



## PREPARING TO ENTER THE HOLY TEMPLE

*“And inasmuch as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it” (D&C 97:15).*

### OBJECTIVE

To prepare the class members to worthily enter the temple.

### LESSON PRESENTATION

Invite someone to give an opening prayer.

Ask class members if they have any questions. Take the time required to answer questions to the best of your ability and as guided by the Lord’s Spirit. Remember that some aspects of temple work must not be discussed outside the temple.

### EACH PERSON SHOULD PREPARE FOR THE TEMPLE

Explain that each person is individually responsible for taking the steps that will lead to the full blessings of the temple.

Briefly discuss the following five ideas. Each one presents a way in which we should be prepared to enter the temple. You may want to list each point on the chalkboard as you discuss it.

1. Each person should be worthy.

Ask the class members to read Doctrine and Covenants 97:15–17.

- What does this passage teach you about the importance of being worthy when you enter the temple?

President Howard W. Hunter asked us to consider the “attitudes and righteous behaviors that the Lord pointed us toward in the counsel He gave to the Kirtland Saints through the Prophet Joseph Smith as they were preparing to build a temple.”

This counsel is found in Doctrine and Covenants 88:119. Ask the class members to read this passage.

Ask the class members also to consider the question posed by President Hunter: “Are these attitudes and behaviors indeed reflective of what each of us desires and seeks to be?” (“The Great Symbol of Our Membership,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 2).

*“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” (D&C 88:119).*

2. Each person should be humble.

Each person should enter the temple in humility, with a desire to be taught from on high.

- Why is humility so important as we serve and learn in the temple?

Have the class members read Doctrine and Covenants 136:32–33.

- What does this passage teach about the importance of humility? How could you apply this counsel to attending the temple for the first time?

3. Each person should understand that receiving temple ordinances and covenants is essential to gaining eternal life.

President Harold B. Lee said: “The temple ceremonies are designed by a wise Heavenly Father who has revealed them to us in these last days as a guide and a protection throughout our lives, that you and I might not fail to merit exaltation in the celestial kingdom where God and Christ dwell” (“Enter a Holy Temple,” *Improvement Era*, June 1967, 144).

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: “These blessings insure to us, through our faithfulness, the pearl of great price the Lord has offered us, for *these are the greatest blessings we can receive in this life*. It is a wonderful thing to come into the Church, but you cannot receive an exaltation until you have made covenants in the house of the Lord and received the keys and authorities that are there bestowed and which cannot be given in any other place on the earth today” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:253).

4. Each person should understand the importance of wearing the temple garment.

Explain that those who have participated in the temple ceremony are privileged to wear the garment of the holy priesthood. In a statement to the Church, the First Presidency said:

“Church members who have been clothed with the garment in the temple have made a covenant to wear it throughout their lives. This has been interpreted to mean that it is worn as underclothing both day and night. . . .

“The fundamental principle ought to be to wear the garment and not to find occasions to remove it. . . . When the garment must be removed, . . . it should be restored as soon as possible.

“The principles of modesty and keeping the body appropriately covered are implicit in the covenant and should govern the nature of all clothing worn. Endowed members of the Church wear the

garment as a reminder of the sacred covenants they have made with the Lord and also as a protection against temptation and evil. How it is worn is an outward expression of an inward commitment to follow the Savior” (First Presidency letter, 10 Oct. 1988).

5. Each person should be prepared for personal and sacred worship.

In the temple, before, during, and after the ceremonies, there are opportunities for a person to meditate and to draw closer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Everyone is faced with questions that need answers, with burdens that need lightening, with problems that need to be solved. Many have appreciated the temple as a place to get away from the world and to communicate with Heavenly Father. Many have found answers, peace, and joy in the temple.

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “Temples are places of personal revelation. When I have been weighed down by a problem or a difficulty, I have gone to the House of the Lord with a prayer in my heart for answers. These answers have come in clear and unmistakable ways” (“What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children about the Temple,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, 8).

Explain that in the temple, we can submit the names of those who have special needs so that those who attend the temple can unite their faith and prayers in behalf of these people.

#### **SPECIAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIRST TEMPLE VISIT**

The following information will help each person make all necessary preparations for the first temple visit and ensure that this visit is uplifting. Discuss with class members the information that applies to their circumstances.

1. *Temple Recommend.* Obtain a temple recommend. Be sure to carry your recommend with you to the temple, since only those with valid recommends may enter. As you live worthily, the recommend will allow you to enter any temple of the Church as often as you wish during the next two years. To renew your temple recommend, you must be interviewed by a member of your bishopric or your branch president and a member of your stake presidency or the mission president.
2. *Planning and Scheduling the Visit.* Before you go to the temple to receive the endowment or the sealing ordinance, call the temple to make an appointment. Find out when you need to arrive at the temple, how long you should plan to stay, and what you should take with you. Ask for translation assistance if necessary.
3. *Travel Plans.* If you live a long distance from the temple, you should consider the following:

- Make transportation, lodging, and eating arrangements in advance. It may be to your advantage to travel with a group if possible.
  - If necessary, make arrangements to exchange your money into the currency of the country where the temple is located.
  - Take sufficient funds to cover all expenses. You may need to purchase additional garments, rent temple clothing, and pay for lodging and travel. (Note that rental clothing is not available in many temples. The First Presidency encourages all members to purchase their own temple clothing.)
4. *Dress.* Plan to dress as you would when attending Sunday meetings. Women should not wear pants to the temple.
  5. *Escorts.* All who are going to the temple for the first time may have an escort to accompany them. This can be a relative or friend of the same gender who has previously been to the temple, or one of the temple workers may assist. Workers in the temple will offer friendly guidance at all times.
  6. *Sealing Work.* If you plan to do sealing work for your deceased ancestors, you should take completed family group records with you to the temple. If you and your spouse are to be sealed or if you are going to have children sealed to you, you must have your own family group record. If you are going to be married, you will need to comply with all local civil laws and bring a valid marriage license with you. Read carefully the *Member's Guide to Temple and Family History Work* (34697) for more detailed information about how to provide temple ordinances for both the living and the dead. You may also contact the temple recorder at the temple you are planning to visit.
  7. *Care of Children.* If children are coming to the temple to participate in a sealing ceremony, they will be cared for in the temple youth center until it is time for them to join you in the sealing room. White clothing for the ceremony will be provided for the children. After the sealing ceremony is completed, they will return to the center to wait for you. No care is provided at the temple for children not involved in a sealing.
  8. *Temple Garments.* You will need to buy one or two pairs of temple garments before you enter the temple. Do not put them on before you go to the temple. After receiving your endowment and when you are satisfied that you have identified the desirable size and fabric, you can purchase additional pairs of garments. Some people like to wash their initial pair of garments to make sure they fit comfortably before purchasing others. Temple garments are

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manufactured by the Church and may be purchased through Church Distribution Services.

9. *Temple Clothing.* The First Presidency has encouraged members to purchase and use their own temple clothing. In some temples it is possible to rent temple clothing for a small fee, but it is preferable for members to own and maintain their own temple clothing. The bishop or branch president can provide information about where this clothing may be purchased.

Sisters may wear their wedding dresses for their temple wedding, but the dress must be white, have long sleeves, be modest in design and fabric, have no train, and be free from elaborate ornamentation.

#### CONCLUSION

Share your testimony of the sacredness of temple work. Express your happiness in seeing the class members prepare to enter the temple.

Invite someone to give a closing prayer.

Following this lesson, class participants and instructors should attend the temple together where possible.