

TOGETHER FOREVER

By Vicki F. Matsumori

Julie was sad. Nana—Grandma Marilyn—was in the hospital, and Mother had gone to visit her.

“What’s wrong, Julie?” Angie, her older sister, asked. “Are you having trouble with your math homework again?”

“No,” Julie replied. “Math is OK. I’m worried about Nana. Is she going to get better?”

“I don’t know,” Angie said. “The doctors aren’t sure what’s wrong with her.”

“Why aren’t you as upset as I am? Won’t you miss her if she doesn’t get better? What if she dies? Don’t you love Nana?” Julie had tears in her eyes.

Angie gathered Julie into her arms. “I think Nana will get better, and of course I love her,” Angie said. “But even if she dies, we can be together forever.”

“I thought that meant that Nana would always be with us, that I’d always be able to go to visit her, that none of us would ever die,” Julie said.

“No.” Angie smiled. “We’ll all have to die sometime. Being together forever means that because our family has been sealed together in the temple, after we leave this life, we can be together forever as a family in Heavenly Father’s kingdom.”

Julie sighed. “I don’t understand.”

“Let me see if I can help. Next month Mark and I are going to be married,” Angie said. “Do you know where we are being married?”

“Sure, that’s easy. You’ve been planning for months to be married in the temple.”

“Actually, for as long as I can remember, I’ve planned on being married in the temple. The reason is that when we are married in the temple, we will also be sealed together as an eternal family unit. The brother who will perform our marriage has the priesthood authority to join us as husband and wife not just for this life, but for forever. Because we will be sealed in the temple, if we live righteously, we and any children we have will be sealed together as a family for eternity. Because Nana and Grandpa John were sealed in the temple, and Mom and Dad were sealed in the temple, we are all sealed together as a family even after this life.”



“And that’s all there is to it?” Julie asked.

“No. We also have to live as an eternal family. For example, we need to try to live the gospel, love one another, have family home evening, pray together, help each other, and be kind to one another.”

“Thank you for helping me feel better today,” Julie said as she hugged Angie. “I’m glad you’re my sister forever.”

“So am I,” Angie said.

A FOREVER FAMILY

1. Remove page 33 from the magazine. Glue it onto heavy paper. Cut off the temple picture along the broken line, then cut slits in it along the thirteen broken lines.

2. Fold the picture along the heavy horizontal line.

3. Fold out the three tabs created by the six vertical slits. Cut out the three family figures. Glue the bottom half of each figure to one of the tabs (see illustration).

4. Cut out the seven shrubs. On the blank shrub, write something you will work on to help you prepare to go to the temple one day. Fold the tabs back on all the shrubs and insert them into the horizontal slits so that the shrubs face forward. They will remind you of some of the things your family can do to be a forever family.

SHARING TIME IDEAS

(Note: All songs are from *Children’s Songbook* unless otherwise indicated; GAK = Gospel Art Kit; TNGC = Teaching, No Greater Call)

1. On six cards print the letters *F, A, M, I, L, and Y*. Tape the letters under the seats of six chairs before Primary begins. Ask the children to locate the letters. Have those who find the letters come up front and hold them up. Ask the rest of the children to help unscramble the letters by giving directions to the children in front, such as, “John, please move between Susan and Michael.” Instruct the children holding the letters not to move unless the person giving the direction says “please.” Explain that one way we can show kindness to one another is by the way we speak to each other. Sing “Love Is Spoken Here” (pp. 190–191). Explain that we can have happy homes by being kind to our families and to our friends.

