

A group of five missionary students are walking outdoors on a paved path. On the left, two young women are walking; one is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and a dark skirt, holding a Bible, and the other is wearing a dark blazer over a blue shirt and dark pants, also holding a Bible. To their right, three young men in dark suits and ties are walking, with the two in front holding Bibles. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. In the background, there are large flags, including the flag of the Philippines, and green trees under a blue sky with some clouds.

MISSIONARY PREPARATION

STUDENT MANUAL

Religion 130

“Go ye into all the world.”

Doctrine and Covenants 84:62

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Religion 130

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDENT MANUAL

President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that “the mission of the Church is to save souls. It is to teach the gospel to those who are willing to listen wherever they may be. . . . There is no greater work. There is no more important work. There is no more compelling work than this which the God of heaven has given us responsibility for accomplishing” (“Missionary Service,” *First Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 2003, 21).

You are preparing to accept a God-given responsibility. The work you will do as a missionary will be in fulfillment of the Savior’s commission to “teach all nations” (Matthew 28:19). Your purpose as a missionary is to “invite others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end” (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 1).

Each chapter in this student manual is organized to assist you, the prospective missionary, in developing Christlike attributes and in teaching doctrines and principles of the restored gospel with power and authority of God (see Alma 17:3). Some chapters will also help familiarize you with personal and missionary conduct and basic mission organization. Chapters are organized using the following main headings:

- **Introduction.** This section briefly introduces the topic of each chapter.
- **Doctrines and Principles to Understand.** This bulleted list of doctrines and principles suggests what students should come to understand, accept, and apply in their lives.
- **Supporting Scriptures and Statements.** This section provides specific teachings on each of the doctrines and principles listed under “Doctrines and Principles to Understand.” As you study these, you may want to mark your personal scriptures and make notes to help you remember what you learn. It is recommended that you begin a study journal in which you record gospel insights learned from your study. Many missions instruct missionaries to keep such a journal, so this will give you a start on this useful missionary tool. Your study journal is separate from the “Notes and Impressions” section, although you may want to

record some of your notes from this section into your study journal.

- **Points to Ponder.** Spend a few moments reflecting upon answers to the questions in this section. You may want to record your insights in your study journal.
- **Suggested Assignments.** These assignments provide opportunities to apply what you have learned and thus strengthen your preparation with actual experience.
- **Recommended Additional Reading.** These readings, mainly from *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (2004), will enhance insight and reinforce principles covered or referred to in each chapter.
- **Notes and Impressions.** Use this section, provided at the end of each chapter in the student manual, to write down information and impressions you receive during the class. Recording your thoughts and feelings will enhance your learning and retention of important principles and experiences. You may want to later record some of these notes and impressions in your study journal.

If you are enrolled in a missionary preparation course, take this student manual and your scriptures to each class. It is recommended that you have a copy of *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* (item 36863) for the recommended additional readings. Published by the Church and recommended by the First Presidency, this booklet contains gospel topics arranged alphabetically.

An additional resource is the guide to missionary service, *Preach My Gospel* (2004; item 36617), used by missionaries around the world. The *Missionary Preparation Student Manual* corresponds with *Preach My Gospel* in principle and philosophy. It has been carefully written to prepare you with an understanding of the doctrines and principles upon which the missionary program and *Preach My Gospel* are centered. Using this student manual and participating in a missionary preparation course will help prepare you for full-time missionary service, where *Preach My Gospel* is the core training resource.

Subjects covered in both this student manual and *Preach My Gospel* include understanding the call to serve a mission; learning to study and teach the gospel; teaching about the Apostasy, the Restoration, and the importance of latter-day scripture; understanding, recognizing, and teaching with the Holy Ghost; developing Christlike attributes; and using time wisely. Subjects in *Preach My Gospel* that are not covered in this student manual include learning another language, helping people make and keep covenants, preparing people for baptism, and working with members. Cooking and housekeeping skills, detailed mission organization, and budgeting are also not addressed in this student manual.

Your preparation will help you meet the challenge to become a spiritually strong missionary, as expressed by Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: “What we need now is the greatest generation of missionaries in the history of the Church. We need worthy, qualified, spiritually energized missionaries who, like Helaman’s 2,000 stripling warriors, are ‘exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity’ and who are ‘true at all times in whatsoever thing they [are] entrusted’ (Alma 53:20)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2002, 50–51; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 47).



CALLED TO SERVE

INTRODUCTION



One of the most exciting moments in a young adult's life is when he or she opens a letter from the First Presidency and reads the words: "You are hereby called to serve . . ." Missionaries in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are called by inspiration to represent the Lord. To

become a part of the great latter-day missionary force is an honor. It is thrilling to participate in the fulfillment of latter-day prophecy, such as the rolling forth of the restored gospel "unto the ends of the earth" (D&C 65:2) in preparation for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Full-time missionaries are commissioned to act in the name of God and invite people to come unto Christ by accepting the principles and ordinances of His restored gospel and endure to the end in faithfulness. In addition, all members of the Church have the privilege and duty to help with missionary work throughout their lives (see D&C 88:81).

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Members of the Church have the duty and privilege to share the restored gospel.

- The Lord has said, "The field is white already to harvest" (D&C 4:4).
- Missionaries assist in the gathering of Israel.
- The focus of missionary work is to invite people to Christ.
- A full-time mission call comes from the Lord through His authorized servants.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Members of the Church have the duty and privilege to share the restored gospel.

■ Shortly before His Ascension, the Lord gave His Apostles the divine command to "teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19). Since the early days of the Restoration, this sacred charge has been renewed through His latter-day prophets and apostles. In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord said, "And I give unto you a commandment that . . . ye shall teach them unto all men; for they shall be taught unto all nations, kindreds, tongues and people" (D&C 42:58). He later said, "For verily, the sound must go forth from this place into all the world, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth—the gospel must be preached unto every creature, with signs following them that believe (D&C 58:64). The restored gospel that we are to share "is our Heavenly Father's plan of happiness. The central doctrine of the gospel is the Atonement of Jesus Christ" (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 76). From the early days

"You are hereby called to serve . . ."

of the Church, many members have sacrificed much to take the message of the restored gospel to the world. As the seed of Abraham, members of the Church have an opportunity and responsibility to share the restored gospel in fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (see Abraham 2:9–11). It is a privilege to participate in this sacred charge.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Mark 16:15
- Romans 1:16–17
- 3 Nephi 27:13–22
- Doctrine and Covenants 88:81

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley said: “Let us reach out to the world in our missionary service, teaching all who will listen concerning the restoration of the gospel, speaking without fear but also without self-righteousness, of the First Vision, testifying of the Book of Mormon and of the restoration of the priesthood. Let us, my brothers and sisters, get on our knees and pray for the opportunity to bring others into the joy of the gospel” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2000, 110–11; or *Ensign*, May 2000, 87).

■ What is the gospel that we are to share with others? In *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference*, the gospel is defined as “our Heavenly Father’s plan of happiness. The central doctrine of the gospel is the Atonement of Jesus Christ” ([2004], 76). The Bible Dictionary teaches: “The word *gospel* means good news. The good news is that Jesus Christ has made a perfect atonement for mankind that will redeem all mankind from the grave and reward each individual according to his/her works. This atonement was begun by his appointment in the premortal world but was worked out by Jesus during his mortal sojourn” (“Gospels,” 682).

In *Preach My Gospel*, a guide to missionary service, we learn: “The gospel of Jesus Christ defines both your message and your purpose; that is, it provides both the ‘what’ and the ‘why’ of missionary work. The Savior defined His gospel to include some very

vital and basic doctrines. He came into the world to do His Father’s will, and His Father sent Him into the world to be lifted up on the cross. By His Atonement and Resurrection, all men will be lifted up to stand before Christ to be judged of their works, whether they be good or evil. Those who exercise faith in Christ, repent of their sins, and are baptized in Christ’s name can be sanctified by the Holy Ghost. If they endure to the end, they will stand spotless before Christ at the last day and will enter into the rest of the Lord. Christ will hold them guiltless before the Father. He will be their Mediator and Advocate” ([2004], 5).

■ As descendants of Abraham and of the house of Israel, Church members have a responsibility to share the gospel. Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained:

“Are you of Israel? Absolutely. You are the ‘Hope of Israel, Zion’s army, Children of the promised day’ (*Hymns*, 1985, no. 259). . . .

“. . . Most of us are of the lineage of Joseph through Ephraim or Manasseh. That was the lineage selected to pioneer the gathering of Israel, the seed to lead throughout the world in blessing all the nations of the earth.

“Missionary work is only the beginning of that blessing” (“Thanks for the Covenant,” in *Brigham Young University 1988–89 Devotional and Fireside Speeches* [1989], 58–59).

■ Elder Nelson further emphasized missionary work as part of the Lord’s covenant with Abraham: “We have received, as did they of old, the holy priesthood and the everlasting gospel. Abraham,

Isaac, and Jacob are our ancestors. We are of Israel. We have the right to receive the gospel, blessings of the priesthood, and eternal life. *Nations of the earth will be blessed by our efforts and by the labors of our posterity.* The literal seed of Abraham and those

who are gathered into his family by adoption receive these promised blessings—predicated upon acceptance of the Lord and obedience to his commandments” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 42–43; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 33; italics added).

■ Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that the Lord’s commission to “teach all nations” is still in force today: “Near the end of his earthly ministry, the

“The central doctrine of the gospel is the Atonement of Jesus Christ.”

resurrected Jesus instructed his disciples with these words: ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you’ (Matthew 28:19–20). That instruction is in force today and is the mandate for General Authorities [and] missionaries . . . to travel to the four corners of the world teaching the gospel” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 34; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 28).



■ Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke of the charge each Church member has to share the restored gospel:

“Our ability to touch others with our warning voice matters to all who are covenant disciples of Jesus Christ. Here is the charge given to each of the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: ‘Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor’ (D&C 88:81).

“That command and warning of danger was given to those called as missionaries at the start of the Restoration. But the duty to warn our neighbor falls on all of us who have accepted the covenant of baptism. We are to talk with nonmember friends and relatives about the gospel. Our purpose is to invite them to be taught by the full-time missionaries who are called and set apart to teach” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 40–41; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 32–33).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles expressed the value of his full-time mission: “I encourage you with every capacity that I have to pray about a full-time mission for the fulfillment it will bring to your life as you bless

others to find the truth and receive the ordinances of salvation. Everything that I cherish in life today began to mature from my sacred experience as a full-time missionary” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 48; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 36).

The Lord has said, “The field is white already to harvest” (D&C 4:4).

