



My Family Can Be Forever

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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).



Do you remember the story of Adam and Eve? When they left the Garden of Eden, they became the parents of the first family on earth. Adam and Eve had sons and daughters and taught them the gospel (see Moses 5:12). They experienced the challenges and also the great joy of family life (see 2 Nephi 2:23).

Since then, through Heavenly Father’s plan, each of us has come to earth as part of a family. Each family is different—there may be two parents or one parent, lots of children or few children; sometimes there are cousins or grandparents also living in the home. It is important for family members to love each other and do their part to have a happy home.

Learning and living My Gospel Standards (see *Faith in God* guidebook, back cover) can help you do

your part to build a happy home and have an eternal family. As you choose the right—by being baptized, paying tithing, repenting, keeping the Sabbath day holy, helping Mom and Dad, taking the sacrament, praying, reading the scriptures, and living worthy to go to the temple—you are learning righteous family traditions.

As we do our part to build an eternal family by learning and living the gospel of Jesus Christ, we will rejoice in Heavenly Father’s plan for us. ●

Family Tree

Cut a small branch off a tree or bush, and secure it in a vase or cup (be sure to ask for an adult’s help and permission). Or draw a picture of a tree on a large sheet of paper. The pictures on page 12 show ways you can help strengthen your family. Cut out the frames, and punch holes at the top of each one. In the blank frames, write or draw your own ideas of ways to help and show love for your family. With string or yarn, hang the frames on the tree.

Note: If you do not wish to remove pages from the magazine, this activity may be copied, traced, or printed out from the Internet at www.lds.org. Click on Gospel Library.

Sharing Time Ideas

(Note: All songs are from *Children's Songbook* unless otherwise noted; GAK = Gospel Art Picture Kit, TNGC = Teaching, No Greater Call.)

1. Invite a family consisting of a father, mother, and baby to Primary. Ask the father to be prepared to briefly teach the children about pre-earth life and Heavenly Father's plan for us to come to a family. Ask the mother to explain what parents do for a baby and what the baby will need to learn to return to Heavenly Father. Play the following game to show that everyone in the family can teach the baby. Copy Primary packet picture 1-7 (a family), and cut it into six puzzle pieces. Write on the back of each piece one of the following names: Grandpa, Grandma, Father, Mother, Brother, Sister. Pass the puzzle pieces from child to child as the pianist plays "music clues" as to what the baby must learn (examples: "I Know My Father Lives," p. 5; "I Pray in Faith," p. 14; "Baptism," pp. 100–101; "Follow the Prophet," pp. 110–11). When the music stops, have the children identify the song and the principle taught. Ask each child holding a puzzle piece to tell one thing that the family member on the puzzle piece can do to teach that principle to the baby or to his or her own family. Have one child put his or her puzzle piece in place after each song, beginning with "Grandpa." Continue until the puzzle is complete. Sing and review "I Will Follow God's Plan" (pp. 164–65).

2. We can learn to live the gospel in our homes. Divide the room into four stations depicting four areas of a home—living room, kitchen, bedroom, and family room. The children will move from station to station for brief activities. In the "living room," lead the older children on a scripture chase (see who can reverently find each reference first) to identify gospel traditions in the home. Include the following scriptures: D&C 19:38 (praying), D&C 1:37 (reading scriptures), John 14:15 (keeping the commandments), Exodus 20:12 (honoring parents), D&C 119 (paying tithing), and D&C 59:9 (attending meetings). Point out that these are also part of the Faith in God requirements. (For younger children: Conduct a similar activity—instead of using scriptures, ask the children to identify the principles as shown in pictures from the GAK.)

In the "kitchen," have the children make a simple sack puppet (see TNGC, 176–77). Show pictures of various foods and substances. Have the children open the puppet's mouth if the food or substance shown is good for them and close the puppet's mouth if it is not. Encourage the children to share the puppet in family home evening.

In the "bedroom," review with the children how to pray with the second verse of "I Pray in Faith" (p. 14) or by discussing the Lord's prayer (see Matthew 6:9–13). Help the children make cutouts of the sun and moon to take home to remind them to pray morning and night.

In the "family room," teach older children how to lead a song from the *Children's Songbook* (see *Faith in God* guidebook, 10). Teach younger children a scripture story, song, or finger play that they can share in family home evening. When all have participated, gather the children to sing "Seek the Lord Early" (p. 108).