Make a picture of a home, leaving parts of it, such as doors, windows, roof, and chimney, unfinished (see *Friend*, Feb. 1996, pp. 30–31). Draw separate pictures of the missing pieces. On the back of each piece, write a

SHARING TIME IDEAS *continued*

situation. For example: (1) A new girl has moved into your class. You see her sitting by herself. (2) You see your dog digging up the flowers in your neighbor's yard. (3) Your friend whispers that he needs an answer to a test question. Use more difficult situations for the larger pieces of the home. Have each class choose a part of the home that can be added to complete the home. Have them read the situation on the back and discuss what they could do to be kind in that situation. Have one member of each class in turn read their situation to the entire Primary, give the answers his or her class came up with, then tape the piece onto the house. If possible, give each child a picture of an uncompleted home. Suggest that during the week they draw in a missing part each time they act or speak more kindly to a family member. Sing "Kindness Begins with Me" (p. 145).

2. Divide the Primary into five groups. Assign each group one of the following scripture passages: Adam and Eve teach their sons and daughters (Moses 5:2, 12); Lehi listens to the Lord and removes his family from danger (1 Ne. 1:13; 2:1-4); Alma the Elder's prayers about his son are answered (Mosiah 27:11-16); Helaman preaches about Christ to his sons (Hel. 5:12-14); two thousand young warriors are taught by their mothers (Alma 56:heading, 47-48). Have the children read the passages with the help of their teachers and discuss how what these parents did helped their children.

Using large pieces of paper, have each group illustrate their scene. In turn, have each group explain its scene to the rest of the Primary and tell what the parents did to help their children. Then have that group or the entire Primary sing a song that relates to the scene, such as: Adam and Eve—"Teach Me to Walk in the Light" (p. 177); Lehi—"Quickly I'll Obey" (p. 197); Alma—"I Thank Thee, Dear Father" (p. 7); Helaman—"Where Love Is" (pp. 138-139); warriors' mothers—"Mother, Tell Me the Story" (pp. 204-205). Conclude by asking the children about their responsibilities to their parents. Help the children memorize "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Ex. 20:12). Bear testimony of the blessings that come through obedience to parents.

For Younger Children: Using simple costumes, have the children dramatize several of the above scriptural accounts (see *TNGC*, pp. 165-166). Please note that God the Father and the Holy Ghost are not to be portrayed.

Have the children sit in a circle and pass a beanbag as they sing "When We're Helping" (p. 198). Have the pianist stop playing sometime during the second verse. The child holding the beanbag acts out something he or she could do to help Mother, while the other children guess what is being acted out. Repeat several times for "Mother" and then several times using "Father." Sing the song again, using other family members, especially if you have a child who lives with a grandparent, aunt, or uncle in your Primary.

3. Give each child a copy of "The Family: A Proclamation to the World" (*Ensign*, Nov. 1995, p. 102), or at least a copy of the sixth paragraph, which begins, "Husband and wife have a solemn responsibility." Read that paragraph aloud. Give the children a word search (see *Friend*, Oct. 2001, p. 26 as an example), using words from the paragraph, such as *care, children, duty, fathers, husband, love, mothers, needs, parents, responsibility, serve, teach, wife*. As the children find and mark the words in the word search, have them also underline the words in their copy of the Proclamation.

Discuss what it means for parents to be accountable for rearing their children. Ask what rules their parents have made to protect them, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, to teach them to love and serve one another, to help them observe the commandments of God, and to be law-abiding citizens. Write the rules on the chalkboard. Explain that family rules are for their benefit. Sing "Quickly I'll Obey" (p. 197).

Have the children decorate a paper frame for his/her copy of the Proclamation. Attach the Proclamation to the frame. Encourage the children to share the Proclamation with their families and then place it in their temple booklets.

4. Show a CTR shield (*Primary 2* manual, page iii). Tell the children

that it is a symbol because it stands for something else. Ask what it symbolizes. Sing "Our Primary Colors" (p. 258) and ask what each color symbolizes. Have the children draw a picture of themselves choosing the right. Have them color a border around their picture: red, if the act took courage; yellow, if it was an act of service; blue, if it required being true in thought or deed.

