



Teaching OUR CHILDREN ABOUT the Temple

*A husband and wife from Australia share
how they helped their children develop
a love for the temple.*

By Graham and Gail Nicholl

Gail: My dad was diagnosed with cancer when I was 18; two weeks after I turned 19, he died. I wanted to know where he had gone, so I asked my older sister, who, while living away from home for work, had joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. She arranged for the missionaries to meet with me. I felt through the Holy Ghost that the gospel was true and that joining the Church was the right thing to do, so I was baptized.

Graham and I met a few months after I was baptized, and in 1970 we were sealed in the New Zealand Temple. This was before we had a temple in Australia. While we were on our honeymoon, Graham was able to perform the temple ordinances for my father.

Mum died five years after Dad. A year and a half later, my older sister, my younger sister (who, by this time, had also joined the Church), and I flew to the New Zealand Temple with our husbands so that my siblings and I could perform the work for Mum and then be sealed to our parents.

Each sister performed one ordinance (mine being the baptism), after which the sealing took place. This was such a joyful experience, especially because our parents loved and cherished each other all their lives. We felt in our hearts that they had accepted these ordinances and were rejoicing with us in their sealing.

Graham: I joined the Church as a teenager; the missionaries knocked on my family's door when I was 14. After they taught us for nine months, all of us joined the Church together. We were sealed in the New Zealand Temple three years later: Mum, Dad, my older sister, and I.

After Gail and I were married, we knew the temple would continue to be an important part of our lives. We started preparing our four children for the temple when they were very young. We sang songs about the temple, hung pictures of the temple in our home, and talked about visiting the temple. We'd take them to the temple grounds and walk around the temple with them, even when they were very small. We did this year after year, until they were all old enough to do baptisms for the dead and go on missions. Even being outside the temple, we felt they could grasp the spirit of it, the joy associated with it. We wanted to make sure that they felt that.

Gail: It took some planning to give them that experience. We would drive the 1,400 kilometers (870 miles) over two days to get to the temple in Sydney. We'd leave home from Adelaide very early in the morning, stay somewhere overnight, and then drive the rest of the way the next day. We knew that we needed to give our children goals; we couldn't expect a love for the temple to just develop on its own. So when the Sydney Temple was built, we set the goal of visiting there at least once a year. I know that the



PREPARING OUR CHILDREN FOR THE TEMPLE

“Let us share with our children the spiritual feelings we have in the temple. And let us teach them more earnestly and more comfortably the things we can appropriately say about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it. Teach them about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Have them plan from their earliest years to go there and to remain worthy of that blessing.”

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), “A Temple-Motivated People,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 5.

Lord blesses us as parents, but we have to do our part too. “Faith without works is dead” (James 2:20).

We’d take them to the temple in Sydney and walk around the grounds with them and talk to them about being reverent there, preparing to do baptisms for the dead when they were 12, the joy that they would feel doing work for the dead, and ultimately being married in the temple one day. Sometimes we would see new brides, which was always a highlight. On our long trip we would also listen to Church music or sing Primary songs. After two days of driving, we’d have a little competition to see who could be the first one to see the statue of Moroni as we neared the temple.

One of the choicest and most memorable experiences of my life was being in the baptism with my husband and all of our children just before our second son left on

his mission to Japan. Today, all four of our children have been married in the temple.

Graham: An interesting sidelight: When our two eldest grandchildren were four years old, before they started school, they attended a kindy (kindergarten) group. These two cousins were the only Church members among their 20 classmates.

One day, they got a large cardboard box, decorated it together, and then sat inside. Their kindergarten teacher asked, “What are you doing?”

They replied, “We’ve made a motorbike. We’re going to the temple.”

And so it continues on, to the next generation.

Gail: The generations *do* go on. You have those kinds of experiences as a parent, and they’re very choice, but when you see it in the next generation, in our precious grandchildren, we feel extremely blessed. My own parents never had the opportunity of knowing my children in this life, so I cherish the association I have with my grandchildren.

We hope and pray that our children, grandchildren, and the generations that follow will always hold strong to the faith so that we’ll all be together forever. That is our greatest joy, that families are forever.

We’re both so grateful that through the everyday trials of life, both large and small, we were blessed with the gospel to raise our children, that we could teach them to know the Savior and the plan of salvation, and that they know for themselves that by making good choices and keeping temple covenants, they can return to live with Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ for eternity. ■

The authors live in Queensland, Australia.

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