A Name and Standing in This Thy House©
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President Nelson asked us to read and ponder the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple. The prayer is so inspiring and gives us so many insights into our eternal covenants, eternal promises, and temple worship.

My attention was specifically drawn to Joseph Smith's request in verse 24. What did he mean when he asked that those who make temple covenants "honorably hold a name and standing in this thy house, to all generations and for eternity?" Usually when I have these types of questions, the first thing I do is find a commentary online, which is so easy to do in the internet age. I found nothing after a brief search and decided to write about "what does this mean to me?" Here's my answer.

First, at baptism and in the Sacrament prayer, we covenant that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ. In specific in places in the temple, we actually take upon us the name of Christ, covenanting to follow Him and do His will in all aspects of our lives. Taking His name upon us and standing as witnesses of Him at all times and in all things and in all places is an essential part of our sacred covenants and our endowment with Priesthood power.

But our own name is also important in the temple. I have a name, I am known and recognized. By whom? By friends and family, or even better, by Jesus Christ. It is a deep human need to feel loved, appreciated, and recognized – to feel belonging. The theme song of the TV show "Cheers" captures the feeling people seem to generally share throughout the world, and they go to great lengths to try to find it.

> Making your way in the world today
> Takes everything you've got
> Taking a break from all your worries
> Sure would help a lot
> Wouldn't you like to get away?
> Sometimes you wanna go
> Where everybody knows your name
> And they're always glad you came
> ...
> You wanna be where everybody knows your name

The words you hear repeated to you the most in the temple ordinances are the words of your own name. And when you go through the temple for an ancestor, you hear their name at least sixteen times. Often in the temple, I recall a story related by Dr. Michael Wilcox. He spoke about slaves his ancestors had in the US and how they probably thought their existence would go unnoted in the annals of history. How could an African slave who worked in Southern fields and died at an early age not be relegated to obscurity? But Brother Wilcox found their names and did their temple work. Their names were repeated many times. They were remembered, with their names spoken at least sixteen times. And they were not relegated to obscurity. Rather, they were given the opportunity to accept the ordinances and become Kings and Queens, Priests and Priestesses to the Most High God, to rule and reign in the House of Israel forever. They can each be a member of an eternal family. Most importantly, they have the opportunity to know God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, to be recognized by Them as Their beloved children. They can be known as they are known and that they mean something to a loving Heavenly Father. In Isaiah's words, the Lord says:

> Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. Isaiah 56:5

The everlasting name is Jesus Christ, but nevertheless, every person who ever existed will have the opportunity to have their name repeated in the temple.

The other aspect of having a name is having an eternal posterity that bears your name as their ancestor forever. It is in the temple where the sealing ordinances take place that make our families eternal.

And what is standing? In one sense, standing means to have position, status or reputation, something people want to have. That's good and fine, but what differentiates that from having a "name?" So, how can we distinguish a name from standing?

As a lawyer I know that standing has special meaning in legal courts. To sue in court, one must have an interest in the outcome, a stake in the claim, or colloquially speaking, "a dog in the fight." I can't sue someone just because I think it would be fun to know the legal answer, and courts do not allow you to sue just because you think it might be interesting to know the legal answer – in legal terms, courts don't give "advisory opinions." Your rights must be impacted.

Do we have a right to the blessing promised in the temple? Actually, yes, if we are faithful, we will reach a time when we have that right. Revelation 22:14 reads:

> Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have *right* to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

And it's important to read the fine print in the Come Follow Me manual. Under the section Conversion is Our Goal, in the last line, we read:

> We should seek after whatever invites the influence of the Spirit and reject whatever drives that influence away – *for we know that if we can be worthy of the presence of the Holy Ghost, we can also be worthy to live in the presence of Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ*.

My next question: am I being too aggressive in stating that at some point we gain a right – real legal standing – to the promised blessings? I don't think so. Many years ago – in the early 90's, I heard Elder Richard G. Scott in a regional conference in Virginia relate that he had a dream where he had passed to the other side was seeking his beloved wife Janine, but he was being denied the ability to see her. After some frustration, he cried out that he had been faithful to his covenants and had a *right* to be with his wife, after which the blessing of the sweet reunion was granted. That's the standing we ought to seek. I want the standing to assert a right to these glorious promises:

> Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—[with their names] written in the Lamb's Book of Life … and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever. (D&C 132:19)

As a result of our temple covenants, and through our faithfulness, we have an interest and stake in these blessings – a right – because of the New and Everlasting Covenant and through the atonement of Jesus Christ.

So, in my mind, to have a name and standing in the temple means that I have taken upon me the name of Jesus Christ. I belong there, I am recognized there, my eternal posterity is sealed to me there, and I have a right to be there through the atonement of Jesus Christ and faithfulness to my covenants!