

Unendowed but Not Unimportant

By Jacqueline N. Smith

Being baptized for those who died without being baptized for themselves is a new and exciting experience for a young woman or a young man. But for those of us in our early twenties, it's easy to wonder if there's a place for us in the temple. We don't fit in with the teenagers in the baptistry, but we aren't endowed like many of our peers who have served missions or gotten married.

In the Temple as a Teen

I was blessed to live near the Idaho Falls Idaho Temple. During my last year of high school, I noticed that one of my friends arrived at school every Thursday wearing church clothes, her hair dripping wet. When I asked her why, she said, "I do temple baptisms every Thursday morning before school. You should come with me!"

I spent the next several months

enjoying going to the temple regularly. It was wonderful. Over spring break that year, some friends and I took a road trip to Salt Lake City. We stayed in different cities along the way and visited the temple baptistry in each one. Among all the activities that weekend, our temple visits were the highlight.

The next fall, I found myself at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah . . . all alone. Most of my high school friends stayed in Idaho for college, then departed one by one on full-time missions while I stayed in school—feeling that a full-time mission was not the Lord's intention for me.

Young Adults and the Temple

One day I came to a startling realization: it had been over a year since I had been to the temple. But when I went back, everything was different. I

**I'm not endowed.
Is there still a
place for me in
the temple?**

was alone, though I was surrounded by teenagers. Even if my friends had been there, they were endowed. When they went to the temple, they would be going somewhere I could not yet go.

Looking around the temple baptistry, I wondered, "Is there still a place here for me?" I wasn't going on



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KRISTIN ANNE JONES

a mission, I wasn't getting married, and I felt like it wasn't time for me to receive my own endowment yet. How could I still participate in the blessings of the temple?

Former Relief Society General President Julie B. Beck told young adults who are not yet endowed, "You can help keep temples busy. Temple and family history work is *your* work. Much depends on you!"¹

Therefore, young adults who are not yet endowed: if you want to serve in the temple, don't feel like the baptism is just for 12- to 18-year-olds. And I can testify that there is nothing wrong with going alone. Sometimes sitting in the baptism by myself has been more peaceful and spiritually enlightening than it was when I went with friends.

Making the Temple More Meaningful

The following ideas have helped me make my time in the baptism more meaningful as I prepare for the day when I receive my own endowment.

1. Go to Learn

Attend the temple with the intention to learn; choose a question or gospel topic to ponder during quiet moments. You can also prepare for your visit by learning more about the significance of temple work in God's plan for our happiness. The Church offers several helpful resources, including manuals,

scripture reference guides, and classes. For example, I attend a temple preparation class every Sunday in order to learn more about the temple's significance to the Church as a whole and to me personally.

2. Make the Work a Family Effort

Try incorporating family history into your temple experience. Take family names and do the temple work with your other family members. Learn about the lives of those ancestors whose names you take. Involve everyone, children and adults, in the process and use the time you spend together to strengthen your family relationships. President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018) declared, "In my own family, some of our most sacred and treasured experiences have occurred when we have joined

together in the temple to perform sealing ordinances for our deceased ancestors."²

3. Make the Temple a Priority

Commit to making the temple a priority in your life and consider setting some personal goals. Your goals might include attending regularly, ensuring that you always have a current temple recommend, or researching family names to take to the temple. Or your goals might be to visit the grounds of the nearest temple while you work with your bishop to be ready to go inside. I have started consciously preparing to receive my own endowment, just to help me focus on how I must live my life in order to achieve my goal. Planning for that time, whenever it may be, makes the temple a regular part of my life.

4. Actively Appreciate the Blessings

Remember to look back to identify blessings you received, both before and after going to the temple. This intentional appreciation can cultivate an "attitude of gratitude" for the temple and for the individuals whose work you are doing, even if they aren't your own ancestors.

Furthermore, be aware that performing ordinances is not the only thing that allows us to receive temple blessings. President Russell M. Nelson said: "To each young adult I emphasize that the temple can bless you—even before you enter it.

DISCOVER MORE

- Read about one young adult's experience preparing for her endowment in "Saying Yes to the Temple," *Ensign*, Sept. 2014, 26–27.

- Learn more about the temple by reading the following:

Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple (2002)

Endowed from on High: Temple Preparation Seminar Teacher's Manual (2003)

Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (special issue of the *Ensign*, Oct. 2010)

By maintaining a standard of moral conduct high enough to qualify for a temple recommend, you will find inner peace and spiritual strength.”³ During the time when I was feeling like I didn’t belong in the temple baptism because of my age, I allowed my temple attendance to lapse. However, I will always be grateful that I never allowed my limited-use recommend to expire. Maintaining a temple-worthy life has protected me and surrounded me with people who bring me happiness and peace.

“There Is Much to Be Done”

We cannot take the temple for granted. For those with access to

temples: Go often. Go with friends. Go alone. No matter your age or circumstance, live worthily and make the temple part of your life—for your own “inner peace and spiritual strength,” as well as for the service of others. As President Monson reminded us, “There is much to be done in our temples in behalf of those who wait beyond the veil.”⁴ *All* worthy members are needed to do this work—endowed or not. ■

The author lives in Utah, USA.

NOTES

1. Julie B. Beck, “This Is *Your* Work,” *Ensign*, Feb. 2012, 43.
2. Thomas S. Monson, “The Holy Temple—a Beacon to the World,” *Ensign*, May 2011, 93.
3. Russell M. Nelson, “Young Adults and the Temple,” *Ensign*, Feb. 2006, 17.
4. Thomas S. Monson, “The Holy Temple,” 92.



A SACRED SANCTUARY

“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’ [John 14:27].

“Such peace can permeate any heart—hearts that are troubled, hearts that are burdened down with grief, hearts that feel confusion, hearts that plead for help.”

President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018),
“Blessings of the Temple,” *Ensign*, May 2015,
91–92.

