

Youth & Family History

Quotes from April 2014 Conference

“The doctrine of the family in relation to family history and temple work is clear. The Lord in initial revelatory instructions referred to “baptism for *your* dead.” Our doctrinal obligation is to our own ancestors. This is because the celestial organization of heaven is based on families. The First Presidency has encouraged members, especially youth and young single adults, to emphasize family history work and ordinances for their own family names or the names of ancestors of their ward and stake members. We need to be connected to both our roots and branches. The thought of being associated in the eternal realm is indeed glorious.” (Cook, Apr. 2014)

The question is, what do we need to do? The Prophet Joseph's counsel was to present in the temple “the records of our dead, which shall be worthy of all acceptance.” The leadership of the Church has issued a clarion call to the rising generation to lead the way in the use of technology to experience the spirit of Elijah, to search out their ancestors, and to perform temple ordinances for them. Much of the heavy lifting in hastening the work of salvation for both the living and the dead will be done by you young people. If the youth in each ward will not only go to the temple and do baptisms for their dead but also work with their families and other ward members to provide the family names for the ordinance work they perform, both they and the Church will be greatly blessed. Don't underestimate the influence of the deceased in assisting your efforts and the joy of ultimately meeting those you serve. The eternally significant blessing of uniting our own families is almost beyond comprehension. (Cook, Apr. 2014)

We finally have the doctrine, the temples, and the technology for families to accomplish this glorious work of salvation. I suggest one way this might be done. Families could hold a “Family Tree Gathering”. This should be a recurring effort. Everyone would bring existing family histories, stories, and photos, including cherished possessions of grandparents and parents. Our young people are excited to learn about the lives of family members—where they came from and how they lived. Many have had their hearts turned to their fathers. They love the stories and photos, and they have the technological expertise to scan and upload these stories and photos to Family Tree and connect source documents with ancestors to preserve these for all time. Of course, the main objective is to determine what ordinances still need to be done and make assignments for the essential temple work. The *My Family* booklet can be utilized to help record family information, stories, and photos that can then be uploaded to Family Tree. (Cook, Apr. 2014)

I wondered if each of those enthusiastic Arizona youth knew their own family history—if they knew the history of how *their family* came to be members of the Church. It would be a

wonderful thing if every Latter-day Saint knew the conversion stories of their forefathers. Whether or not you are a descendant of pioneers, the Mormon pioneer heritage of faith and sacrifice is your heritage. It is the noble heritage of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (Walker, Apr. 2014)

Some of you are already models of unselfish priesthood service. In temples across the world, priesthood holders arrive before sunrise. And some serve long after sunset. There is no record or public acclaim in this world for that sacrifice of time and effort. I have gone with young people as they serve those in the spirit world, who are not able to claim temple blessings for themselves. (Eyring, Apr. 2014)