■ The imagery in the phrase “the field is white already to harvest” is the white appearance of a ripe field of grain as it stands in the bright sunshine. The Lord has frequently used the phrase when He has declared that the earth is ready for the gathering of souls (see D&C 4:4; 6:3; 11:3; 12:3; 14:3; 33:3, 7). Many of Heavenly Father’s children are prepared to hear and accept the restored gospel. They are ready to be brought to the Lord’s Church as part of the latter-day harvesting.



In February 1829, when the Lord said that “the field is white already to harvest” (D&C 4:4), He began opening the doors for missionary work throughout the world. Although Church membership is presently a small percentage of the world population, the Church will eventually be established in all nations. Sometimes people come into the Church “one of a city, and two of a family” (Jeremiah 3:14). At other times people are brought into the Church in large numbers. For example, Wilford Woodruff baptized over 2,000 converts in less than a year in Great Britain. In the 14 years that the Prophet Joseph Smith led the Church—from April 6, 1830, to June 27, 1844—that membership grew from 6 to 26,000 members. From a small beginning the Church has grown to a worldwide organization, and that statement of the Lord given in 1829 is still being realized.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 11:3
- Doctrine and Covenants 33:3
- Doctrine and Covenants 123:12

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave the following promise to prospective missionaries: “To you who will accept the call to go forth and serve, I can promise you that your good name will never be forgotten in this world or in the eternities to come. So again we issue the clarion call and pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers in increased numbers, for the field is white, all ready for a bounteous harvest (see D&C 4:4)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 33–34; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 25).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: “From the original six members has grown a vast family of worshipers. . . . No other church to come out of the soil of America has grown so fast or spread so widely. Within its vast embrace are members from many nations who speak many tongues. It is a phenomenon without precedent. As the tapestry of its past has unrolled, a beautiful pattern has come to view. It finds expression in the lives of a happy and wonderful people. It portends marvelous things yet to come” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2002, 3; or *Ensign*, May 2002, 4).

“To you who will accept the call to go forth and serve, I can promise you that your good name will never be forgotten in this world or in the eternities to come.”

Missionaries assist in the gathering of Israel.

■ The work of bringing people into the gospel net through faith in Christ, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost is a part of the gathering of Israel. President Joseph Fielding Smith taught: “Every person who embraces the gospel becomes of the house of Israel. In other words, they become members of the chosen lineage, or Abraham’s children through Isaac and Jacob unto whom the promises were made” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:246).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Jeremiah 16:14–17
- 1 Nephi 22:4, 11–12
- Doctrine and Covenants 29:7
- Doctrine and Covenants 110:11

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Spencer W. Kimball taught about the gathering of Israel: “The gathering of Israel consists of joining the true church and their coming to a knowledge of the true God. Any person, therefore, who has accepted the restored gospel, and who now seeks to worship the Lord in his own tongue and with the Saints in the nations where he lives, has complied with the law of the gathering of Israel and is heir to all of the blessings promised the Saints in these last days” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 439).

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson taught that “missionary work is only the beginning” of the gathering of Israel: “The fulfillment, the consummation, of those blessings comes as those who have entered the waters of baptism perfect their lives to the point that they may enter the holy temple. Receiving an endowment there seals members of the Church to the Abrahamic covenant” (*Perfection Pending, and Other Favorite Discourses* [1998], 207).

The focus of missionary work is to invite people to Christ.

■ When the Lord’s Church was restored to the earth, people could once again receive baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and other principles and ordinances of the gospel as revealed by the Lord. Acceptance of the Lord’s doctrine and ordinances puts us on the path that leads to eternal life with Him and our Heavenly Father. The prophet Moroni taught: “Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his

grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God" (Moroni 10:32).

Missionaries and Church members may experience joy and peace as they share the restored gospel message that leads people to Christ.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 1 Nephi 6:4
- 2 Nephi 25:26
- Jacob 1:7
- Doctrine and Covenants 133:37–39

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.



■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles bore witness of Christ and His central role in the Church: "We love the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Messiah, our Savior and our Redeemer. His is the only name by which we can be saved (see Mosiah 3:17, 5:8; D&C 18:23). We seek to serve him. We belong to his church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Our missionaries and members testify of Jesus Christ in many nations of the world" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 65).

■ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke of his life as a witness of the truth:

"My greatest thrill and the most joyful of all realizations is that I have the opportunity, as Nephi phrased it, to 'talk of Christ, . . . rejoice in Christ, . . . preach of Christ, [and] prophesy of Christ' (2 Nephi 25:26) wherever I may be and with whomever I may find myself until the last breath of my life is gone. . . .

"Prepare yourself now to be worthy to serve the Lord as a full-time missionary."

"But my greatest anxiety stems from that very same commission. A line of scripture reminds us with searing understatement that 'they which preach the gospel should live . . . the gospel' (1 Corinthians 9:14). Beyond my words and teachings and spoken witness, my life must be part of that testimony of Jesus. My very being should reflect the divinity of this work. I could not bear it if anything I might ever say or do would in any way diminish your faith in Christ" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 39–40; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 31).

A full-time mission call comes from the Lord through His authorized servants.

■ Being a full-time missionary is a great opportunity. Through His authorized servants, the Lord calls missionaries to invite people to come unto Christ. This is the Lord's work. Missionaries have the authority to teach the restored gospel and, through the priesthood, administer essential ordinances of salvation.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Alma 42:31
- Doctrine and Covenants 11:15
- Doctrine and Covenants 64:29

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley challenged the young men of the Church to take their missionary opportunities seriously: "I throw out a challenge to every young man within this vast congregation tonight. Prepare yourself now to be worthy to serve the Lord as a full-time missionary. He has said, 'If ye are prepared ye shall not fear' (D&C 38:30). Prepare to consecrate two years of your lives to this sacred service. That will in effect constitute a tithe on the first twenty years of your lives" (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1995, 70; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 51–52).

■ Elder Monte J. Brough of the Seventy emphasized that a mission call comes from the Lord:



“On four different occasions, Sister Brough and I and our family have excitedly opened the envelope containing the mission call and assignment for one

of our children. Each time, we have contemplated with excitement the various possibilities for their service. While preferences were expressed, the moment their eyes saw the words ‘You are hereby assigned to serve in the (blank) mission,’ without exception a wonderful feeling of good and right came over each family member. We each knew that a prophet had guided a divine selection process to which four of our children have gladly responded. Tens of thousands of returned missionaries can also testify of this process and the divine inspiration of their own missionary calling. . . .

“ . . . Personal and prophetic revelation is the foundation upon which our Church service is firmly based” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 37–38; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 28).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott taught about a young man’s responsibility to serve a mission: “If you are a physically able, emotionally stable young man, pray about the opportunity and responsibility you have to the Lord to prepare yourself to be a full-time missionary. That includes understanding the scriptures, being obedient, keeping yourself clean, pure, and worthy to be endowed in the temple. When of age, accept a call by the President of the Church to serve for two years as an emissary of the Lord” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 48; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 36).

POINTS TO PONDER

- What does the declaration “the field is white already to harvest” mean to you?
- In what ways is going on a mission a sacrifice? In what ways is it not a sacrifice?
- In what ways will knowing that your mission call came from the Savior influence how you use your time each day during your mission?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Start a study journal. This is a journal in which you record gospel insights learned from your study. Many missions will instruct you to keep such a journal, so this will give you a start on a useful missionary tool.
- Memorize Doctrine and Covenants 4, and prepare to recite it in a future class devotional (or you may recite it together as a class).
- Memorize (or rememorize) the Articles of Faith.
- Talk with a recently returned missionary about the value of serving a mission and whether or not his or her mission was a sacrifice.
- Read Doctrine and Covenants 31:3–13, and analyze those charges and promises of the Lord to missionaries.
- Bring scriptures and this student manual to class each week.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Missionary Work” (pp. 104–6)

MISSIONARY ACCOUNTS

Samuel H. Smith

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote about the first missionary of this dispensation, Samuel Smith, one of the Prophet Joseph Smith’s brothers. This early missionary serves as an important example to faithful missionaries who may feel like they see few fruits from their labors and about how to use the Book of Mormon in missionary work.

“His is a story of great faith and courage in the face of discouraging circumstances. He was not called as the first missionary by accident. After receiving a spiritual confirmation of the truthfulness of what his prophet-brother had been telling him, he became the third person baptized in this dispensation—following Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.

“He began his mission with a sure knowledge of the truthfulness of the sacred work being performed by Joseph Smith and also of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. As one of the Eight Witnesses,

Samuel was privileged to be shown the plates by Joseph, and was able to hold the plates in his hands and examine the ancient writing thereon. He was also one of the six charter members of the Church when it was organized on 6 April 1830.

“Shortly before he received his formal missionary call, Samuel sold a copy of the Book of Mormon to Phineas Young, a traveling preacher. In this initial encounter he held a book in his hand and offered it to Phineas.

“ ‘There is a book, sir, I wish you to read.’

“Phineas hesitated. ‘Pray, sir, what book have you?’

“ ‘The Book of Mormon, or, as it is called by some, the Golden Bible.’

“ ‘Ah, sir, then it purports to be a revelation?’

“ ‘Yes. It is a revelation from God.’

“The young man showed Phineas the last two pages of the book and had him read the testimony of the witnesses. The young man continued, ‘If you will read this book with a prayerful heart and ask God to give you a witness you will know of the truth of this work.’

“His earnest demeanor and forthright manner impressed Phineas, who told the young man he would certainly read it. Phineas asked his name; he told him it was Samuel H. Smith.

“ ‘Ah, you are one of the witnesses.’

“ ‘Yes, I know the book to be a revelation from God, translated by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, and that my brother, Joseph Smith, Jun., is a Prophet, Seer and Revelator’ (quoted in S. Dilworth Young, *Brigham Young—His Life (First Half)*, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year [17 Mar. 1964], 3).

“When Samuel left on his first mission, shortly following the organization of the Church, he was armed with a testimony of the truth and little else. But he needed little else. He had a testimony, and he had copies of the Book of Mormon—the missionary tool for conversion. He carried a knapsack with him that he filled with as many copies of this book as he could carry. He probably even carried one in his hand.

“You have to remember that this had never been done before. He didn’t have a companion to show him how to use the Book of Mormon. There was no missionary training center for this young man.

“So Samuel left Palmyra to travel throughout the countryside, seeking converts and interested individuals who would purchase a copy of the Book of Mormon. He walked 25 miles that first day, and upon reaching an inn, he asked the innkeeper if he would buy one of the books. When the innkeeper learned more of his mission, Samuel was forced to leave and spent that first night under an apple tree.



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“The next day Samuel met a Methodist preacher named John P. Greene. Mr. Greene was not personally interested in reading the book, but he said he would keep it to see if anyone else wanted to buy it. Samuel did not give up. He called again on the Greene family and found that Mr. Greene’s wife, Rhoda Young Greene—a sister of Phineas Young—had read the book. She later convinced her husband that he needed to read it as well. Samuel did not baptize one soul on that first mission, but those two copies of the Book of Mormon that were given to Phineas Young and John P. Greene eventually were the means of converting a whole neighborhood, including Brigham Young and his family and Heber C. Kimball and his family” (“The Book of Mormon: The Heart of Missionary Proselyting,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2002, 15–16).

