

Home: A School for Eternity

Lesson 40

Purpose To help class members understand that home is the best place to prepare for the challenges of earthly life and the blessings of eternal life.

- Preparation**
1. Prayerfully study 4 Nephi 1:2–3, 15–16; Doctrine and Covenants 88:119.
 2. Write each of the following words or phrases on a separate strip of paper:
 - Work
 - Faith
 - Love
 - Prayer
 - Controlling anger
 - Service
 - Selflessness
 - Scripture study
 3. Write the following statement on a card or small piece of paper for each class member (from “Blueprint for Family Living,” *Improvement Era*, Apr. 1963, 252):

“I believe that the best place to prepare for . . . eternal life is in the home.”
—President David O. McKay
 4. Make a copy of the house diagram found at the end of the lesson (page 240). Then cut out the different parts of the diagram to make a puzzle.
 5. Materials needed:
 - a. The picture Latter-day Prophets (62575; Gospel Art Picture Kit 506) and any pictures of members of the current First Presidency or Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (available from the meetinghouse library or in conference issues of the *Ensign*).
 - b. A set of scriptures and a scripture marking pencil for each class member. Continue to encourage class members to bring their own scriptures to class each week.

Note to the teacher Nothing we do while on the earth is of greater importance than what we do in our homes with our families. What we do with our families is important not only because it prepares us for eternity, but also because it helps us meet the challenges of everyday life. No relationships are as important as family relationships. President Harold B. Lee, eleventh President of the Church, emphasized that “the most important of the Lord’s work that you will ever do will be the work you do within the walls of your own home” (Strengthening the Home [pamphlet, 1973], 7).

During the lesson be sensitive to the feelings of class members who do not come from gospel-centered homes. You may want to focus on important principles class members can learn from their families, such as honesty and hard work, even when family members are not members of the Church. Encourage class members to decide now that when they are adults, they will establish gospel-centered homes of their own.

**Suggested Lesson
Development**

Families Are Important to Our Heavenly Father

Picture discussion
and quotation

Display the pictures of latter-day prophets and apostles.

- Who are these men? (If class members cannot identify the men, state their names and their callings in the Church.)
- What are some of the main responsibilities of prophets and apostles?

Invite a class member to list on the chalkboard the responses to this question. After class members have had time to give their answers, tell them that all of the great responsibilities of the prophets and apostles have one main purpose. Then read the following statement by President Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:

“The ministry of the prophets and apostles leads them ever and always to the home and the family. . . .

“The ultimate purpose of all we teach is to unite parents and children in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they are happy at home, sealed in an eternal marriage, linked to their generations, and assured of exaltation in the presence of our Heavenly Father” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 8).

- What does this statement say about the importance of homes and families?

Point out that this statement explains how important families are to our Heavenly Father. Tell class members that today’s lesson discusses why families are important and how we can contribute to our families’ efforts to learn and apply gospel principles.

Family Life Helps Us Learn Gospel Principles

Story

Explain that home is an important place for us to learn the gospel. Read or tell the following story shared by a young Latter-day Saint about how an experience at home helped him learn gospel principles:

“The Book of Mormon . . . is where you find the best discourse on serving ice cream in a truly righteous family. Actually it doesn’t talk much about ice cream. . . . But it does teach you a lot about proper technique in *servicing* ice cream.

“Maybe you could understand better if I told you how I used to serve ice cream and then explain the difference.

“Since I am a teenager, when dad or mom would ask me to serve everyone some ice cream, the first thing I would do was find me a [large] bowl and stack the ice cream to the teenager level, which is about two inches above the rim. Then I would dish up the ice cream for the rest of my family. However, my brother and sisters are smaller than I, so of course the small ice cream dishes are just about right for them.

“Well, my dad showed me in the Book of Mormon where it explains that my method [wasn’t right].

“In 4 Nephi it tells what it was like after the Savior visited the people in America following his resurrection. After his visit, the people really lived righteous lives. And the way they lived can help us understand how to develop celestial families. It even teaches us how to serve ice cream.”

Scripture discussion

Have class members read and mark 4 Nephi 1:2–3, 15–16.

- What might these verses have to do with serving food to your family?

