

Intro:

We belong to the Church of Jesus Christ, of Latter-day Saints. This is His church. This is His work. He is the one that said to our Eternal Father: “Here I am, send me.” We believe that he accomplished all that He was sent to do. And thus, we believe that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ all can be saved. It is His loving-kindness (or grace) that saves and nothing else does.

He can do it all.

But, He wants us to be participants in His work. If ye have a desire to serve God, then ye are called to His work. Through our participation, we grow. We learn of Him by our engagement in His work. If we are not growing closer to the Father and the Son, then we’re doing the work wrong.

Each of you has been formally called to serve in a leadership position in your ward. We know that sometimes that responsibility may cause you to think: “I cannot do it all!” You are right, you cannot.

Here’s a leadership pattern for you to consider:

- Learn
- Organize
- Teach
- Delegate
- and have faith.
- Then repeat.

Tonight we intend to help with the first step: **learn**. Various stake leaders have searched, and studied to understand doctrine, and church programs related to Temple and Family History work.

Make tonight a revelatory experience. Let the spirit teach you more-- beyond the material they present. Try to make tonight very personal – to you. Your calling. Your relief society. Your quorum. Your ward.

After tonight, with the mantle of your leadership calling, council with your presidency: **organize** for the work. **Teach** doctrine to your group and share your vision for how they can be involved in Jesus’ work. Then **delegate**. Have faith in the people and in this divine work. Learn from the experience and then repeat the process.

A few years ago, I had a sweet encounter on the grounds of the Los Angeles temple. I will shorten the story and jump right to the pinnacle of the experience. I exited the glass doors at the visitor center and there was the temple before me. I experienced an overwhelming feeling of divine love. I glanced back at the Christus statue. The outstretched arms on the statue had always communicated to me the message “come unto me.” But now they were also communicating a message: “behold the boundless love of God for all of His children. Temples stand as a witness of that love which transcends generations past, and into the future.” You know that little statuary garden in front of the visitor center? I sat there and sobbed. Once again, the temple had changed me. And I was just standing on the outside of the temple.

Among all of your leadership responsibilities perhaps three really stick out:

- Ministering,
- Sharing the gospel
- Temple & family history.

An ideal team for missionary work in the ward involves a member of the EQ presidency, and a member of the RS presidency, possibly a ward mission leader, and a team of ward missionaries, and a Young Man, and a Young woman. They meet together regularly as a council.

The organizational pattern for temple and family history work is nearly identical to the missionary committee. In both cases, under the direction of the bishopric, adaptations can be made to fit the needs and abilities of your ward.

Involvement of the youth is really important to success in the work, and the youth will grow in testimony by serving.

We all grow by serving, because serving is worshiping.

Some of the words translated as “worship” and “service” in our bible are used interchangeably. Service in God’s work is a form of worship. (Joshua 24:14-15, Exodus 20:5)

We hope that tonight you will also see new connections that can make missionary work, ministering, and temple related activities interrelated. They can be complementary and not competing efforts.

Elder Gong taught in a 2022 conference talk that “... we each have a story. As we discover our story, we connect, we belong, we become. In this age of “I choose me,” societies benefit when generations connect in meaningful ways. We need roots to have wings—real relationships, meaningful service, life beyond fleeting social media veneers.”

We posted a link to this talk on ChatsworthStake.org. We have curated a list of other resources for you there—to help you in your teaching and leading. Trade in 5 mins of social media scrolling this week and look at some of the temple and family history links we have posted.

What an exciting time!!!! Uniting families for eternity is part of God’s work of salvation and exaltation. It involves temple preparation classes, writing your history, writing or reading your ancestors history, headstone searches online or on-site, attending the temple, digitizing and indexing records, detective work, temple open houses and dedications, meeting distant relatives, family reunions, family home evenings, family and personal prayers, family and personal scripture study (see what I did there?), and myriad other activities that help us to feel the love of our Heavenly Father for all the generations of Earth.

Buckle up, take your vitamins, and think celestial!