Heber C. Kimball

Elder Heber C. Kimball, then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, was called as the first missionary to preach the restored gospel in England, in 1837. He left his family in Kirtland, Ohio, to serve across the Atlantic Ocean in the first overseas mission of the Church in the latter days.

He described his calling, his departure from home, and his arrival in England:

“It never occurred to my mind that I should be one of the first commissioned to preach the everlasting gospel on the shores of Europe, and I can assure my friends, I was taken by surprise when I was informed by Brother Hyrum Smith, one of the Presidency of the Church, that I had been designed by the Spirit, and at a conference of the authorities of the Church which had been held, was appointed to take the charge of a mission to the kingdom of Great Britain.



“The idea of being appointed to such an important office and mission was almost more than I could bear up under. I felt my weakness and unworthiness, and was nearly ready to sink under the task which devolved upon me, and I could not help exclaiming: O Lord I am a man of ‘stammering tongue’ and altogether unfit for such a work. How can I go to preach in that land, which is so famed throughout Christendom for light, knowledge, and piety, and the nursery of religion; and to a people whose intelligence is proverbial?

“Again, the idea of leaving my family for so long a time, which a mission to that country must necessarily require—of being separated from my friends whom I loved, and with whom I had enjoyed many blessings and happy seasons—of leaving my native land to sojourn among strangers in a strange land, was almost overwhelming.

“However, all these considerations did not deter me from the path of duty. Neither did I confer with flesh and blood; but the moment I understood the will of my Heavenly Father, I felt a determination to go at all hazards, believing that He would support me by His almighty power, and endow me with every qualification I needed. And although my

family were dear to me, and I should have to leave them almost destitute, yet I felt that the cause of truth, the gospel of Christ, outweighed every other consideration; and I felt willing to leave them, believing that their wants would be provided for by that God, who ‘taketh care of sparrows’ and who ‘feedeth the young ravens when they cry.’ . . .

“After spending a few days in arranging my affairs and settling my business, on the thirteenth day of June, A.D. 1837, I bade adieu to my family and friends, and the town of Kirtland, where the House of the Lord stood.”

Over a month later, on July 18, Elder Heber C. Kimball and his mission companions arrived in Liverpool, England. He wrote: “Immediately after we anchored, a small boat came along side, and several of the passengers, with Brothers Hyde, Richards, Goodson, and myself, got in and went on shore. When we were within six or seven feet from the pier, I leaped on shore, and for the first time in my life stood on British ground, among strangers whose manners and customs were different from my own. My feelings at that time were peculiar, particularly when I realized the object, importance, and extent of my mission and the work to which I had been appointed and in which I was shortly to be engaged” (*Journal of Heber C. Kimball*, comp. R. B. Thompson [1840], 9–11, 15; punctuation and capitalization modernized; paragraphing altered).

Wilford Woodruff



In the late summer of 1839, Elder Wilford Woodruff left his home and family under very difficult conditions to begin a mission in Great Britain. Both he and his wife were very ill and very poor. Elder Woodruff was faithful to his call, however, and the Lord

blessed him with great success during his missionary labors. One significant account occurred following an impression he received to leave a town where he was having great success preaching and baptizing. He wrote:

“I went in secret before the Lord, and asked Him what His will was concerning me.

"The answer I got was, that I should go to the south, for the Lord had a great work for me to perform there, as many souls were waiting for the word of the Lord."

After traveling nearly 50 miles by coach and foot to a region where no Latter-day Saint had ever been, Wilford met John and Jane Benbow. They were wealthy farmers and members of a congregation "who had broken off from the Wesleyan Methodists, and taken the name of United Brethren." Wilford Woodruff wrote:

"This body of United Brethren were searching for light and truth, but had gone as far as they could, and were continually calling upon the Lord to open the way before them, and send them light and knowledge that they might know the true way to be saved.

"When I heard these things I could clearly see why the Lord had commanded me, while in the town of Hanley, to leave that place of labor and go to the south, for in Herefordshire there was a great harvest-field for gathering many Saints into the kingdom of God."

While in this location he baptized over 600 people! One unique teaching experience from his journal worth noting helps illustrate how "white" this field of labor was:

"On Sunday, the 8th, I preached at Frome's Hill in the morning, at Standley Hill in the afternoon, and at John Benbow's Hill Farm, in the evening.

"The parish church that stood in the neighborhood of Brother Benbow's, presided over by the rector of the parish, was attended during the day by only fifteen persons, while I had a large congregation, estimated to number a thousand, attend my meeting through the day and evening.

"When I arose in the evening to speak at Brother Benbow's house, a man entered the door and informed me that he was a constable, and had been sent by the rector of the parish with a warrant to arrest me.

"I asked him 'For what crime?'

"He said, 'For preaching to the people.'

"I told him that I, as well as the rector, had a license for preaching the gospel to the people, and that if he would take a chair I would wait upon him after meeting.

"He took my chair and sat beside me. I preached the first principles of the everlasting gospel for an hour and a quarter. The power of God rested upon me, the Spirit filled the house, and the people were convinced.

"At the close of the meeting I opened a door for baptism, and seven offered themselves. Among the number were four preachers and the constable.

"The latter arose and said, 'Mr. Woodruff, I would like to be baptized.'

"I told him I would like to baptize him. I went down to the pool and baptized the seven. We then met together and I confirmed thirteen, and broke bread unto the Saints and we all rejoiced together.

"The constable went to the rector and told him if he wanted Mr. Woodruff taken up for preaching the gospel, he must go himself and serve the writ, for he had heard him preach the only true gospel sermon he had ever listened to in his life.

"The rector did not know what to make of it, so he sent two clerks of the Church of England as spies, to attend our meeting, and find out what we did preach.

"But they were both pricked in their hearts and received the word of the Lord gladly, and were baptized and confirmed members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"The rector became alarmed and did not dare to send anybody else" (*Leaves from My Journal* [1881], 93–97).

Dan Jones

Another of the Restoration's great missionaries was a convert to the Church named Dan Jones. President Gordon B. Hinckley wrote about Dan Jones's missions in his homeland of Wales:

"Dan Jones was born 4 August 1810 in Halkin, Flintshire, Wales. When he was seventeen, he went to sea. He learned of ships and sailors, the sting of salt spray whipped by a stiff wind, the pitching of a boat in a terrifying storm. In 1840 he came to America. Here he acquired and captained a small boat that plied the waters of the Mississippi. . . .

"While engaged in river traffic, Dan learned of the Mormons, who had been driven from Missouri and had found temporary refuge in Quincy, Illinois, and then had gone on to establish 'Nauvoo the Beautiful' on ground where the river makes a sweeping bend,

creating the illusion of a peninsula reaching out into the water. Indications are that Dan Jones read some of the anti-Mormon castigations then prevalent. All of this piqued his curiosity. He wanted to learn more about these people. He met them, was taught, and accepted the truth. In January 1843, he was baptized in the cold waters of the Mississippi River. . . .



"Dan Jones was called to go [on a mission] to Wales. His wife, Jane, accompanied him. They traveled with Wilford Woodruff and others to the British Isles. Elder Jones was assigned to labor in north Wales. Though he had the great asset of speaking both Welsh and English, he accomplished relatively little in touching the hearts of the people of that area. On the other hand, William Henshaw, who did not speak the Welsh language, enjoyed considerable success in the south.

"When Brother Henshaw was released a year later, Elder Jones was called to preside over all the work in Wales. He made his headquarters in Merthyr Tydfil in southeastern Wales. Working with a handful of missionaries, he witnessed a remarkable harvest. From 1845 to 1848, approximately 3,600 were baptized. It is estimated that in terms of population, one out of every 278 people in Wales at that time was baptized into the LDS Church.

"Opponents had access to newspapers and other publications to attack the Mormon missionaries. But the press would not open its columns to Elder Jones. He therefore determined that he would answer with publications of his own. He enlisted the help of his brother, John Jones, a Protestant minister who owned a printing press. It is said that John printed Dan's literature during the week and denounced him from the pulpit on Sunday.

"Dan Jones's publication was the first Mormon periodical published in a language other than English. . . .

". . . He feared no one. He moved with great boldness. Of his method it has been written: 'He would often advertise in a town for several weeks that he was coming to "convert" the whole town. He would inform the mayor, the city council, the ministers, and the police force of his intentions. He would have the local members of the church distribute thousands of tracts to all the city. When he arrived at the railroad station he was often met by all of the officials of the city and many excited citizens' [Rex LeRoy Christensen, "The Life and Contributions of Captain Dan Jones," Master's thesis, Utah State University, 1977, 39-40].

"Ministers of other churches lashed out against him. They used their pulpits and the public press. Of their antagonism against him, Dan Jones wrote, 'Most of the stories that were told on poor Brother Joseph in America, are here fathered on Captain Jones, and I often hear those who don't know that little man [himself], unhesitatingly denounce him as "a curse upon this nation" ' [Christensen, "Life and Contributions," 27].

"Public opinions raged this way and that. But instead of shrinking, Dan Jones capitalized on controversies. He drew such public attention that people had to decide whether the gospel of the Mormons was true or false. An increasing number of converts came into the Church while a veritable storm arose against the Mormons in general and Elder Jones in particular. He was vilified in the press. He was shouted at in the streets. His life was threatened. . . .

". . . [In 1852] he was called to serve a second mission in his native land. Again he responded without hesitation. . . .

"Once back in Wales, Elder Jones again put his whole energy into the work. During his second mission, some two thousand new converts came into the Church. It was remarkable. . . .

"Tens of thousands in the Church today are descended from those whom he and his associates taught and baptized. In terms of the number of converts, Dan Jones must certainly be included in the half dozen or so most productive missionaries in the history of the Church. He dedicated his life to the teaching of righteousness and the building



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PERSONAL WORTHINESS

INTRODUCTION



One of the crowning blessings of your life will be to go to the temple of the Lord and receive your temple endowment. This endowment gives you spiritual knowledge and power that will help you better serve the Lord and eventually qualify you to enter His kingdom. Because of the knowledge, power,

and strength gained in the temple, prospective missionaries generally have the opportunity to go to the temple and receive their temple endowment prior to their missionary service. To do the Lord's work as a missionary and to enter His holy house requires a high degree of personal worthiness.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Personal worthiness is necessary to accomplish missionary work.
- Personal worthiness allows prospective missionaries to obtain temple blessings.
- Repentance is a cleansing process that allows us to become worthy.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Personal worthiness is necessary to accomplish missionary work.

