

## TEMPLE BLESSINGS NOW AND ETERNALLY

By Stacy Vickery

I remember seeing pictures of the temple from the time I was very small. Though too young to understand the blessings of the temple, I knew I wanted to go there someday. In Young Women, I started to understand the blessings that would come from the temple. At that time my family was less active, and I prayed each day that we could be sealed as an eternal family.

In the fall of 1993, two weeks before I turned 18, my family did go to the temple. I remember the feeling I had in the Provo Utah Temple, becoming an eternal family with my parents and siblings. As I left the temple that day, I thought I understood the blessings it brought me.

Two years later, in the summer of 1995, I was engaged to be married, so I went to the temple to receive my own endowment. How wonderful to receive another blessing of the temple! Three days after receiving my endowment, I was sealed to my husband for time and all eternity in the Manti Utah Temple. I realized another blessing that I had not previously experienced—my husband and I could be an eternal family. Again I thought I had experienced all the blessings of the temple.

Six years into marriage, we found that we were expanding our family. We were so excited to raise our son and teach him the gospel. But 24 weeks into the pregnancy, our little boy was born fighting for life. After just



*My understanding of temple blessings has grown as my need for them has increased.*

eight weeks he returned to Heavenly Father. As I held him for the last time, I recognized yet another wonderful blessing of the temple: our son had been born in the covenant and could be ours forever.

Eighteen months after the passing of our son, we received a phone call from LDS Family Services saying that a young woman had chosen to place her baby with us. Knowing that we could not have more biological children, we could not have been more excited.

When our little girl was six months old, we finalized her adoption and took her to the temple to be sealed to us. Four years after our little girl became part of our family, another young woman chose us to be the parents of a sweet little boy. Again we had the blessing of taking a six-month-old to the temple. I will never forget how I felt when I saw my children, all in white, in the temple with my husband and me to be sealed to us for eternity.

I now realize that I did not understand all the blessings the temple could bring when I was in Young Women or when I was sealed to my husband or even when our son passed away. And even though I recognize many more blessings than I have in years past, I now understand that the temple is a place of *eternal* blessings, blessings that will come to us in this life and in eternity. Some we may realize easily today, and others will teach us, strengthen our testimonies, and help us someday to reach our eternal home.

The temple is a place of peace and comfort, joy and newness. I am more grateful than ever for the temple and pray that as I return there, I can continue to learn and appreciate the blessings of the temple. ■