

Hastening

THE WORK OF SALVATION

As we invite, love, and serve others, we become true disciples of Jesus Christ and help hasten the work of salvation.

Although there is excitement about full-time missionaries working online and giving tours in meetinghouses, those changes are only a tiny part of the big picture of the work of salvation. Far more important is how we as members fit into the larger picture of hastening the work of salvation. We are not being asked to engage in a new program. We are simply being encouraged to be true disciples of Jesus Christ. Our role is to immerse ourselves in loving and serving those around us—comforting a co-worker in need, inviting our friends to a baptism, helping an elderly neighbor with his yard work, inviting a less-active member over for a meal, or helping a neighbor with her family history. These are all natural, joyful ways to invite less-active members and those not of our faith into our lives and consequently into the light of the gospel. Sharing with them the fun times and the sacred times of our lives may actually be the most effective way any of us can “labor in [Jesus Christ’s] vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men [and women]” (D&C 138:56).

What Is the Work of Salvation?

The work of salvation is Heavenly Father’s work “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). This important work includes member missionary work, convert retention, activation of less-active members, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel.¹ Too often, we think these aspects of the gospel are unrelated. But in *The Work of Salvation: Worldwide Leadership Broadcast* on June 23, 2013, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “the work really is indivisible. These efforts are not separate; they’re all part of the work of salvation.”²

The phrase “Hastening the Work of Salvation”—the name of the broadcast’s companion website (hasteningthework.lds.org)—refers to the Lord’s promise: “Behold, I will hasten my work in its time” (D&C 88:73).



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Essential priesthood ordinances—baptism, confirmation, ordination to the priesthood for men, and temple ordinances—stand as milestones along our path to return to our Heavenly Father. As we participate in the work of salvation, we follow and inspire others to follow this covenant path.

Members and Missionaries Work Together under Priesthood Keys

The time has come to refocus on the fundamental principle that membership in the Lord's Church means

being called to be fully engaged in His work of salvation. Stake presidents and bishops hold the priesthood keys of missionary work in their Church units³ and help members do what true disciples of Christ do—share the light of the gospel. Mission presidents hold priesthood keys that enable them to direct the work of the missionaries they lead.⁴ Full-time missionaries are trained to teach those who have been prepared to receive the gospel. They help the members with the members' missionary work, not vice versa. Full-time and member missionaries are thus



partners in bringing the gospel into the lives of those the Lord has prepared to receive it.

During the broadcast, President Thomas S. Monson said: “Now is the time for members and missionaries to come together, to work together, to labor in the Lord’s vineyard to bring souls unto Him. He has prepared the means for us to share the gospel in a multitude of ways, and He will assist us in our labors if we will act in faith to fulfill His work.”⁵

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke of the importance of love. He said, “We work together in faith and unity—faith that the Lord will guide our steps and unity with each other and with the missionaries, always motivated by our love for [Jesus Christ], our love for one another, and our love for those we serve.”⁶

Ward Councils Lead Out, Ward Mission Leaders Coordinate

Under the direction of the bishop, the ward council facilitates, supports, and coordinates the efforts of ward members by planning and leading the work of salvation for the ward.⁷

As a member of the ward council, the ward mission leader “coordinates the ward’s efforts to find, teach, and baptize investigators. He coordinates this work with the work of the full-time missionaries.”⁸

Speaking to ward mission leaders, Elder Nelson said: “Help [the missionaries] to fill their appointment books with meaningful opportunities and appointments so that they won’t have time to knock on doors searching for people to teach. . . . [You] are the connecting link between



the missionaries, the ward council, and the members of the ward.”⁹

The True Mark of Success

As Latter-day Saints we are blessed to be living in this time when the Lord is hastening His work. Because God has a purpose in placing us on earth at this time, we have the capacity to do more than we think we can. As long as we reach out in kindness and love to those who need our friendship and help, we will not fail. Missionary success comes by following the inspiration that flows into our minds and hearts and simply inviting others into our gospel-centered lives. The invitation is the mark of success, not whether people get baptized or become active in the Church. As Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said of the great army of missionaries now entering the mission field: “The hour is upon us in which we must now say, ‘Here they come.’ All of us must plan for and use this heaven-sent resource in the most productive way possible.”¹⁰

It is time for all of us to understand more clearly our role in hastening the work of salvation. As we make member missionary work, convert retention, activation of less-active members, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel a natural part of our lives, we will experience great joy and be endowed with the spiritual gifts we need to strengthen the Church in the 21st century. ■

NOTES

1. See *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* (2010), chapter 5.
2. Russell M. Nelson, *The Work of Salvation: Worldwide Leadership Broadcast*, June 23, 2013, hasteningthework.lds.org.
3. See *Handbook 2*, 5.1.6; 5.1.9.
4. See *Handbook 2*, 5.1.6.
5. Thomas S. Monson, *The Work of Salvation*, hasteningthework.lds.org.
6. Neil L. Andersen, *The Work of Salvation*, hasteningthework.lds.org.
7. See *Handbook 2*, 5.1.2.
8. *Handbook 2*, 5.1.3.
9. Russell M. Nelson, *The Work of Salvation*, hasteningthework.lds.org.
10. Jeffrey R. Holland, *The Work of Salvation*, hasteningthework.lds.org.

For the video of *The Work of Salvation: Worldwide Leadership Broadcast*, visit hasteningthework.lds.org. You can find *Handbook 2: Administering the Church* online at lds.org/manual/handbook.