■ Missionaries must be pure in order to have the spirit necessary to represent the Lord. Personal purity includes clean thoughts, moral cleanliness, adhering to gospel principles, and keeping the commandments. The demands of missionary service require spiritual fortitude. Priesthood leaders help prospective missionaries prepare for this demanding work by helping them repent and become worthy to serve as full-time missionaries.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 38:42 (see also D&C 133:5)
- Doctrine and Covenants 88:74
- Doctrine and Covenants 121:45

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Charles Didier of the Presidency of the Seventy reflected on what prospective missionaries need to understand about worthiness to be prepared to serve the Lord: "I wish we could teach the youth how to avoid the need for major repentance. Prevention is better than redemption. We need to teach them to have a spirit of love for the Lord and His commandments. If they have that, we don't

need to establish barriers where we tell them, 'If you go over that, you cannot serve' " (in "Teaching from the Heart," *Ensign*, June 2004, 10).

■ When asked what potential missionaries should focus on being or becoming, Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles answered: "Worthy—so that the Spirit can guide them." He also said:

"They need to stay as far away from the boundaries of sin as they can. That gives them the greatest happiness as they're preparing. It assures them the greatest capacity to be led by the Spirit and to be the examples they need to be in the mission field.

"Almost any young person can recite the 'Rs' of repentance or some other way of describing it. What they really need to do, though, is understand the gravity with which the Lord views some transgressions and not commit them" (in "Teaching from the Heart," *Ensign*, June 2004, 9–10).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley described a standard of worthiness that missionaries must attain:

"This work is rigorous. . . . It demands clean hands and a pure heart. . . .

"What a solemn and serious undertaking this work is. It demands that those who serve as missionaries be worthy in every respect. We simply cannot permit those who have not qualified themselves as to worthiness to go into the world to speak the glad tidings of the gospel.

"I am confident that raising the bar on eligibility will cause our young people, particularly our young men, to practice self-discipline, to live above the low standards of the world, to avoid transgression and take the high road in all their activities. We will not knowingly send young men to reform them. If their lives need reforming, that must happen well before they go. . . .

". . . We need missionaries, but they must be capable of doing the work. They must be spiritually sensitive to do that which is expected of them, which is essentially a spiritual work. They must be morally worthy in every respect, having kept themselves clean from the evils of the world. If there have been offenses, there must have been adequate repentance. . . .

"This work is rigorous. . . . It demands clean hands and a pure heart."

"We are not asking for perfection. The work of the Lord is done by ordinary people who work in an extraordinary way. The Lord magnifies those who put forth the effort. Nowhere is this more evident than in missionary service. . . . With small means the Lord accomplishes His marvelous work" ("Missionary Service," *First Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 2003, 17–18).

■ President Hinckley warned against pornography: "There is an ever-growing plague of pornography swirling about us. The producers and purveyors of smut are assiduously working a mine that yields them many millions in profit. Some of their products are artfully beguiling. They are designed to titillate and stimulate the baser instincts. Many a man who has partaken of forbidden fruit and then discovered that he has . . . lost his self-respect . . . has come to realize that the booby-trapped jungle trail he

has followed began with the reading or viewing of pornographic material. Some who would not think of taking a sip of liquor or of smoking a cigarette, have rationalized indulgence in pornography. Such have warped values totally unbecoming one who has been ordained to the priesthood of God" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1983, 66; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 45).

■ What standards of worthiness and testimony must prospective missionaries live?

- Have faith in and a testimony of Heavenly Father, His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost.
- Have a testimony of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and His role as the Savior.
- Have a testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Restoration of the gospel.
- Sustain the Church authorities.
- Keep the law of chastity. This includes avoiding pornography in any form.
- Keep the covenants made at baptism and elsewhere.
- Attend all their Church meetings.
- Be honest in their dealings with others.
- Pay a full tithing.
- Keep the Word of Wisdom.
- Repent and confess their sins. Confess serious sins to priesthood leaders.

Personal worthiness allows prospective missionaries to obtain temple blessings.

■ President Howard W. Hunter taught the importance of the temple blessings in relation to the mission call: “Let us prepare every missionary to go to the temple worthily and to make that experience an even greater highlight than receiving the mission call” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 118; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 88).

Why is the temple experience so important to a missionary? Temple blessings bring power to worthy missionaries. The blessings obtained in the house of the Lord come to those who are worthy. The required standards of worthiness will increase spirituality and enhance each missionary’s ability to teach the restored gospel to others.

A missionary endowed in the temple is entitled to additional power. This power comes through the greater understanding of Heavenly Father’s plan, the covenants, and the blessings obtained only in the temple.



“We need every divine power to enhance our effort and move the Church steadily forward.”

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Psalm 24:3–5
- Doctrine and Covenants 95:8
- Doctrine and Covenants 109:22–23
- Doctrine and Covenants 110:7–9

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that temple work “can be an anchor in daily life, a source of guidance, protection, security, peace, and revelation” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 123; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 88).

■ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained why missionaries need temple ordinances in order to successfully preach the restored gospel:

“It is so important for you to understand that going to the temple for your own endowment . . . [is] an integral part of your mission preparation. . . . [You should] understand the significance of those temple covenants [and] the inextricable link between your endowment and your missionary success. Indeed, the very word *endowment* conveys the essence of that vital link. An endowment is a gift.

“You cannot do this work alone. We have to have heaven’s help, we have to have the ‘gifts’ of God. . . . This work is so serious and the adversary’s opposition to it so great that we need every divine power to enhance our effort and move the Church steadily forward” (“Making and Keeping Covenants” [missionary satellite broadcast, Apr. 25, 1997]).

■ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained how temple blessings qualify one to go forth and preach the restored gospel: “The apostles—or any ministers or missionaries in any age—are not fully qualified to go forth, preach the gospel, and build up the kingdom, unless they have the gift of the Holy Ghost and also are endowed with power from on high, meaning [they] have received certain knowledge, powers, and special blessings, normally

given only in the Lord's Temple" (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966–73], 1:859).

■ President Joseph Fielding Smith explained why temple blessings are needed before entering the mission field: "Do you understand why our missionaries go to the temple before they are set apart for their mission fields? This is a requirement made of them . . . [where there is access to a temple] because the Lord has said it should be done. He called all the missionaries to Kirtland in the early day of the Church to receive endowments in the temple erected there. He said this was so that they could go out with greater power from on high and with greater protection" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 2:255).

■ Elder David B. Haight, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, described the blessings of receiving the temple endowment: "The environment in the temple is intended to provide the worthy member of the Church with the power of enlightenment, of testimony, and of understanding. The temple endowment gives knowledge that, when acted upon, provides strength and conviction of truth" (*A Light unto the World* [1997], 49).

■ While serving as a member of the Seventy, Elder Jack H. Goaslind Jr. spoke of the relationship of the endowment to missionary service: "By obeying the commandments and fulfilling these covenants, we are sanctified, purified, and born of the Spirit. We become vessels worthy of receiving the Holy Spirit and the accompanying gifts of the Spirit that must attend this work if we are to succeed" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1983, 47–48; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 33).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott spoke of the purpose of the temple recommend interview: "Before entering the temple, you will be interviewed by your bishop and stake president for your temple recommend. Be honest and candid with them. That interview is not a test to be passed but an important step to confirm that you have the maturity and spirituality to receive the supernal ordinances and make and keep the edifying covenants offered in the house of the Lord. Personal worthiness is an essential requirement to enjoy the blessings of the temple. Anyone foolish enough to enter the temple unworthily will receive condemnation" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 31; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 25).

■ Elder David B. Haight taught, "When we present our recommend to the attendant at the temple, we reaffirm our worthiness to enter the temple" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 19; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 15).

Repentance is a cleansing process that allows us to become worthy.

■ There is a strong correlation between personal worthiness and success in the mission field. Prospective missionaries must properly repent of past sins before entering the mission field.

Repentance is a principle that will bless the lives of missionaries and investigators who exercise faith in Jesus Christ, repent of their sins, and accept the principles and ordinances of the gospel.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Isaiah 1:18
- 1 John 1:5–10
- Mosiah 26:29
- Helaman 14:13

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland wrote of the vital need to understand that true faith in Christ leads us to repent of our sins: "We learn above all else [from the experience of Alma the Younger] that Christ is the power behind all repentance. . . . Alma had been touched by the teaching of his father, but it is particularly important that the prophecy he remembered was one regarding 'the coming of one Jesus Christ, a Son of God, to atone for the sins of the world.' (Alma 36:17.) That is the name and that is the message that every person must hear. . . . Whatever other prayers we offer, whatever other needs we have, all somehow depends on that plea: 'O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me.' He is prepared to provide that mercy. He paid with his very life in order to give it" (*However Long and Hard the Road* [1985], 85).

■ Elder Glenn L. Pace of the Seventy focused on the importance of clearing up unresolved transgressions prior to serving a mission:

“The strongest counsel I can give a prospective missionary is to stay worthy. The second strongest counsel is to get yourself worthy before you enter the MTC. Make certain you are honest with your local priesthood leaders. . . .



“There is a common feeling among the youth that the only real discomfort or penalty for serious transgression is the pain and embarrassment attendant with confessing the transgression to their bishop. This is only the beginning. One cannot immediately have the Holy Ghost as a constant companion by walking into the bishop’s office, confessing a sin, and walking out again. None of us believe in deathbed repentance. Why do so many of us accept ‘mission bed’ repentance. It matters little that a prospective missionary learns his or her [lessons] well . . . , gaining a person’s trust, and all the other techniques. They are hollow without the Spirit. . . . Without the Spirit, you shall not teach” (“Why?” [devotional address at Ricks College, Sept. 24, 1991], 2–4).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott counseled those who have fully repented but continue to feel weighed down because of those sins:

“If you have repented from serious transgression and mistakenly believe that you will always be a second-class citizen in the kingdom of God, learn that is not true. The Savior said:

“ ‘Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remember them no more.

“The strongest counsel I can give a prospective missionary is to stay worthy.”

“ ‘By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them’ [D&C 58:42–43]” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2000, 33; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 26).



■ President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, described the cleansing power of repentance: “The discouraging idea that a mistake (or even a series of

them) makes it everlastingly too late, does not come from the Lord. He has said that *if* we will repent, not only will He forgive us our transgressions, but He will forget them and remember our sins no more (see Isaiah 43:25; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17; Alma 36:19; D&C 58:42). Repentance is like soap; it can wash sin away. Ground-in dirt may take the strong detergent of discipline to get the stains out, but out they will come” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 72; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 59).

