

BY CAROLYN RUSCH

When my testimony of eternal families began to waver, I sought answers in the temple.

I love the message in the hymn “Families Can Be Together Forever,” and yet following the untimely death of my husband, I found my testimony of eternal families wavering. I needed to find out for myself if what I had grown up believing was really true.

I made my search a matter of prayer, but I did not receive an answer right away. Eventually, I decided to attend the temple often and spend as much time as I could praying and pondering over my question. Early one morning as I entered the temple chapel, I immediately recognized the person playing the organ. I glanced in her direction in hopes of being able to give her a friendly smile, but she was intent on her playing and seemed unaware of the people gathering in the chapel. I focused on the quiet music in hopes it would bring peace to my troubled soul while I prayed. After playing several hymns, the organist

Families *Can Be*



ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT T. BARRETT

began to play “Nearer, My God, to Thee.” This hymn had been one of the songs sung at my husband’s funeral. I sang the words of the hymn in my mind and then returned to my prayer.

Soon the time came for us to leave the chapel. As we did so, I glanced at my friend, who was hurriedly turning the pages in her binder as though she were having trouble finding a particular hymn. Just as I was walking out the door, she began to play the hymn “Families Can Be Together Forever.” Tears filled my eyes, for this was the other song we had sung at my husband’s funeral. I couldn’t remember if the organist had attended his funeral or not, but even if she had, I doubted she could remember the songs we had sung. It occurred to me that this probably was not a coincidence that she had played both of those songs, and I knew I had received an answer to my petition. Yes, families *can* be together forever.

Later, I called my friend and asked if she had seen me in the temple. When she said she had, I told her what had happened. She began to cry, and for several moments could not speak. Then she told me that each time she sits at the organ, she asks Heavenly Father to help her know what songs she should play to touch the hearts of people who have come to the temple with questions or concerns. After seeing me in the chapel, she offered a quick prayer on my behalf. Then feeling the promptings of the Holy Ghost, she knew the hymns she needed to play. This had happened to her many times in the past, but she never knew if what she played had made a difference to anyone. My call confirmed to her that her prayers had indeed been answered this time and most assuredly on other occasions as well.

We both cried as we realized that the Lord, through His tender mercies, had answered both our prayers. Our experience in the temple that day helped each of us gain a profound testimony of our Heavenly Father’s love and concern for each of His children. We learned that He truly hears our prayers and answers them. ■

gether Forever