

BUILDING OUR MARRIAGE

*After marriage, life fills with struggles as quickly as it fills with dreams.
But the Lord offers us the means to build a marriage to last for eternity.*



By Christopher Deaver

Not long after I started dating Julia, I quickly realized she was the one I wanted to marry. She was beautiful, focused, educated, and full of testimony. I didn't tell her early on that I wanted to marry her, but I stayed focused and did everything I could to demonstrate my love for her. There were definitely challenges, but I prayed for faith, and the Lord granted it to me. Eventually, we looked at each other with joy across the altar in the temple, and we knew the Lord had blessed us.

Life Got Busy

We lived happily ever after—until something happened. Life got busy. Just as fast as our life had filled with hopes and dreams, it filled with challenges. Months after our wedding, unexpected struggles arose—including a devastating job loss.

I was stressed, and I had no idea what to do. Julia and I were frustrated with the situation and even with each other. The future had looked so bright, but we got stuck and couldn't see past our challenges. Months of frustration and discord turned into years. We were getting a lot of advice from people, some suggesting we just divorce to spare ourselves the troubles we faced. But that didn't seem right at all.

Eventually, we realized just how deeply we needed the Lord and each other. We began recommitting ourselves to a more focused effort to do all the things that would invite the Spirit into our hearts and home: attending the temple, praying together, and reading the scriptures together. We prayed fervently together as a couple, pleading with the Lord for His help. We realized that the only way out of our trials was through them—together. And then something happened, something amazing. Our hearts became softer, more caring, and filled with greater concern for each other. We became more thoughtful in what we said to each other and to our children.

Built to Last

During that trying time, I found comfort and strength in the experience of the Latter-day Saint pioneers. After being persecuted for years, they arrived in the Utah desert and

welcomed the words of the prophet Brigham Young (1801–77): “This is the right place.”¹

In addition to building their homes and community, they worked tirelessly to build a temple they could finally keep without fear of destruction. But then, after several years of toil, tensions between the U.S. government and the Saints led them to temporarily abandon Salt Lake City and to bury the temple foundation to protect it from harm.

When they returned to the temple site and dug up the foundation, they found it had cracked. Because they were eager to receive the blessings of the temple, the Saints wanted to finish building it. But Brigham Young told them that the temple must be built “to stand through the Millennium.”² And with that, the Saints went back to work. They removed the old foundation and found a more durable rock for the new foundation. They spent 40 years building a temple that has lasted well over a century.

An Eternal Promise

As we build our lives and our families, it matters what materials we use: our time, our efforts, and our choices. And in a world that trains us to expect immediate results, we need to understand that building a marriage for eternity takes a lot of time and effort. If we've struggled in life, family, or marriage, we can't give up. We must turn it around.

We need the Lord's power. He will strengthen us to create a foundation that matters, one that lasts forever. He taught:

“Therefore, whoso heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock—

“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock” (3 Nephi 14:24–25).

If we build the foundations of our lives, marriages, and families on Him, we will not fail. ■
The author lives in California, USA.

NOTES

1. Brigham Young, in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff* (2004), 146.
2. Brigham Young, in *Church History in the Fulness of Times Student Manual*, 2nd ed. (2003), 390.