■ President N. Eldon Tanner, who was a counselor in the First Presidency, explained why missionaries must be worthy and clean: “Prospective missionaries should realize that the Lord wants somebody in whom he can place every confidence, one who is clean and worthy in every way to represent him in the mission field. If you are not worthy, don’t accept a call, don’t lie to get there, but through repentance prepare yourself to go. It is so much better to wait a year or so than to go unworthily. Have the courage and manhood, stamina and determination

to face the facts, to tell the truth, to prepare yourselves in every way to do what the Lord would want you to do” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1976, 67; or *Ensign*, May 1976, 44).

POINTS TO PONDER

- Why do you feel it is important to receive a temple endowment prior to serving a mission?
- What is wrong with thinking it is okay to sin now and repent later?
- Why do those who have sincere faith in Jesus Christ desire to repent of their sins?

- Why do you feel it is important to confess serious sins to priesthood leaders as well as to the Lord?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Memorize Doctrine and Covenants 58:42–43 and 121:45–46.
- Examine your personal worthiness for serving a mission. If there are problem areas, determine what needs to be done and then follow through.
- Write in your study journal your understanding of why those who have sincere faith in Jesus Christ will repent of their sins, be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Why would this relationship be important for missionaries to understand in their personal lives? Why must they be able to clearly teach this truth?

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Chastity” (pp. 29–33)
- “Repentance” (pp. 132–35)

NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS



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THE COMPANIONSHIP OF THE HOLY GHOST

INTRODUCTION

Vital to successful missionary work is the willingness to seek and follow the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, missionaries must be worthy to receive that divine guidance. They must be sensitive to the Spirit of God to teach with power and conviction. As they seek, receive, and follow the guidance of the Holy Ghost, they are prepared to teach others the doctrines of the Restoration in clarity, and the Spirit testifies of the truthfulness of their message (see D&C 11:21; 50:13–14).

The Light of Christ is a source of inspiration our Heavenly Father has given to all of His children. Understanding the functions of the Light of Christ and of the Holy Ghost helps you recognize God's influence in your life. The influences of the Light of Christ and the Holy Ghost upon the minds and hearts of all seekers of truth are essential in the conversion process.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- The Light of Christ is a power for good in the lives of all people.
- The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead.
- There are many ways that the Holy Ghost influences our lives for good.
- Sensitivity and obedience to the Spirit is one of a missionary's greatest resources.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

The Light of Christ is a power for good in the lives of all people.

■ President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught that the Light of Christ “fosters everything that is good” (“The Light of Christ,” *Ensign*, Apr. 2005, 10). Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “The Light of Christ, which is sometimes called the Spirit of Christ or the Spirit of God, ‘giveth light to every man that cometh into the world’ (D&C 84:46). This is the light ‘which is in all things, which giveth life to all things’ (D&C 88:13). The prophet Mormon taught that ‘the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil’ (Moroni 7:16; see also v. 19; 2 Nephi 2:5; Helaman 14:31)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 79; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 60).

Since everyone you meet will have been given the Light of Christ, it is important that you understand the role of this great influence. Those who follow the Light of Christ will be led to Christ, develop faith in Christ, repent of their sins, and accept baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost as they become members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Moroni 7:16–19
- Doctrine and Covenants 84:46–47
- Doctrine and Covenants 88:11–13

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ “The Light of Christ should not be confused with the Holy Ghost. It is not a personage, as the Holy Ghost is. Its influence leads people to find the true gospel, be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (see John 12:46; Alma 26:14–15)” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 96; see also Bible Dictionary, “Light of Christ,” 725; Guide to the Scriptures, “Light, Light of Christ,” 150).

■ President Boyd K. Packer taught that the Light of Christ is “another source of inspiration, which each of us possesses in common with all other members of the human family. If we know about the Light of Christ, we will understand that there is something inside all of us, and we can appeal to that in our desire to share truth. . . .

“Every man, woman, and child of every nation, creed, or color—everyone, no matter where they live or what they believe or what they do—has within them the imperishable Light of Christ. In this respect, all men are created equally. The Light of Christ in everyone is a testimony that God is no respecter of persons (see D&C 1:35). He treats everyone equally in that endowment with the Light of Christ” (*Ensign*, Apr. 2005, 8, 10).

■ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that the Light of Christ helps prepare people for the restored gospel message

and its blessings: “Its influence is preliminary to and preparatory to one’s receiving the Holy Ghost. The Light of Christ will lead the honest soul to ‘[hearken] to the voice’ [D&C 84:46] to find the true gospel and the true Church and thereby receive the Holy Ghost” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2003, 26; or *Ensign*, May 2003, 26).

■ President Boyd K. Packer explained the importance of understanding that all of God’s children have been given the Light of Christ:

“The more we know about the Light of Christ, the more we will understand about life and the more we will have a deep love for mankind. We will be better teachers and missionaries and parents, and better men and women and children. We will have deeper regard for our brothers and sisters in the Church and for those who do not believe and have not yet had conferred upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . .



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“It is important for a teacher or a missionary or a parent to know that the Holy Ghost can work through the Light of Christ. A teacher of gospel truths is not planting something foreign or even new into an adult or a child. Rather, the missionary or teacher is making contact with the Spirit of Christ already there. The gospel will have a familiar ‘ring’ to them” (*Ensign*, Apr. 2005, 8, 10).

The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead.

■ The scriptures teach about the function of the Holy Ghost in the Godhead. As a member of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost performs duties that are important for missionaries to understand.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- John 14:26
- 3 Nephi 28:11
- Doctrine and Covenants 130:22

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.



■ Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles described some of the duties of the Holy Ghost: “The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead, a personage of spirit. He is the Comforter, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit of Promise. He

testifies of Jesus Christ, His work, and the work of His servants upon the earth. He acts as a cleansing agent to purify and sanctify us from sin. He comforts us and brings peace to our souls. The right to His constant companionship is among the greatest gifts we can receive in mortality, for by the light of His promptings and His cleansing power we can be led back into the presence of God” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2002, 80; or *Ensign*, May 2002, 70).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught that manifestations of the Holy Ghost are “given to acquaint sincere seekers with the truth about the Lord and His gospel” and that “these manifestations are available to everyone [see 2 Nephi 26:13].” He then explained the difference between the Light of Christ, manifestations of the Holy Ghost, and the gift of the Holy Ghost:

“The Light of Christ is given to all men and women that they may know good from evil; manifestations of the Holy Ghost are given to lead sincere seekers to gospel truths that will persuade them to repentance and baptism.

“The gift of the Holy Ghost is more comprehensive. . . .

“The gift of the Holy Ghost includes the right to constant companionship, that we may ‘always have his Spirit to be with [us]’ (D&C 20:77). . . .

“For faithful members of the Church of Jesus Christ, the companionship of the Holy Spirit should be so familiar that we must use care not to take it for granted. For example, that good feeling you have felt during the messages and music of this conference is a confirming witness of the Spirit, available to faithful members on a continuing basis. A member once asked me why he felt so good about the talks

and music in a sacrament meeting, while a guest he had invited that day apparently experienced no such feeling. This is but one illustration of the contrast between one who has the gift of the Holy Ghost and is in tune with His promptings and one who has not, or is not” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 79–80; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 60).

■ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, illustrated the difference between the influence of the Holy Ghost and the gift of the Holy Ghost: “Before baptism [all people] may receive revelation from the Holy Ghost for the purpose of giving them a testimony of the truth and divinity of the Lord’s work on earth. After baptism they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and it is then their right to have the constant companionship of that member of the Godhead if they keep the commandments. The testimony before baptism, speaking by way of analogy, comes as a flash of lightning blazing forth in a dark and stormy night; it comes to light the path on which earth’s pilgrims, far from their heavenly home and lost in the deserts and swamps of the world, must walk if they are to return to the Divine Presence. The companionship of the Holy Ghost after baptism is as the continuing blaze of the sun at noonday, shedding its rays on the path of life and on all that surrounds it” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [1985], 262).

There are many ways that the Holy Ghost influences our lives for good.

■ Manifestations of the Spirit come in a variety of ways. The scriptures help us better understand the promptings of the Holy Ghost. Prospective missionaries should be able to recognize the influence of the Holy Ghost in their lives and have the faith and courage to follow those promptings. The Lord gave the following commission: “That which the Spirit testifies unto you even so I would that ye should do in all holiness of heart” (D&C 46:7).

Prospective missionaries should also be able to explain the nature and basic duties of the Holy Ghost to investigators.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- John 14:26
- John 15:26
- John 16:13
- Galatians 5:22–23
- 1 Nephi 4:6
- 2 Nephi 31:17–18
- 2 Nephi 32:5, 8
- 2 Nephi 33:1
- Alma 21:16
- Moroni 10:5

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ “No mortal teacher, no matter how expert or experienced, can bring the blessings of testimony and conversion to another person. That is the office of the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit. People come to know that the gospel is true by the power of the Holy Ghost” (*Teaching, No Greater Call* [1999], 41).

■ Following are some important principles to understand about the influence of the Holy Ghost:

1. We can receive spiritual impressions.

- See Romans 15:13.
- See Alma 32:28.
- See Doctrine and Covenants 9:8–9.
- “Although we often describe communication from the Spirit as a voice, that voice is one that we feel more than we hear. And while we speak of ‘listening’ to the whisperings of the Holy Ghost, we often describe a spiritual prompting by saying, ‘I had a feeling . . .’ The Lord’s counsel to Oliver Cowdery in section 9 of the Doctrine and Covenants . . . teaches this principle. However, this counsel is sometimes misunderstood. Upon reading that passage, some members of the Church become confused, fearing that they have never received a prompting from the Holy Ghost because they have never felt a burning

“Personal revelations . . . come to the mind as thoughts and to the heart as feelings.”

in their bosom. Note the Lord’s final words in Doctrine and Covenants 9:8: ‘Therefore, you shall feel that it is right.’ The burning described in this scripture passage signifies a feeling of comfort and serenity, not necessarily a sensation of heat. As you continue to seek and follow the Lord’s will in your life, you will come to recognize how the Holy Ghost influences you personally” (*True to the Faith*, 144).

- While serving as a member of the Seventy, Elder L. Lionel Kendrick described how the Spirit influences both the mind and the heart: “Personal revelations are received in both the mind and in the heart. These impressions come to the mind as thoughts and to the heart as feelings. Elder Boyd K. Packer explained, ‘This guidance comes as thoughts, as feelings, through impressions and promptings’ (‘Revelation in a Changing World,’ *Ensign*, November 1989, p. 14). At times the Spirit will impress both the mind and the heart at the same time. Usually when your head and your heart are receiving the same impression, you know that you are receiving a personal revelation. The Savior instructed Hyrum Smith, ‘I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy’ (D&C 11:13)” (‘Personal Revelation,’ *Brigham Young University 1996–97 Speeches* [1997], 256).
- President Boyd K. Packer explained how our minds receive communication from divine sources: “The Holy Ghost communicates with the spirit through the mind more than through the physical senses. This guidance comes as thoughts, as feelings, through impressions and promptings. It is not always easy to describe inspiration. The scriptures teach us that we may ‘feel’ the words of spiritual communication more than hear them, and see with spiritual rather than with mortal eyes (see 1 Nephi 17:45)” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1989, 16; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1989, 14).