Story continued

Continue the story:

“ . . . My dad gently explained to me that when I have the standard teenager’s portion, it makes [my sisters] jealous and envious. When they get like that, they start giving me all kinds of reasons why they should have as much as I do. Of course, I have to explain to them, loud enough for them to understand, that teenagers need more nourishment than ‘little girls.’ Then they always have a response for that. And I have to reply—in a slightly louder tone, of course.

“Well, when I read 4 Nephi, I could see that we were having one of those ‘disputations’ that Nephi was talking about; and the disputation had been caused by a ‘contention;’ and the contention was caused by ‘envying.’

“So you can see that there is a certain way you have to serve ice cream in a family desiring to be more righteous.

“Mom also pointed out something else. If everyone is allowed to have a fair share, according to their needs, then there are really no rich ice cream eaters and no poor ice cream eaters. Having no rich or poor means that everyone has as much as he needs, but he does not have so much more than [others] that they get envious and cause contentions which lead to disputations.

“When these disputations are avoided, there really is ‘peace in the land.’ At least there is peace in the [home], and everyone is happier!” (R. Todd Hunt, “Serving Ice Cream in a Celestial Family,” *New Era*, Jan.–Feb. 1982, 9).

Discussion

- What did the author of the story learn when he served ice cream to his family? (Answers may include that he learned about the damaging effects of contention and the helpful effects of love, and he realized that his actions influenced the degree of happiness in his home.)

Activity

Show the strips of paper you have prepared and explain that each strip contains a gospel principle that has been discussed in this year’s Sunday School class. Point out that we also learn about these principles at home. Have class members take turns selecting a strip of paper, reading the principle that is written on it, and handing it back to you. Then have all class members suggest ways family life can help us learn that principle.

Family Life Prepares Us for the Challenges of Life

Activity

Explain that when we learn gospel principles at home, we are better prepared to successfully meet the challenges of life. For example, if the young man in the story applies the lesson he learned when he was serving ice cream, he will be able to establish and maintain good friendships at school.

Following the same procedure as before, have class members read again the principles written on the strips of paper. As each principle is read, ask class members how it can be applied to meet the challenges they may face outside the home, such as at school or with their friends.

As appropriate, tell about a time when something you learned at home helped you successfully meet a challenge that you experienced outside the home.

Family Life Prepares Us for Eternal Life

Quotation

Point out that family life prepares us for more than just the challenges of everyday life. Hand out the copies you have made of the statement by President David O. McKay, eighth President of the Church, about family life preparing us for eternal life. Have a class member read the statement.

Activity

Explain that class members are going to do an activity to show how family life prepares us for eternal life. Divide the pieces of the house diagram among class members and have them work together to assemble the puzzle.

Have class members read and mark Doctrine and Covenants 88:119. Explain that this verse is part of a revelation instructing the early Latter-day Saints to build a temple. Point out that although this verse is about the temple, it can be applied to the home also, because “only the home can compare with the temple in sacredness” (Bible Dictionary, “Temple,” 781).

Discuss with class members why the qualities listed in this verse are essential characteristics of a “house of God.” For example, you may want to remove the puzzle piece labeled “Prayer” and ask class members why a home without prayer is incomplete.

Chalkboard discussion

- What are some actions our families can take to make our homes houses of God?

Write class members’ answers on the chalkboard. Answers may include the following:

Have family prayer.
Help each other.
Forgive each other.
Read the scriptures together.
Work together.
Be considerate of each other.
Hold family home evening.

- What can youth do to help their parents make their homes houses of God? What can youth do when their parents are not members of the Church or are not enthusiastic about holding family prayer or family home evening or about attending Church meetings?

Quotation

Read the following statement by Elder Boyd K. Packer:

“The most sacred place on earth may not be the temple, necessarily. The chapel, the stake house, and the temple are sacred as they contribute to the building of the most sacred institution in the Church—the home—and to the blessing of the most sacred relationships in the Church, the family” (*That All May Be Edified* [1982], 234–35).

Testimony

Testify of the importance of the home and family in learning gospel principles and preparing for eternal life.

Encourage class members to think about President McKay's statement (on their pieces of paper) and to contribute to their family's efforts to have a gospel-centered home.

