesus Christ, His role as our Redeemer, and His desire to have us return to the presence of God. In the temple, we are invited to commit to higher standards of personal conduct and faithfulness, showing the way we can “lay aside the things of this world, and seek for the things of a better” ([D&C 25:10](#)). In the temple, we are taught truths pertaining to the past, present, and future, thus receiving a “knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” ([D&C 93:24](#)). In the temple, we come to more fully comprehend the Savior’s teaching that, “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” ([John 10:10](#)). In the temple, the Savior’s testimony of His divine role is affirmed to us repeatedly: “no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” ([John 14:6](#)).