2. We can receive a feeling of peace.

- See Genesis 41:16.
- See Doctrine and Covenants 6:22–23.

- “The Holy Ghost is often called the Comforter (see John 14:26; D&C 39:6). As He reveals the will of the Lord to you, He will ‘speak peace to your mind’ (D&C 6:23). The peace He gives cannot be counterfeited by worldly influences or false teachings. It is the peace the Savior promised when He assured His disciples that He would send the Comforter: ‘Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid’ (John 14:27)” (*True to the Faith*, 144).
- Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles described feelings associated with the burning of the bosom: “What does a ‘burning in the bosom’ mean? Does it need to be a feeling of caloric heat, like the burning produced by combustion? If that is the meaning, I have never had a burning in the bosom. Surely, the word ‘burning’ in this scripture signifies a feeling of comfort and serenity. That is the witness many receive. That is the way revelation works” (“Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 13).
- Elder Robert K. Dellenbach of the Seventy taught how peace can bless our lives: “As we sincerely pray to the Lord and rely upon his divine whisperings, that still, small voice will come to us (see Helaman 5:30). We will receive a peace, knowing that God has answered our prayers. Remember the peace that Oliver received [see D&C 6:23]. These spiritual embers can grow into a flame of testimony (see Helaman 5:45)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 28; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 23).

3. We can receive the still, small voice.

- See 1 Kings 19:9–12.
- See Helaman 5:30.



your heart” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2000, 8; or *Ensign*, May 2000, 8).

- Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles indicated how a strong need to know what God wants brings answers: “I have had prayers answered. Those answers were most clear when what I wanted was silenced by an overpowering need to know what God wanted. It is then that the answer from a loving Heavenly Father can be spoken to the mind by the still, small voice and can be written on the heart” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2000, 111; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 86).
- President Ezra Taft Benson spoke about what the gift of the Holy Ghost will do for us: “The Holy Ghost helps you choose the right.

The Holy Ghost will protect you from evil. He whispers to you in a still, small voice to do right. When you *do* good, you *feel* good, and that is the Holy Ghost speaking to you. The Holy Ghost is a wonderful companion. He is *always* there to

help you” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 103; or *Ensign*, May 1989, 82).

*“When you do good,
you feel good, and that
is the Holy Ghost
speaking to you.”*

4. We can receive new ideas.

- See Doctrine and Covenants 8:2.
- The Prophet Joseph Smith taught how the spirit of revelation can bring new ideas: “A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of

God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 151).

5. We should remember that spiritual manifestations are sacred.

- See Alma 12:9.
- President Boyd K. Packer gave caution regarding the sacred nature of spiritual manifestations:
 "Dreams and visions and visitations are not uncommon in the Church and are a part of all that the Lord has revealed in this dispensation.
 "It may be that you will be the recipient of a marvelous spiritual experience. I have come to know that these experiences are personal and are to be kept private. Ponder them in your heart and do not talk lightly about them [see Alma 12:9]" (*"The Great Plan of Happiness and Personal Revelation"* [CES fireside for young adults, Nov. 7, 1993], 7–8).

6. The Lord gives us revelation in His own time.

- See Isaiah 55:8–9.
- See Moroni 7:2.
- See Doctrine and Covenants 88:68.
- Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught about the timing of inspiration from the Lord: "We should recognize that the Lord will speak to us through the Spirit in his own time and in his own way. Many people do not understand this principle. They believe that when they are ready and when it suits their convenience, they can call upon the Lord and he will immediately respond, even in the precise way they have prescribed. Revelation does not come that way" (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 10).
- Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, emphasized the need to submit ourselves to the Lord's timing while waiting for answers to our prayers and other righteous desires: "Since the Lord wants a people 'tried in all things' (D&C 136:31), how, specifically, will we be tried? He tells us, I will try the faith and the patience of my people (see Mosiah

23:21). Since faith in the timing of the Lord may be tried, let us learn to say not only, 'Thy will be done,' but patiently also, 'Thy timing be done' " (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 76; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 59).



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7. We should not expect revelation in all things.

- See James 4:3.
- See Doctrine and Covenants 58:26–29.
- Elder Dallin H. Oaks cautioned: "Revelations from God—the teachings and directions of the Spirit—are not constant. We believe in continuing revelation, not continuous revelation. We are often left to work out problems without the dictation or specific direction of the Spirit. That is part of the experience we must have in mortality. Fortunately, we are never out of our Savior's sight, and if our judgment leads us to actions beyond the limits of what is permissible and if we are listening to the still, small voice, the Lord will restrain us by the promptings of his Spirit" (*Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 14).
- Elder Oaks also warned about seeking revelation in every element of our lives: "The Spirit of the Lord is not likely to give us revelations on matters that are trivial. I once heard a young woman in testimony meeting praise the spirituality of her husband, indicating that he submitted every question

to the Lord. She told how he accompanied her shopping and would not even choose between different brands of canned vegetables without making his selection a matter of prayer. That strikes me as improper. I believe the Lord expects us to use the intelligence and experience He has given us to make these kinds of choices" ("Revelation," *New Era*, Sept. 1982, 46).

Sensitivity and obedience to the Spirit is one of a missionary's greatest resources.

■ The missionary teaches restored gospel truths to the investigator, but the influence of the Spirit is the most powerful element in a person's conversion to the restored gospel. It is critical that missionaries be sensitive to the Spirit and learn to follow the impressions they receive. Our understanding of the role of the Spirit will increase as we learn to obey its promptings.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 2 Nephi 33:1
- Doctrine and Covenants 43:15–16
- Doctrine and Covenants 50:21–22

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles discussed the power of the Spirit in conversion: "In the missionary training centers, we teach the missionaries that they must have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They are taught that they need to develop genuinely warm, personal, caring relationships with those whom they meet. They must learn to listen with understanding and to show sincere sensitivity to the interests and concerns of those they teach. As missionaries teach the doctrines, they need to find out what their contacts think and feel so they can clarify misunderstandings, ease doubts, resolve concerns, and provide encouragement. The warm, sincere spirit of the missionaries is essential to help nonmembers feel and recognize the Spirit of the Lord, because the Spirit is the power that

The influence of the Spirit is the most powerful element in a person's conversion to the restored gospel.

leads to conversion" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 34; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 28).

■ Elder Gene R. Cook of the Seventy taught how sharing our testimonies brings the Spirit: "Testify frequently while you are teaching. This may even be more important than the thing you are teaching. Testify in the name of the Lord that the things you are teaching are true. If you will do that, it will bring the Spirit of the Lord" (*Raising Up a Family to the Lord* [1993], 49).



■ President Boyd K. Packer described an important lesson he learned while serving in the mission field:

"I learned a sobering lesson as a mission president. I was also a General Authority. I had been prompted several

times, for the good of the work, to release one of my counselors. Besides praying about it, I had reasoned that it was the right thing to do. But I did not do it. I feared that it would injure a man who had given long service to the Church.

"The Spirit withdrew from me. I could get no promptings on who should be called as a counselor should I release him. It lasted for several weeks. My prayers seemed to be contained within the room where I offered them. I tried a number of alternate ways to arrange the work, but to no avail. Finally I did as I was bidden to do by the Spirit. Immediately the gift returned. Oh, the exquisite sweetness to have that gift again! You know it, for you have it—the gift of the Holy Ghost. And the brother was not injured,

indeed he was greatly blessed and immediately thereafter the work prospered" (*That All May Be Edified* [1982], 341).

■ President Marion G. Romney, who was a counselor in the First Presidency, emphasized the need to follow the Lord's guidance after we receive it: "When a person learns what the Lord's counsel is and follows it, he irresistibly draws close to the Spirit. From its very beginning, the history of God's dealings with his children on the earth testifies to the fact that those who disregard his counsel fail and come to grief" ("Seek Not to Counsel the Lord," *Ensign*, Aug. 1985, 2).

POINTS TO PONDER

- What are some of the ways the Spirit of the Lord has inspired you?
- What can you do to increase the influence of the Spirit in your life? How does personal worthiness affect the influence of the Spirit in a person's life?
- In what ways can you develop greater sensitivity to the Spirit?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Determine what adjustments you can make in your life to become more sensitive to the Spirit.
- Choose a time and a place where you can be alone. You may want to fast. Begin with prayer and ask your Heavenly Father what He would have you do as you prepare to be one of His missionaries. After praying, take some time to consider thoughts and feelings that come to you. Record these impressions in your journal. This may be a good start to your missionary journal.
- Record impressions and insights regarding the scriptures you study in a scripture study journal.

- Prayerfully review your patriarchal blessing, noting counsel and impressions that could be applied to your mission. (If you have not received your patriarchal blessing, consider doing so.)
- Prepare a talk on the subject "Why being guided by the Spirit is important to every missionary." Give your talk to your family or a trusted friend.
- Read the scripture references in the left column of the chart below. In the right column, write a brief description of the way the Holy Ghost can influence us that is illustrated in the scripture. You may also want to "chain" these verses together in your scriptures by cross-referencing the first scripture on the list to the second, the second to the third, and so on to the end and then cross-referencing the last scripture to the first.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- "Holy Ghost" (pp. 81–84)
- "Prayer" (pp. 118–23)
- "Revelation" (pp. 140–44)

	Ways the Holy Ghost Can Influence Us
John 14:26	
John 15:26	
John 16:13	
Galatians 5:22–23	
Mosiah 5:2	
D&C 6:14–15	
D&C 6:22–23	
D&C 8:2–3	
D&C 9:8–9	
D&C 11:12–13	
D&C 50:17–23	

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The Sermon on the Mount, by Harry Anderson

TEACHING BY THE SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION

Missionaries are called to teach the restored gospel with the power and authority of God. “Wherefore, I the Lord ask you this question—unto what were ye ordained? *To preach my gospel by the Spirit*” (D&C 50:13–14; italics added). Speaking about the importance of effective gospel teaching, Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that “every member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is, or will be, a teacher” and that “we are His servants with the sacred responsibility of teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, the greatest message of all time. We need more teachers to match that message” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1999, 100, 104; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 78, 80).

