

BEING IN THE KINGDOM

Our baptism and confirmation is the gateway into His kingdom. When we enter, we covenant to be of His kingdom—forever!



and of the Kingdom

The ordinance of baptism and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost takes us out of this world and into the kingdom of God.

There is a familiar phrase: to be *in* the world, but not *of* the world (see John 17:11, 14–17). Our mortal existence is necessary to fulfill the plan of salvation. We must therefore live in this world, but we must also resist the worldly influences that are ever before us.

Being in the kingdom and of the kingdom

Jesus taught, “My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36). These words led me to ponder more concerning His kingdom. I concluded that when we are baptized by immersion by one with the proper priesthood authority and choose to follow our Savior, we then are *in* His kingdom and *of* His kingdom.

Being of the kingdom of God requires that we heed the Savior’s admonition “Follow thou me” (2 Nephi 31:10). At baptism we make a covenant with our Heavenly Father that we are willing to come into His kingdom and keep His commandments from that time forward, even though we still live in the world.

Understanding our covenant changes our lives

When we understand our baptismal covenant and the gift of the Holy Ghost, it will

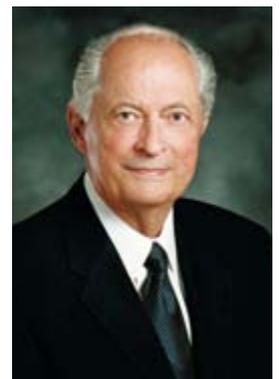
change our lives and will establish our total allegiance to the kingdom of God. When temptations come our way, if we will listen, the Holy Ghost will remind us that we have promised to remember our Savior and obey the commandments of God.

President Brigham Young said: “All Latter-day Saints enter the new and everlasting covenant when they enter this Church. They covenant to cease sustaining, upholding and cherishing the kingdom of the Devil and the kingdoms of this world. They enter the new and everlasting covenant to sustain the Kingdom of God and no other kingdom. They take a vow of the most solemn kind, before the heavens and earth, . . . that they will sustain truth and righteousness instead of wickedness and falsehood, and build up the Kingdom of God, instead of the kingdoms of this world” (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* [1997], 62–63).

The significance of baptism

Many members of the Church do not fully understand what happened when they went into the waters of baptism. It is very important for us to understand the marvelous gift of the remission of sins, but there is much more. Do you understand that when you are baptized you are changed forever?

When we are baptized, we take upon ourselves the sacred name of Jesus Christ. Taking upon us His name is one of the most



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significant experiences we have in life. Yet sometimes we pass through that experience without having a full understanding.

How many of us really understand that when we were baptized we took upon us not only the name of Christ but also the law of obedience?

How the gift of the Holy Ghost helps us

Each week in sacrament meeting we promise to remember the atoning sacrifice of our Savior as we renew our baptismal covenant. We promise to do as the Savior did—to be obedient to the Father and always keep His commandments. The blessing we receive in return is to always have His Spirit to be with us.

The gift of the Holy Ghost, given to us when we are confirmed, gives us the ability to discern the difference between the giving ways of the kingdom of God and the taking practices of the world. The Holy Ghost gives us the strength and courage to conduct our lives in the ways of the kingdom of God and is the source of our testimony of the Father and the Son. As we obey the will of our Father in Heaven, this priceless gift of the Holy Ghost will be with us continually.

We need the Holy Ghost as our constant companion to help us make better choices in the decisions that confront us daily. You young men and women are bombarded with ugly things of the world. Companionship with the Spirit will give you the strength to resist evil and, when necessary, repent and return to the strait and narrow path. None of us are immune from the temptations of the adversary. We all need the fortification available through the Holy Ghost. Having the gift of the Holy Ghost helps us make wise

choices—choices that will help us return with our families to our Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, to live with Them eternally.

Loving God and our fellowmen

The scriptures confirm that the truly converted do more than just forsake the enticements of the world. They love God and their fellowmen. Their minds and hearts are centered on the Savior's atoning sacrifice. From the moment of their respective conversions, Enos, Alma the Younger, Paul, and others turned wholeheartedly to the task of bringing themselves and their fellowmen to God. Worldly power and possessions lost their former significance. The sons of Mosiah refused an earthly kingdom and risked their lives for the sake of others. These faithful sons were driven by the hope that they might be able to help save even one soul—thus winning for themselves and their brethren a place in God's eternal kingdom.

Effects baptism should have in daily life

By choosing to be in His kingdom, we separate—not isolate—ourselves from the world. Our dress will be modest, our thoughts pure, our language clean. The movies and television we watch, the music we listen to, the books, magazines, and newspapers we read will be uplifting. We will choose friends who encourage our eternal goals, and we will treat others with kindness. We will shun the vices of immorality, gambling, tobacco, liquor, and illicit drugs. Our Sunday activities will reflect the commandment of God to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. We will follow the example of Jesus Christ in the way we treat others. We

will live to be worthy to enter the house of the Lord.

We will be examples “of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

We will receive “a mighty change . . . in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually.” We will keep our “covenant with our God to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in all things . . . all the remainder of our days” (Mosiah 5:2, 5).

We will demonstrate that we “are desirous to . . . be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light;

“Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Mosiah 18:8–9).

Gratitude for baptism and confirmation

I feel great gratitude for my baptism and confirmation into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I am grateful for the spiritual strength and guidance the gift of the Holy Ghost has given me throughout my life. I am thankful for goodly parents and teachers who impressed the significance of baptism upon me so that the memory and feelings of that occasion have been an enduring influence throughout my life.

I testify of the divinity of the gospel, restored in this latter day. I testify of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the efficacy

and power of the priesthood and its gospel ordinances. I pray that each of us as members of His kingdom will understand that our baptism and confirmation is the gateway *into* His kingdom. When we enter, we covenant to be *of* His kingdom—forever! **NE**

From an October 2000 general conference address.

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