



*Marriage is ordained of God, and as these couples testify, working together brings joy.*

# Creating a Joyful Marriage— *Together*



Dale and Rita Bills of Utah, USA, fell in love after discovering how much they enjoyed talking to each other. Now, after more than 40 years together, they still find joy in talking. “We talk about the gospel, our children, and our grandchildren,” says Dale. “We read novels, biographies, and talks from general conference together. In the process, we laugh, cry, ponder, discuss, learn, and grow together.”

Rita remembers that on their honeymoon, they went to several different temples in Utah. “We still love to be together in the celestial room, holding hands and quietly contemplating things of eternal significance,” she says. “Our temple service strengthens our marriage as it helps us to become one with each other and with the Lord.”

Joy in marriage is a result of building the marital relationship on gospel principles and on a concern for one’s spouse.

President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said: “Harmony in marriage comes only when one esteems the welfare of his or her spouse among the highest of priorities. When that really happens, a celestial marriage becomes a reality, bringing great joy in this life and in the life to come.”<sup>1</sup>



## Building a Family Together

“My husband, Dale, and I have often wondered what our lives would have been like without the scheduled chaos and sometimes messy life moments that having children brings,” says Linda Ottley from Utah. “Naively, we began our parenthood years with visions of ruffles and bows and shiny, happy faces. However, those shiny, happy faces have been ours, as we have shared in the joys and sorrows and the ups and downs of parenting. The joy of marriage is not just experienced in perfect moments. By having children, we have learned who we really are and what we’re made of. Through raising a family together, we have discovered the kind of love where we care more about someone else’s welfare than our own.”

Parenting is exactly about that kind of selfless love. Early in their marriage, Don and Janice Ryther of Washington,

USA, discovered they were unable to have children of their own. “We decided to adopt, and with each child, we went to the temple to have them sealed to us so we could be an eternal family,” says Janice. “Each time our joy multiplied as we added another child with his or her unique personality. Our joy multiplied again as we watched each of our two daughters kneel across the altar to be sealed to a young man who held the priesthood.”

Don says, “Our son has taken a different path that has complicated his life. Remembering our temple covenants and promises has given us hope as we continue to pray daily for him. It has been a blessing to have an eternal partner to experience the happy times with as well as the times of trial in this life. As we continue to work together, we find joy as we discover new depths in ourselves and collectively as a family unit.”





### Building a Spiritual Foundation Together

Mike and Stacey Sitton of Utah have learned that daily prayer and scripture study have brought them joy in marriage.

“As we pray together each morning and night, we are reminded that treating each other as the Savior would treat us is a great way to help us take upon ourselves His name,” says Mike. “As we read from the scriptures each morning, we learn more about how the prophets followed the Lord. This in turn helps us to always remember Him in our marriage. Then as we apply the teachings of the scriptures and living prophets, we are strengthened in our resolve to keep His commandments.”

### Together Again One Day

Peering into the sealing room in the Los Angeles California Temple where she and her now-deceased husband, Winston, were married more than 50 years ago brings peace to Sally Smith.

“On a rainy Thursday morning in January, we knelt across that sacred altar and were sealed for time and all eternity,” she says. “We felt great joy, but it was joy tinged with sadness because we had no family with us—only five friends. My husband, who grew up in a less-active family, and I, a Jewish convert of three years, chose to marry in the Lord’s appointed way in spite of intense pressure from parents and siblings. With a borrowed wedding dress and a borrowed car, and with none of the festivities that typically accompany marriage, we not only set our life’s course in that Los Angeles temple sealing room—we also set our eternal course.

“After a lifetime of being together, my dear Win and I are now separated by a painful parting. Nevertheless, through the Savior’s atoning sacrifice and the reality of the sealing power of the priesthood, I feel hope—even joy—during this trying season of my life, knowing we will one day be together again.” ■

#### NOTE

1. Russell M. Nelson, “Celestial Marriage,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2008, 94.