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “Salvation cannot come without revelation; it is in vain for anyone to minister without it” (*History of the Church*, 3:389). President Brigham Young also emphasized the necessity of the Spirit when teaching the gospel: “If all the talent, tact, wisdom, and refinement of the world had been sent to me with the Book of Mormon, and had declared, in the most exalted of earthly eloquence, the truth of it, undertaking to prove it by learning and worldly wisdom, they would have been to me like the smoke which arises only to vanish away. But when I saw a man without eloquence, or talents for public speaking, who could only say, ‘I know, by the power of the Holy Ghost,

that the Book of Mormon is true, that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of the Lord,’ the Holy Ghost proceeding from that individual illuminated my understanding, and light, glory, and immortality were before me. I was encircled by them, filled with them, and I knew for myself that the testimony of the man was true” (in *Journal of Discourses*, 1:90).

*“We are His servants
with the sacred
responsibility of
teaching the gospel
of Jesus Christ.”*

As a servant of the Lord, you must learn to minister, which means to teach with the Spirit. This includes learning and using teaching skills and principles that allow you and your investigators to receive the influence of the Spirit. The Lord knows what each person needs to learn. When you teach correct doctrines and principles clearly and with the Spirit, the message will touch hearts with power. Inspired teaching will strike a chord in souls that can lead to conversion through acceptance of the first principles and ordinances of the restored gospel.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Personal preparation and worthiness are necessary to teach by the Spirit.
- Missionaries can invite the Holy Ghost into their teaching.
- Missionaries should practice methods of teaching that edify.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Personal preparation and worthiness are necessary to teach by the Spirit.



■ The Lord will bless prepared and worthy missionaries with His Spirit. President Joseph F. Smith taught: “Every missionary should strive to devote part of each day to study and prayerful thought on the principles of the gospel

and the theology of the Church. He should read and reflect and pray. . . . His mind should be well stored with thoughts worth uttering, worth hearing, worth remembering; then the spirit of inspiration will bring forth the truths of which his [listeners] are in need, and give to his words the ring of authority” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 363).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Alma 5:46
- Alma 8:10
- Alma 17:2–3
- Doctrine and Covenants 11:21–22
- Doctrine and Covenants 84:85

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ “One purpose of the Spirit is to ‘manifest the truth . . . of all things’ (Moroni 10:4–5). Only through the influence of the Spirit can gospel teaching be edifying and inspiring.

“Your privilege as a gospel teacher is to be an instrument through whom the Holy Ghost can teach, testify, comfort, and inspire. . . .

“If you prepare spiritually, the Holy Ghost will help you know what to do and say in your teaching. You can prepare yourself by praying often, studying the scriptures, living the gospel, and being humble” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 169).

■ Elder David B. Haight, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught: “Our missionaries teach and testify by the Spirit. But they must be in tune with the Lord. Hoping for the Spirit is not enough. Praying is not enough. Missionaries must do what the Lord requires: live the commandments, be clean, be wholesome in deed and thoughts. ‘The Lord hath said he dwelleth not in unholy temples.’ (Al. 34:36.)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1977, 86; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 57).

■ President James E. Faust, a counselor in the First Presidency, compared worthiness to receive the Spirit to receiving a signal on a cellular phone:

“Cellular phones are used for much of the communication in our time. Occasionally, however, we find dead spots where the signal coming to a cell phone fails. This can happen when the cell phone user is in a tunnel or a canyon or when there is other interference.

“So it is with divine communication. The still, small voice, though still and small, is very powerful. It ‘whispereth through and pierceth all things’ [D&C 85:6]. . . . Perhaps something in our lives prevents us from hearing the message because we are ‘past feeling’ [see 1 Nephi 17:45]. We often put ourselves in spiritual dead spots—places and situations that block out divine messages. Some of these dead spots include anger, pornography, transgression, selfishness, and other situations that offend the Spirit” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2004, 67–68; or *Ensign*, May 2004, 67).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks described what we can do to invite the Spirit:

“The best way to have the spirit of revelation is to listen to and study words spoken under the influence of the Holy Ghost. In other words, we obtain the Spirit by reading the scriptures or reading or listening to the talks of inspired leaders. . . .

“As we devote ourselves to the Lord’s work, we must be involved in the hard work we call preparation” (“Teaching and Learning by the Spirit,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 9).

■ Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles emphasized prayer as a means to nurture the presence of the Holy Ghost: “Just as pondering the scriptures invites the Holy Ghost, so does daily pleading in prayer. If we do not ask

in prayer, He will rarely come, and without our petition He is not likely to linger. ‘And the Spirit shall be given unto you by the prayer of faith; and if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach’ (D&C 42:14). Heartfelt, constant pleading for the companionship of the Holy Ghost, with the pure intent to nourish our Father’s children, will surely bring blessings to us and to those we love and serve” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 115; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 84).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks addressed the question of what to do when we don’t sense the Spirit directing our words: “Careful preparation is required for those times when we are not given the specific words to speak. In my experience, we are often left to formulate our own words to express the gospel truths we have studied and the testimonies we have received. The Lord does not direct us in every act or word, so we must always be prepared to proceed on the basis of our own best judgment. As we do, we can grow in faith and spirituality on the one hand and in mortal experience on the other” (“Teaching by the Spirit” [address delivered at the Provo Missionary Training Center, June 21, 1988], 7).

Missionaries can invite the Holy Ghost into their teaching.



■ Elder Gene R. Cook of the Seventy declared, “You, as the teacher, must do all in your power to *prepare the hearts of men* so the Spirit can teach” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 48; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 38). Missionaries must learn how to invite the Spirit into their teaching in a variety of ways, including using scriptures and bearing testimony. Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: “When the Spirit touches the heart, hearts are changed. When individuals . . . feel the

Spirit working with them, or when they see the evidence of the Lord’s love and mercy in their lives, they are edified and strengthened spiritually, and their faith in Him increases” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2000, 97; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 75).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Alma 5:45–46
- Doctrine and Covenants 84:62
- Doctrine and Covenants 100:7–8

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley taught how to teach by the Spirit: “We must strengthen ourselves and our people to get our teachers to speak out of their hearts rather than out of their books, to communicate their love for the Lord and this precious work, and somehow it will catch fire in the hearts of those they teach” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 619–20).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: “Missionaries are being taught to fill their minds and hearts with the basic doctrine, with supporting scriptures, and with relevant experiences from their own lives. Those become resource material upon which they can call as they identify through the Spirit the need of a particular investigator family or individual” (in “Teaching from the Heart,” *Ensign*, June 2004, 6).

■ Elder Henry B. Eyring emphasized the role of the Holy Ghost in teaching and preparing investigators to receive certain truths: “The Holy Ghost will teach each of us in individual ways. But I promise you that when [investigators and missionaries] ponder and pray about the messages in the Book of Mormon, the Holy Ghost will testify of the Savior, they will remember Him, and the Holy Ghost can in time become their companion. It will bring truth to their remembrance. It will reveal the hearts of people to [the missionaries]” (*The Book of Mormon* [address at seminar for new mission presidents, June 25, 2003], 6).

■ Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles named some prerequisites to being able to teach by the Spirit: “Our teaching will be

“When the Spirit touches the heart, hearts are changed.”

effective if we approach it humbly through prayer and study. We will then be assisted by the Spirit in imparting the word, consistent and in harmony with what the Lord would have us teach" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 7; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 8).

■ President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, reflected on a lesson he learned while serving as a mission president. He wrote that his mission wasn't progressing as it should. He didn't know what it was that needed changing. During a testimony meeting at a zone conference, he heard the testimony of a frightened, new elder. President Packer recalled:

"The testimonies we'd heard from all the other missionaries went something like this: 'I'm grateful to be in the mission field. I've learned a lot from it. I have a fine companion. I've learned a lot from him. I'm grateful for my parents. We had an interesting experience last week. We were out knocking on doors and. . . .' Then the missionary would relate an experience. His conclusion would be something like this: 'I'm grateful to be in the mission field. I have a testimony of the gospel.' And he would conclude 'in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.'

"This young elder was different somehow. Anxious not to spend an extra second on his feet, he said simply, in hurried, frightened words, 'I know that God lives. I know that Jesus is the Christ. I know that we have a prophet of God leading the Church. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.'

"This was a testimony. It was not just an experience nor an expression of gratitude. It was a declaration, a witness!

"Most of the elders had said 'I have a testimony,' but they had not declared it. This young elder had, in a very few words, delivered his testimony—direct, basic, and, as it turned out, powerful.

"I then knew what was wrong in the mission. We were telling stories, expressing gratitude, admitting that we had testimonies, but we were not bearing them" (*Teach Ye Diligently* [1975], 275).

■ "Your testimony will be most powerful when it is expressed as a brief, heartfelt conviction about the Savior, His teachings, and the Restoration. Pray for

guidance, and the Spirit will help you know how to express the feelings in your heart" (*True to the Faith*, 180).

"Personal testimony is the factor which turns people around in their living as they come into this Church."

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley noted the importance of testimony in the conversion process: "Personal testimony is the factor which turns people around in their living as they come into this Church" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 90; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 69).

■ President Hinckley described the power of a missionary's testimony: "[Testimony] is something that cannot be refuted. Opponents may quote scripture and argue doctrine endlessly. They can be clever and persuasive. But when one says, 'I know,' there can be no further argument. There may not be acceptance, but who can refute or deny the quiet voice of the inner soul speaking with personal conviction?" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 91; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 70).

Missionaries should practice methods of teaching that edify.



■ Teaching by the Spirit requires that we understand important methods of teaching so that the Spirit can accompany our efforts. Teaching

by the Spirit does not mean that we teach in a dull, unenthusiastic manner. Quite the opposite is true. We must teach in a way that edifies. To edify means to enlighten, to instruct, or to improve spiritually. We do this when we use clear and simple explanations, ask good questions, watch the reactions of our investigators, and share our message with enthusiasm.

Missionaries should help investigators recognize the role of the Spirit in the conversion process. Discussing with investigators their feelings about the restored gospel can help them identify the Spirit (see the supporting scriptures and statements for the principle "There are many ways that the Holy Ghost influences our lives for good," in chapter 3 of this student manual, pp. 23–27).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Romans 14:19
- 2 Nephi 33:1
- Doctrine and Covenants 50:13–14, 17–23

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ The Savior used a variety of edifying teaching methods. The following are some ways missionaries can emulate the Savior's methods in their teaching:

- **Pray.** The Savior prayed for those who would hear His words (see 3 Nephi 19:27–29). When you pray for those you teach, you exercise faith that God will soften their hearts. In your prayers, express your love for God and for those you are teaching.
- **Use the scriptures.** Jesus Christ taught from the scriptures (see Luke 24:27). Using the scriptures invites the Holy Ghost into your teaching.
- **Bear testimony.** Jesus testified of Heavenly Father and of His own divine role (see John 10:17–18, 27–30). A testimony is a simple, direct declaration of belief; it is a feeling or an assurance. As you share your testimony of the gospel principles you teach, the Spirit will witness of their truthfulness.
- **Use music.** Jesus and His Apostles “sung an hymn” (Matthew 26:30). Through music, you and those you teach can invite the influence of the Holy Ghost and express feelings that may be hard to express in other ways.
- **Share stories and examples.** Jesus taught gospel principles with stories, such as those about the good Samaritan (see Luke 10:25–37) and the prodigal son (see Luke 15:11–32). Use true stories to show how principles of the restored gospel apply in daily life.
- **Use objects and pictures.** Jesus used common objects and comparisons to teach gospel principles, such as a mustard seed (see Matthew 17:20) and calling His Apostles to be “fishers of men” (see Matthew 4:18–22). Pictures can also

help strengthen others' understanding of scripture accounts and gospel principles.

