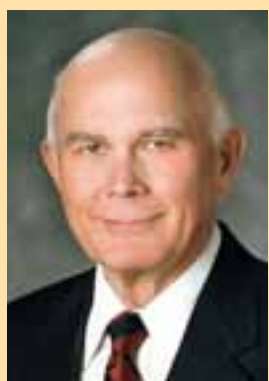


Why Do We Do Missionary Work?



The purpose of our missionary work is to help the children of God fulfill a condition prescribed by our Savior and Redeemer.

BY ELDER DALLIN H. OAKS
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The doctrinal basis of missionary work is contained in the Savior's statement to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

The "kingdom of God" referred to here is the celestial kingdom.

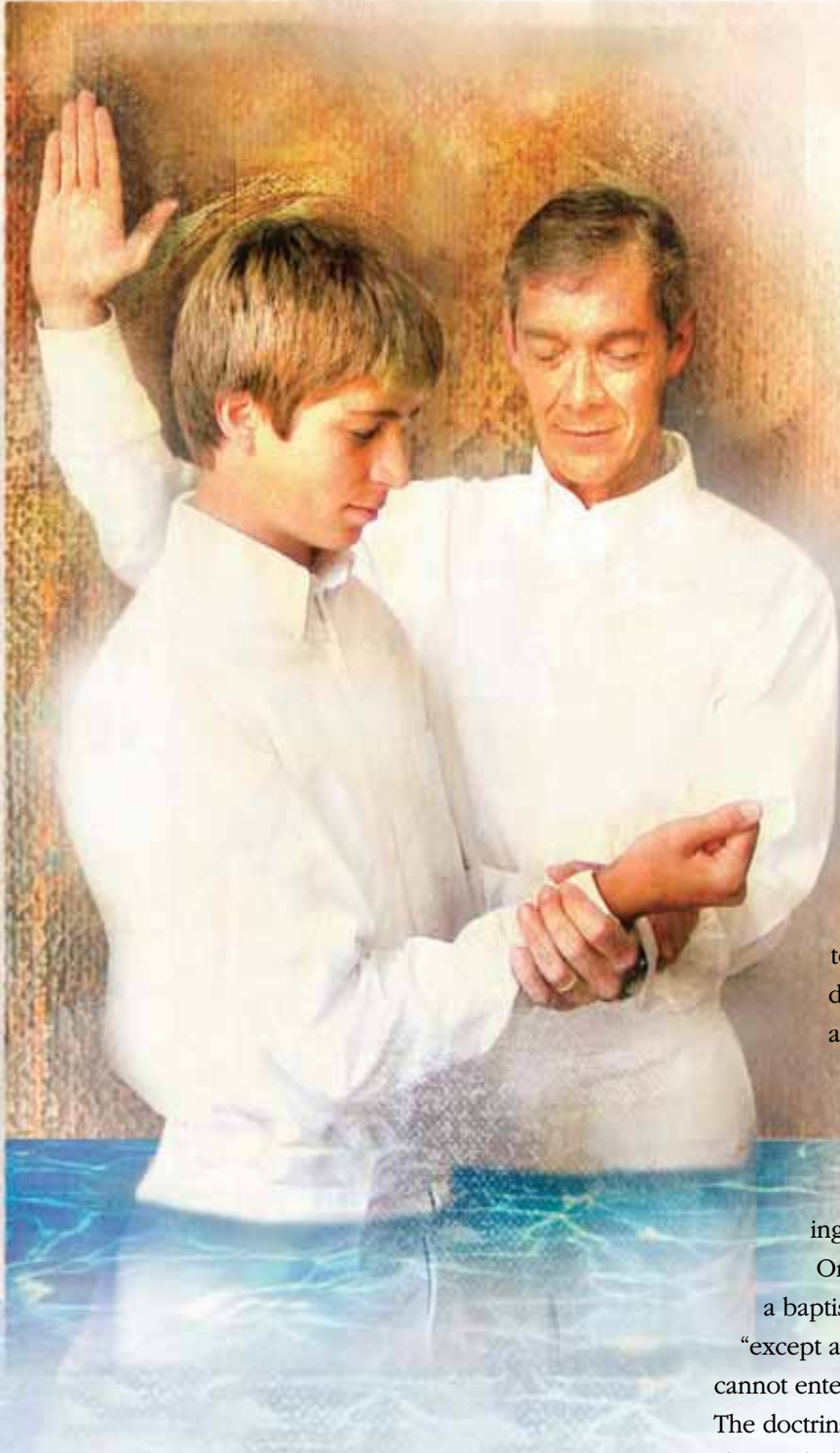
We do not preach and teach in order to "bring people into the Church" or to increase the membership of the Church. We do not preach and teach just to persuade people to live better lives. We honor and appreciate the



many ministers and others who are involved in the kind of ministry that makes bad men good and good men better. That is important, but we offer something more. One can qualify for the terrestrial kingdom instead of the celestial kingdom without the aid of this Church. We are concerned with a higher destination.

The purpose of our missionary work is to help the children of God fulfill a condition prescribed by our Savior and Redeemer. We preach and teach in order to baptize the children of God so that they can be saved in the celestial kingdom instead of being limited to a lesser kingdom. We do missionary work in order to baptize and confirm. That is the doctrinal basis of missionary work.

The restored gospel gives us added knowledge about Jesus Christ and His doctrine. But the uniqueness of our message is not just added knowledge. The requirement of baptism reminds us that the truths we teach are not academic. The restored gospel consists of doctrines *and ordinances*. We proclaim that baptism is necessary in order to redeem us from sins according to the conditions prescribed by the Redeemer and that only priesthood holders of this Church have the God-given authority that transforms the act of immersion in water into an ordinance



Only the priesthood of God can administer a baptism that will satisfy the divine decree that “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

prescribed that condition, again and again. His sacrifice paid the price for my sins, and He has prescribed the conditions upon which I can be saved by His payment. That is reason enough for me.

As the prophets of this dispensation have told us, the missionaries’ purpose of being in the mission field is to save souls, to baptize converts, which is to open the doors of the celestial kingdom to the sons and daughters of God.

No one else can do this.

Other churches cannot do it.

Good Christian living cannot do it.

Good faith, good desires, and good reasoning cannot do it.

Only the priesthood of God can administer a baptism that will satisfy the divine decree that

“except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5).

The doctrinal basis of missionary work is the word of God, revealed in every age, that man cannot be saved in the celestial kingdom without the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ and that the only way to lay claim to the merits of that Atonement is to follow the command of its author: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you” (Acts 2:38). We are called to assist in this great effort. ■

From an address given at a seminar for new mission presidents on June 23, 1992.

of the everlasting gospel. Our preaching and teaching is unto baptism.

Baptism is a requirement, but why? Why is it necessary to be baptized in this way and by one holding particular authority? I do not know. But what I do know is that the remission of sins is made possible only by the atoning sacrifice of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and that He has