

Families Can Be Forever



THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS teaches that we lived in a premortal state as children of heavenly parents. We come to earth to gain a physical body and to be tested through the mortal experience. By obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, we return to the presence of God, where we will live forever in a family organization.

Members of the Church believe that marriages performed in temples are “sealed,” or blessed to last for eternity. The concept that the family unit can continue beyond the grave as a conscious, loving entity, with the marriage partnership and parent-child relationships intact, is a core belief of Latter-day Saints.

To participate in such a marriage ceremony, called a “sealing,” a man and a woman kneel together at an altar in a temple sealing room. For the sealing to remain in effect, a husband and wife must love and be faithful to each other and continue to follow a course of Christian service and commitment throughout their lives.

Children born or adopted into such marriages are also “sealed” to live with their families forever.

TEMPLES AND GENEALOGY Temples serve as the only place where ceremonies such as baptism and sealing can be performed in behalf of those who have died — a practice that Latter-day Saints believe was followed in New Testament times but that later was lost.

They believe that provision must be made for all people — especially their ancestors — who have died without the opportunity to learn about Jesus Christ and the ceremonies required to return to His presence and that of God the Father. Members of the Church believe they have a responsibility to trace their own genealogies so they can take their ancestors’ names and other vital information to the temple. In the temple, they perform the ceremonies (such as baptism and sealing) on behalf of their ancestors, knowing their ancestors are free to accept or decline their gift.

Based on these beliefs and practices, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has established FamilySearch — the largest genealogy organization in the world. Since 1894, FamilySearch has worked with archives, libraries and churches in over 100 countries to facilitate economical access to records that help people find their ancestors.

Every month, over three million people use these records, resources and services, provided free to the public, to learn more about their family history. FamilySearch adds 400 million new historic records every year, and these records and services are available online at FamilySearch.org or through over 4,600 family history centers in more than 130 countries, including the renowned Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.