

# Our Premortal, Mortal, and Eternal Families

## Our Premortal Family

“The family is ordained of God. It is the most important unit in time and in eternity. Even before we were born on the earth, we were part of a family. Each of us ‘is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents’ with ‘a divine nature and destiny’ [‘The Family: A Proclamation to the World,’ *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129]. God is our Heavenly Father, and we lived in His presence as part of His family in the premortal life. There we learned our first lessons and were prepared for mortality (see D&C 138:56)” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 1.1.1).



“We worship the great God who created the universe. He is our Father in heaven. We came into being because of him; we are his spirit children. We dwelt with him in a premortal life in a family relationship. We knew him as intimately and as well as we know our mortal fathers in this sphere of existence” (Bruce R. McConkie, *How to Worship*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year [July 20, 1971], 2).

Discussion questions:

- How was the family a central part of our premortal life?
- How is it helpful to know that God is your Father and that you were a beloved member of His family in the premortal world?
- What do you imagine your interaction with your Heavenly Parents was like?

## Our Mortal Family

“As part of our Heavenly Father’s plan, we were born into families. He established families to bring us happiness, to help us learn correct principles in a loving atmosphere, and to prepare us for eternal life.

“Parents have the vital responsibility to help their children prepare to return to Heavenly Father. Parents fulfill this responsibility by teaching their children to follow Jesus Christ and live His gospel” (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 1.1.4).



“God is the designer of the family. He intended that the greatest of happiness, the most satisfying aspects of life, the deepest joys should come in our associations together and our concerns one for another as fathers and mothers and children” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “What God Hath Joined Together,” *Ensign*, May 1991, 74).

Discussion questions:

- In what ways is the family a central part of our mortal lives?
- How might life on earth be different if we had been sent to earth as individuals without family relationships—no father, mother, siblings, ancestors, or posterity?
- What experiences have helped you understand the role and importance of the mortal family?

## Our Eternal Family

“The divine plan of happiness enables family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 129).



“While our individual salvation is based on our individual obedience, it is equally important that we understand that we are each an important and integral part of a family and the highest blessings can be received only within an eternal family. When families are functioning as designed by God, the relationships found therein are the most valued of mortality. The plan of the Father is that family love and companionship will continue into the eternities. Being one in a family carries a great responsibility of caring, loving, lifting, and strengthening each member of the family so that all can righteously endure to the end in mortality and dwell together throughout eternity. It is not enough just to save ourselves. It is equally important that parents, brothers, and sisters are saved in our families. If we return home alone to our Heavenly Father, we will be asked, ‘Where is the rest of the family?’ This is why we teach that families are forever. The eternal nature of an individual becomes the eternal nature of the family” (Robert D. Hales, “The Eternal Family,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 65).

Discussion questions:

- In what ways is the family a central part of our eternal destiny?
- What are some righteous actions family members could take to help bring about one another’s salvation?
- When has a family member lifted or strengthened you in a way that inspired you to endure to the end?