3. For older children: Many of the prophets in the Book of Mormon were good examples of honoring parents and strengthening family. Divide children into six groups, and give each group one of the following scripture references and a word cut up into letters: obedience, 1 Nephi 3:2–8; prayer, Enos 1:4–5; work, Mosiah 6:7; repentance, Mosiah 27:8–14, 32; faith, Alma 53:18–22, and 56:44–48; scriptures, Mormon 8:1–5.

Have each group read the story in the scripture reference, unscramble the word to identify the principle taught and lived by parents and children, and decide how to honor parents by living the principle today. Invite each group to share briefly the scripture story and application. Sing songs from *Children's Songbook* to reinforce these principles.

For younger children: Using Primary packet pictures 4-5 (Lehi's family fleeing), 4-8 (Nephi delivering the brass plates), and 4-16 (Nephi and the broken bow), involve the children as you tell stories of Nephi's obedience to his parents (see TNGC, 179–82). Invite the children to act out ways they can obey their parents as you sing "When We're Helping" (p. 198) or "Do As I'm Doing" (p. 276).

4. Teach the children about the Kirtland Temple using GAK 500 (Kirtland Temple). (See "First Latter-day Temple," *Friend*, Apr. 2002, 36–37.) Teach about the coming of Elijah to the Kirtland Temple and the restoration of sealing power using GAK 417 (Elijah Restores the Power to Seal Families for Eternity) and the information on the back of the picture. Sing "The Hearts of the Children" (pp. 92–93), and have the children listen for the blessing of Elijah in the last phrase of the song ("families can be sealed for eternity"). What does it mean to "be sealed"? Where and how are we "sealed" today? Show a picture of a temple near you, and explain that when we are married in the temple and keep the promises we make there, we can live together as families in heaven after we die. Sing the first verse of "Families Can Be Together Forever" (p. 188). The last two phrases of the chorus tell us that "the Lord has shown me how I can" (be with my family forever). Sing the second verse, and ask the children to listen for what they can do now to have their family forever ("While I am in my early years, I'll prepare most carefully"). Show the My Gospel Standards poster, and ask the children why it includes a picture of the temple. Ask the children to be thinking as you tell the story in your own words of "Stewart, a Commandment Keeper, Too" (*Friend*, Jan. 2002, 4–6). Review My Gospel Standards, and teach that as we live them now, we will be worthy to attend the temple when we are older.

Give each child a piece of paper divided in half with a line. Have the children draw a picture of themselves living one of the gospel standards on one half of the paper and a picture of themselves at the temple on the other half. Make a collage of the pictures for the Primary room, or have each child take his or her picture to share and post at home. Bear your testimony of the blessing of eternal families.

5. *Song Presentation*: "Teach Me to Walk in the Light" (p. 177). Have each child trace his or her own footprint on a piece of paper, cut it out, and write his or her name on it. Post the footprints on the board around or leading to GAK 239 (The Resurrected Jesus Christ). Begin teaching the song by having the accompanist play the melody as the children clap the rhythm. Point out that the melody is a steady beat—like walking, except for one short "skip" in the last line before we sing "to walk." Teach the last phrase first by clapping the rhythm a couple of times and then singing the words while referring to the "footprint" visual. To continue teaching the first verse, post the following GAK pictures: 608 (Christ and Children from around the World), 605 (Young Boy Praying), and 617 (Search the Scriptures). As you sing each phrase, ask the children to listen for what is being taught and choose the picture that illustrates that idea. Sing each phrase together until the children have learned the whole verse. Sing again and again as you involve the children in ways such as substituting an action instead of singing the word (for example, standing and walking quietly in place instead of singing "walk," hands together in prayer for "pray," point finger to head for "know," stand or sit each time you sing "teach"). Use these and other methods as you teach the second and third verses.

6. *Friend* references: "My Family Can Be Forever," poster, Jan. 2004, insert; "My Family," Feb. 2004, 20–22; "Happy Family Game," Feb. 2004, 30; "My Eternal Family," Feb. 2004, 38–39; "Together Forever," Feb. 2002, 31–33; "The Sealing Keys Restored," Feb. 2002, 44–45; "Honoring Our Parents," Jun. 2003, 8–9. These references and others can be found at www.lds.org. Click on Gospel Library.