

LIVING THE GOSPEL NOURISHES SACRED FAMILY RELATIONS

We are all children of loving Heavenly Parents who sent us to earth to learn how to return to Them. The family is a central part of the plan of salvation. God gives us families so we can gain bodies, learn correct principles, and prepare for eternal life.

Heavenly Father wants each of His children to be raised in loving environments. The best way to achieve these caring environments is by living and practicing gospel principles. “Happiness in family life is most likely to be achieved when founded upon the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.”¹ Homes that are established on gospel principles become places of peace, where the Spirit of the Lord can guide, influence, and uplift all members of the family.

The family is ordained of God and is “the *order* of heaven . . . , an echo of a celestial pattern and an emulation of

God’s eternal family.”² These familial relationships and their accompanying responsibilities are sacred. We learn in the scriptures that parents have a duty to raise their children in truth, light, and love (see Ephesians 6:4; D&C 68:25). Husbands and wives should love and respect each other (see Ephesians 5:25), and children should honor their parents (see Exodus 20:12).

“Successful marriages and families are established and maintained on principles of faith, prayer, repentance, forgiveness, respect, love, compassion, work, and wholesome recreational activities.”³ Following gospel principles strengthens family relationships and increases family members’ individual and collective spiritual strength. These principles will also help us come closer to Christ.

Every family has its challenges. In the spiritual turmoil of these days,

not every family has ideal circumstances. As Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “With millions of members and the diversity we have in the children of the Church, we need to be even more thoughtful and sensitive.”⁴ Some individuals do not have family support in living the gospel. Some challenges are especially difficult, including (but not limited to) divorce, abuse, and addiction.

God is aware of each family’s situation and of individual desires to have love at home. Even if we have imperfect relationships with our families, living the gospel can still bless our lives and our homes. It can strengthen our relationships with our spouse, parents, children, brothers and sisters, and with our Heavenly Father. Some of these blessings will come now, and others not until eternity, but God will not withhold any blessing from those striving for righteousness. ■

NOTES

1. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “In Praise of Those Who Save,” *Ensign*, May 2016, 77.
3. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” 129.
4. Neil L. Andersen, “Whoso Receiveth Them, Receiveth Me,” *Ensign*, May 2016, 50.



DIVINE AND SACRED

“The family is divine [and] encompasses the most sacred of all relationships.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Gordon B. Hinckley* (2016), 167.

How to strengthen family relationships
by living the gospel:



*Being kind, apologizing,
extending forgiveness*



*Participating in
wholesome family
activities and
traditions*



*Worshipping through
family prayer, scripture
study, home evening,
and church and temple
attendance*



*Giving
service*



*Listening and
showing respect*