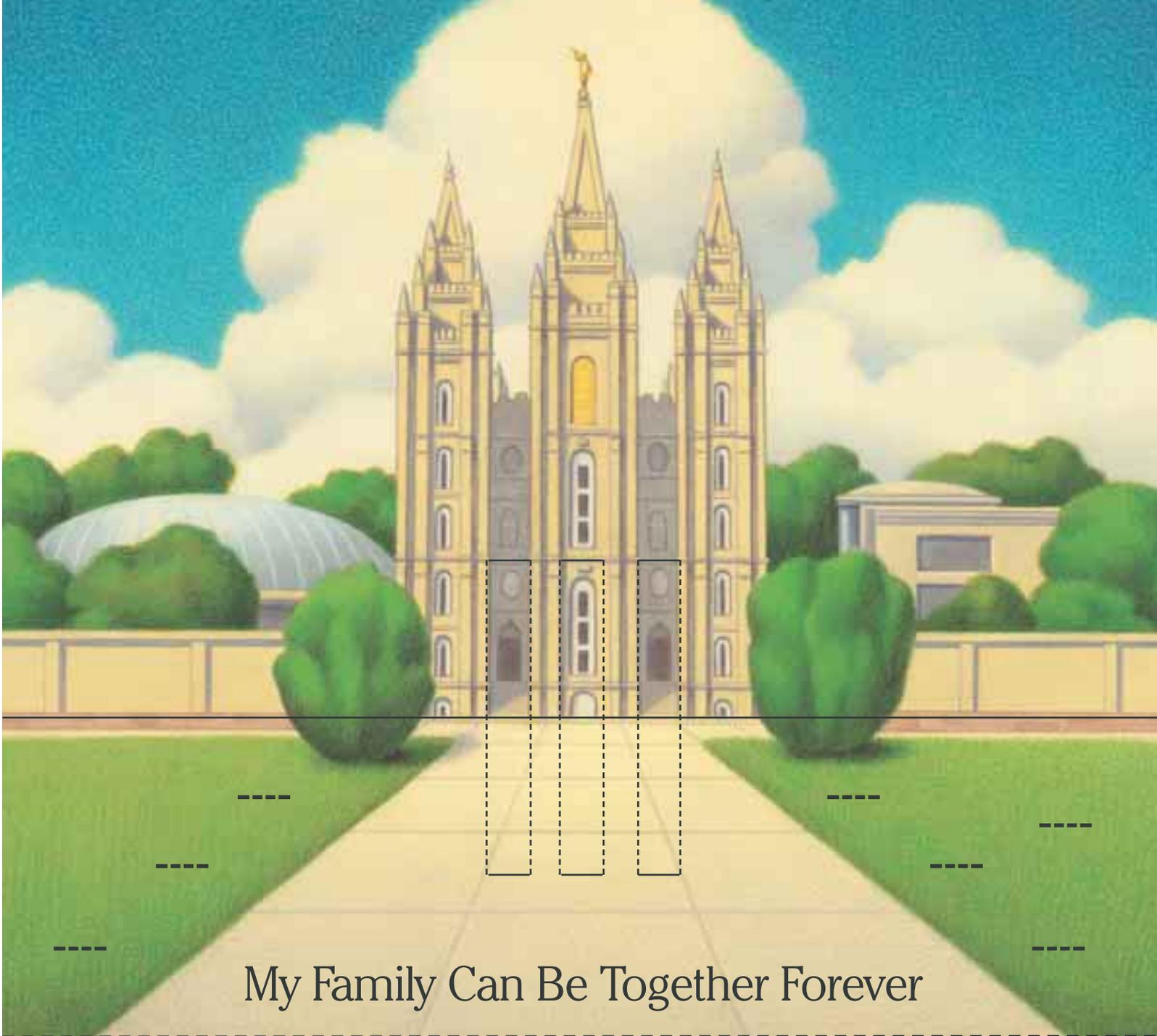
Explain that we often use symbols and analogies to teach gospel principles. Jesus used parables to do the same thing. Sing "The Wise Man and the Foolish Man" (p. 281). What do we learn from the song? Explain that building a house on the rock instead of on the sand is symbolic of following the teachings of Jesus Christ. Have the children read Matt. 7:24-27 in unison. What does the rock represent? (Christ, our Redeemer—see Hel. 5:12). What do the rain, floods, and winds stand for? (adversity). Explain that the song is about the blessings that come from learning and living the commandments of Jesus Christ. Ask the children to think about the song's symbolic meaning while they sing it again.