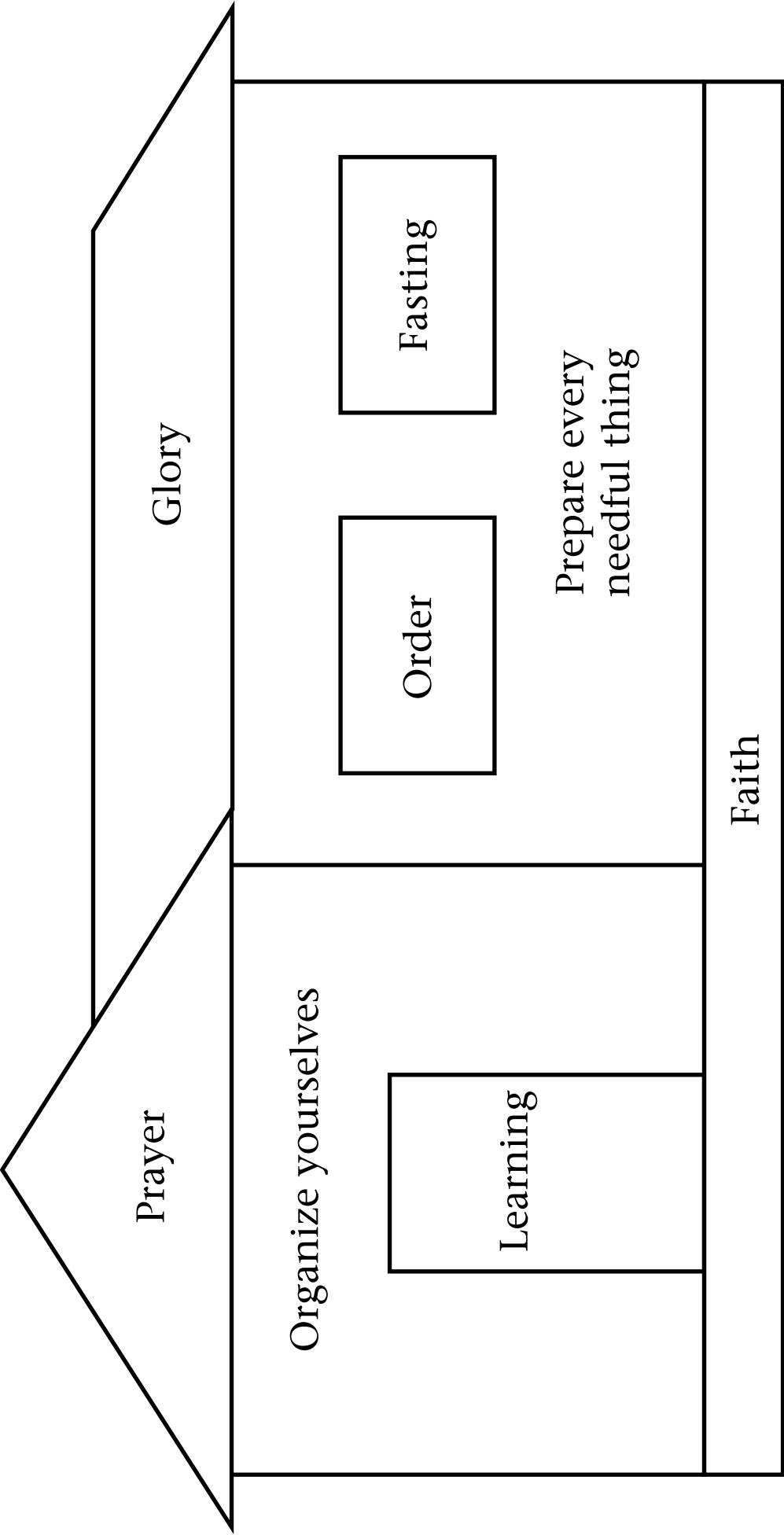
**Enrichment
Activities**

You may want to use one or more of these activities during the lesson.

1. With class members, sing or read the words to "Home Can Be a Heaven on Earth" (*Hymns*, no. 298).
2. Help class members memorize Doctrine and Covenants 88:119. Write the verse on the chalkboard as shown below:

Organize yourselves;
prepare every needful thing;
and establish a house,
even a house of prayer,
a house of fasting,
a house of faith,
a house of learning,
a house of glory,
a house of order,
a house of God.

Have class members repeat the verse a few times, reading from the chalkboard rather than their scriptures. Then erase one line and have them repeat the verse again. Continue the process until class members can recite the entire verse from memory.



Prayer

Glory

Organize yourselves

Learning

Order

Fasting

Prepare every
needful thing

Faith