

# I TOOK THE TEMPLE

BY CORY KEATE

*One of the most important things you can take on your mission is the understanding you gain in the house of the Lord.*

“Well, Cory, based on what we’ve talked about, I would be pleased to recommend you for full-time service as a missionary,” my bishop said, nearing the end of the interview.

“So, I guess I’m pretty well on my way to the mission field after this,” I said. I was already picturing myself in an exotic land, saving lost souls. But the bishop interrupted my daydreams.

“Actually, there’s one more very important thing I wanted to talk about before we end this evening,” he said. “Far too often potential missionaries are so involved in checking off items on their ‘to do’ list that they don’t keep their temple ordinances in the right perspective.” I felt like the bishop was describing me as he went on, “For some missionaries, receiving their endowment is sandwiched between checking the dimensions of their luggage and hitting next weekend’s two-pant suit sale.” My bishop’s words made me realize that I needed to consider the temple with the importance it deserved.

During the rest of the interview he explained the sacred nature of the endowment. By going through the temple, he told me, I would be making sacred covenants with my Heavenly Father that go far beyond the mission and are essential to my exaltation. “Not only that,” he

continued, “your temple experience will fill you with the desire to serve. You will want those you teach to receive the same blessings of the temple that you have received. The strength you’ll receive from your temple covenants will benefit you as a missionary, but they also have eternal significance.”

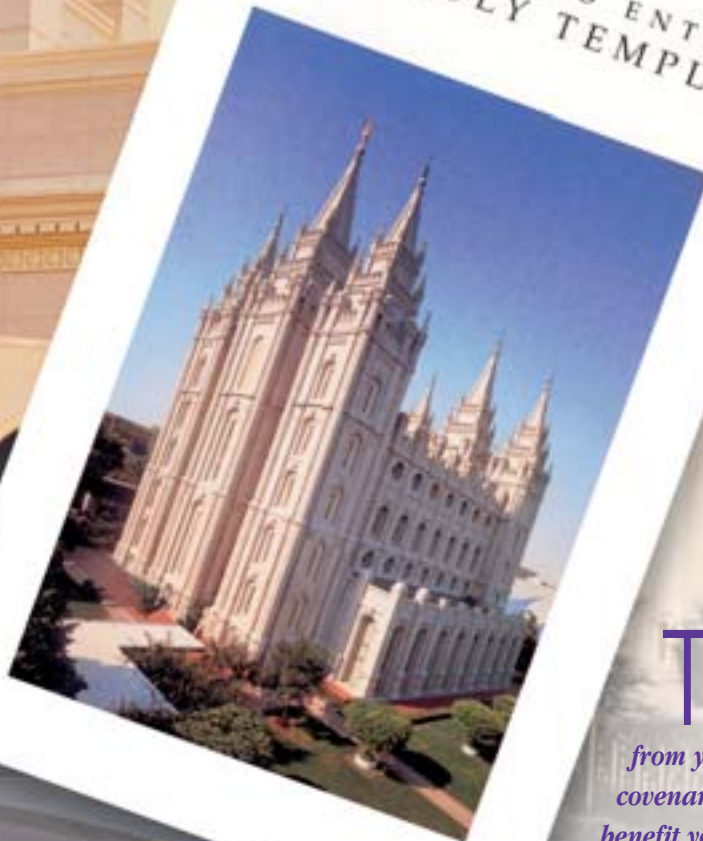
The bishop’s words weighed on me as I walked slowly home. I began to feel nervous. I had looked forward my whole life to the time when I would enter the temple, but now I was especially eager to be ready.

A few weeks later I received my mission call. With excitement I read the words “Brazil Porto Alegre North Mission.” I could hardly wait to be among the Brazilian people, sharing the message of the restored gospel. I shared the news of my call with my extended family, ward members, and friends. I also noticed how many people were just as eager to know when I would go through the temple. Many had words of advice to offer me on how I should prepare myself mentally and spiritually before entering the house of the Lord.

During the next few months I made sure to attend temple preparation classes. I read my scriptures and prayed for a continuing reassurance of my decision to receive my endowment. The Spirit comforted me again and again. I also read the pamphlet *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple*, written to assist those preparing to attend the temple for the first time. I was so grateful for the statements about the reverence and peace that prevail in the temple. During this time of preparation I gained a much

WITH ME

PREPARING TO ENTER  
THE HOLY TEMPLE



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stronger testimony of the sacred nature of the Lord's house and the work that is performed inside.

I will always remember the sight of the temple the day I arrived to receive my endowment. I was filled with deep respect and reverence. I was humbled by the thought that I would go inside and make sacred covenants with my Father in Heaven.

I had arrived dressed in my Sunday best, knowing that my outward appearance reflected my inward respect for the house of the Lord.

"Welcome to the temple," I was greeted as I showed my recommend and walked inside. Everything about the temple was beautiful. It felt like a piece of heaven on earth, and the friendly temple workers seemed like angels.

I remained in awe at the Spirit I felt.

While I didn't immediately understand everything that was taking place, I did realize the importance of the covenants I was making. It was clear to me why my bishop had spoken of the temple the way he had. The endowment I was receiving would extend not only far beyond the two years of my mission but even into the eternities. More meaningful to me than any of the advice I had received from various people was a scripture I had read as part of my preparation, "And that all people who shall enter upon the threshold of the Lord's house may feel thy power, and feel constrained to acknowledge that thou hast sanctified it, and that it is thy house, a place of thy holiness" (D&C 109:13). I knew that the temple was the Lord's house, sanctified and holy. I went expecting to feel God's love, and I did.

Throughout my mission I frequently reflected on my first temple experience. I was also thankful for having attended the temple each week at the MTC. The blessings of the temple fortified me and gave me strength through difficult times. I was filled with the desire to serve and bring others to a knowledge of God's plan. I wanted everyone I taught to have the same opportunity to make covenants with Heavenly Father and receive a greater understanding of His infinite love.

I am grateful for having realized that the temple will be a part of me forever and not something to simply check off before leaving on my mission. Since returning home from my mission, I have made temple attendance a priority in my life. The temple is a place of clarity and renewal for me. It is a place of holiness where I can feel God's love for me and for all His children. **NE**

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PHOTO BY DAVID STOKER