Hang the following pictures along one edge of a chalkboard: baptism (GAK 601); sacrament (GAK 603); twelve oxen holding a temple baptismal font (GAK 504); the iron rod (*Primary 4* manual, picture 4-13); and a sun, the moon, and the stars (*Primary 1* manual, cutouts 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3). Make wordstrips explaining the symbolism in these pictures: baptism—BURIED, OR BORN AGAIN; sacrament—BODY OR BLOOD; twelve oxen—THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL; the iron rod—THE WORD OF GOD; sun—CELESTIAL KINGDOM; moon—TERRESTRIAL KINGDOM; the stars—TELESTIAL KINGDOM. Mix up the wordstrips and place them in a row on the opposite side of the chalkboard. Have the children take turns coming to the chalkboard and drawing a line to connect the wordstrip with the correct picture. Explain that many symbols are used in the temple. For example, people in the temple wear white to symbolize purity. In the sealing rooms, mirrors reflect images back and forth so that they appear to go on forever. This symbolizes eternal life.

5. *Song Presentation:* Gather six small pictures of the following (if you cannot find pictures, write the word on a piece of paper): a family, the earth, an illustration of the plan of salvation (see *Primary 6* manual, p. 2), Jesus, a young child, and a temple. Select six children. Without letting them see the pictures, pin or tape one on each child's back. Have each child take turns asking the Primary a question that can be answered with either "yes" or "no." For example: Is my picture of a person? Is my picture of something I could carry? Then have the child guess what the picture on his or her back is. If after several clues, the child cannot guess what the picture is, give them a musical clue by singing a song related to the picture. For instance: family—"A Happy Family" (p. 198), earth—"The World Is So Big" (p. 235); plan of salvation—"I Will Follow God's Plan" (pp. 164-165); Jesus—"He Sent His Son" (pp. 34-35); young child—"I Am a Child of God" (pp. 2-3); temple—"I Love to See the Temple" (p. 95). When the child guesses the picture correctly, remove it from his or her back.

Using the same pictures, teach the song, "Families Can Be Together Forever" (p. 188). Before you sing the first line of the song, ask the children to listen for two things they learn about their families (they are on earth, they are good to me). Sing the first line. Choose two children to hold the pictures of the family and the earth. Have all the children sing the first line with you. Now have them listen to find out what they want to share with their family eternally (my life with them). Sing the second line and have the children answer. Ask them to listen to discover how they can be together forever (through Heavenly Father's plan) and who has shown them how they can (the Lord). Sing the chorus, then let the children respond. Choose two children to hold the pictures of the plan of salvation and of Jesus Christ. Have all the children sing the chorus with you. Teach the second verse in a similar way, using the pictures of the young child and of the temple. Bear your testimony that eternal families are part of Heavenly Father's plan.

6. Additional *Friend* resources: "Getting to the Temple," Aug. 1993, p. 31; "Love at Home," June 1996, pp. 44-45; "What Lasts?" Oct. 2000, pp. 24-25; "Combing Grandma's Hair," Oct. 2000, pp. 36-38. Other resources: "The Family," *Ensign*, Feb. 1998, pp. 10-18; "Preparing Our Families for the Temple," *Ensign*, May 1999, pp. 12-14; "Receive the Temple Blessings," *Ensign*, May 1999, pp. 25-27.



My Family Can Be Together Forever