- **Ask questions, and listen.** Jesus asked questions, such as, “Whom say ye that I am?” (Matthew 16:15) and “What is written in the law? how readest thou?” (Luke 10:26), and listened to the responses. Thoughtful questions encourage discussion and the appropriate sharing of personal experiences from investigators. When you listen, you show love for your investigators and the Spirit can help direct your conversation.
- **Live the commandments.** Jesus taught that if we wish to learn the truth of a commandment or principle, we must live it (see John 7:17). He taught His disciples about missionary work by sending them on missions (see Luke 9:1–6). Missionaries can help investigators learn to pray by inviting them to pray during the lesson. Investigators can know the truth of the Word of Wisdom when they begin to live it. They will experience the spirit of the Book of Mormon when they read and pray about it.
- **Expound.** “Expound means to enlarge on and to explain clearly. Expounding the gospel means that you explain the meaning of doctrines and scriptural passages simply and clearly, relying on the Spirit to guide what you say” (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 182). The Savior expounded His teachings from the scriptures as He taught the Book of Mormon people (see 3 Nephi 26:1–5).
- **Use events.** Jesus often used events, such as the feast of the Passover, to teach gospel principles. For example, He used the feeding of the multitude and the Passover season to teach that He was the Bread of Life (see John 6:1–14, 22–65). You may use events in your investigators' lives to teach gospel principles, such as using the birth of a baby to teach the need to be born again.

“When you consider using a specific teaching method, ask yourself the following questions: Will this method invite the influence of the Spirit?

Does it match the sacredness of the principles I am teaching? Will it edify and strengthen those I teach?

“Remember that as a gospel teacher, you represent the Lord. Ensure that all you do and say is reverent and consistent with His will” (*True to the Faith*, 170).

■ President Boyd K. Packer described an important teaching method missionaries should learn to use: “The eyes of the alert teacher move constantly back and forth across the class, taking in each movement, recording each expression, responding quickly to disinterest or confusion. They read immediately a puzzled expression or sense at once when learning has taken place” (*Teach Ye Diligently*, 138–39).

■ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles described the importance of listening to those we teach: “Perhaps even more important than speaking is listening. These people are not lifeless objects disguised as a baptismal statistic. They are children of God, our brothers and sisters, and they need what we have. Be genuine. Reach out sincerely. Ask these friends what matters most to *them*. What do *they* cherish, and what do *they* hold dear? And then listen. If the setting is right, you might ask what their fears are, what they yearn for, or what they feel is missing in their lives. I promise you that *something* in what they say will *always* highlight a truth of the gospel about which you can bear testimony and about which you can then offer more. . . . If we listen with love, we won’t need to wonder what to say. It will be given to us—by the Spirit and by our friends” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 16–17; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 15).

POINTS TO PONDER

- Read the following statement from President Harold B. Lee, and think about teaching methods that would be most helpful in teaching plainly: “You’re to teach . . . not so plain that they can just understand, but you must teach the doctrines of the Church so plainly that no one can misunderstand” (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee* [1996], 459).
- What can a missionary do when his or her companion is speaking that will help the investigator feel the Spirit and understand the message more clearly?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Interview one or two of the most effective gospel teachers you know. Ask them to share what has helped them learn to teach by the Spirit. Invite them to share their thoughts on how to teach and on how to invite the Spirit into teaching. Take notes during your interviews.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Teaching the Gospel” (pp. 168–70)
- “Testimony” (pp. 178–80)

NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS

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WE LEARN TO TEACH “BY STUDY AND ALSO BY FAITH,” PART 1

INTRODUCTION

The Lord commanded, “Seek learning, even by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118). As a missionary, your faith in Jesus Christ prepares you to learn from the scriptures and from the Lord’s anointed prophets and apostles. When you exercise your faith by praying for understanding during personal study, your faith will increase. As your faith increases, you build a more secure doctrinal foundation for teaching the restored gospel and inviting others to come unto Christ. Personal and companion study are key components of missionary work.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Prayer and pondering the scriptures help prepare us to receive the influence of the Holy Ghost.
- We must seek to obtain the word.
- We obtain the word by study and by preparing to teach the restored gospel.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Prayer and pondering the scriptures help prepare us to receive the influence of the Holy Ghost.

■ Obedience to the Lord’s commandments is an important spiritual prerequisite for having the Holy Ghost influence your life. In the mission field,

obedience to mission rules is necessary for building spirituality. Along with obedience, prayer and pondering the scriptures help prepare you to receive inspiration from the Lord through the Holy Ghost.



Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 1 Nephi 11:1
- 2 Nephi 4:15–16
- Alma 5:46
- Doctrine and Covenants 11:21–22
- Doctrine and Covenants 19:38
- Doctrine and Covenants 63:64
- Doctrine and Covenants 138:1–2, 6, 11

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.



■ While serving as a member of the Seventy, Elder L. Lionel Kendrick talked about prayer as a means of communication between God and His children: “When we speak to Heavenly Father, we do so by means of prayer. When he speaks to us, he

does so by means of personal revelation. This two-way divine communication is critically important to our success, to our sense of well-being, to our feelings of security, and to our spiritual salvation. It is imperative that we understand the process of receiving personal revelation. We always pray to our Father in Heaven, and to him alone. Our prayers are rendered in the name of the Son and communicated by the power of the Holy Ghost. We do not pray to the Savior or to anyone else. To do so would be disrespectful of Heavenly Father and an indication that we do not properly understand the relationship of the members of the Godhead. The Savior and the Holy Ghost have important roles to play in the process of personal revelation” (“Personal Revelation,” *Brigham Young University 1996–97 Speeches* [1997], 251).

■ President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught the following about prayer: “Learn how to pray and how to receive answers to your prayers. When you pray over some things, you must patiently wait a long, long time before you will receive an answer. Some prayers, for your own safety, must be answered immediately, and some promptings will even come when you haven’t prayed at all” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1976, 47; or *Ensign*, May 1976, 31).

■ As a counselor in the Primary general presidency, Sister Anne G. Wirthlin taught that a pattern of pondering deepens understanding: “The Savior has given us a pattern to follow as we study the scriptures. We hear the word, we ponder upon its meaning, we ask our Heavenly Father to help us understand, and then our minds and hearts are prepared to receive the promised blessings. . . . The Spirit bears witness to our hearts as we prayerfully seek to know the things of our Heavenly Father”

(in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 10; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 10).

We must seek to obtain the word.

■ A missionary must study and learn the restored gospel as taught in the scriptures and the words of the living prophets and apostles. Learning gospel truths increases understanding of Heavenly Father’s eternal plan and our ability to teach it clearly to others.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 11:21
- Doctrine and Covenants 42:14
- Doctrine and Covenants 84:85
- Doctrine and Covenants 100:5–8

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

“It is essential that you study the doctrines of the kingdom and learn the gospel by both study and faith.”

■ President Ezra Taft Benson taught about what is necessary before we can teach with power: “Before you can strengthen your students [or investigators], it is essential that you study the doctrines of the kingdom and learn the gospel by both study and faith. To study by faith is to seek understanding and the Spirit of the Lord through the prayer of faith. Then you will have the power to convince your students” (*The Gospel Teacher and His Message* [address to religious educators, Sept. 17, 1976], 3–4).



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■ “ ‘Missionaries aren’t just memorizing one message to be given all the time, like turning on a tape player,’ says Elder [Richard G.] Scott. ‘They are to fill their minds and hearts with the basic

doctrine, the supporting scriptures, and how that relates to their own experiences that they can call upon. We now have missionaries who are much better equipped to introduce individuals to the magnificent message of the Restoration’ ” (in “Be One of the Greatest,” *New Era*, Mar. 2004, 15).

We obtain the word by study and by preparing to teach the restored gospel.



■ There is no substitute for studying the scriptures and the words of the prophets and apostles. There are wonderful promises made to those who immerse themselves in the study of the gospel, particularly in the scriptures. President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke about the blessings that will come: “I hope that for you [reading the scriptures] will become something far more enjoyable than a duty; that, rather, it will become a love affair with the word of God. I promise you that as you read, your minds will be enlightened and your spirits will be lifted. At first it may seem tedious, but that will change into a wondrous experience with thoughts and words of things divine” (“The Light within You,” *Ensign*, May 1995, 99).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 88:118; see also 109:7

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Ezra Taft Benson explained what would happen when we make the scriptures a vital part of our study:

“Success in righteousness, the power to avoid deception and resist temptation, guidance in our daily lives, healing of the soul—these are but a few of the promises the Lord has given to those who will come to His word. Does the Lord promise and not fulfill? Surely if He tells us that these things will come to us if we lay hold upon His word, then the blessings can be ours. And if we do not, then

the blessings may be lost. However diligent we may be in other areas, certain blessings are to be found only in the scriptures, only in coming to the word of the Lord and holding fast to it as we make our way through the mists of darkness to the tree of life. . . .

“ . . . I urge you to recommit yourselves to a study of the scriptures. Immerse yourselves in them daily so you will have the power of the Spirit to attend you in your callings” (“The Power of the Word,” *Ensign*, May 1986, 82).



■ Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles reflected on how missionary scripture study benefited him:

“[A] fond memory I have as a missionary is that of daily engaging in scripture study.

The discipline of following a scripture-study plan of learning the gospel was a wonderful, rewarding experience. The knowledge of the teachings of the scriptures would unfold in a glorious way through individual study. . . .

“We would also take an hour or more each day to study as companions together. Having two sets of eyes examine the doctrine of the kingdom seemed to multiply our understanding. We would read together, then share our insights.

“Our minds were sharpened as we followed the daily practice of individual and companion study. The practice brought us closer together as companions and increased our understanding of the doctrines of the kingdom” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2001, 93; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 76).

■ President Howard W. Hunter urged regular, daily scripture study: “We should not be haphazard in our reading but rather develop a systematic plan for study. There are some who read to a schedule of a number of pages or a set number of chapters each day or week. This may be perfectly justifiable and may be enjoyable if one is reading for pleasure, but it does not constitute meaningful study. It is better to have a set amount of time to give scriptural study each day than to have a set amount of chapters to read. Sometimes we find that the study of a single verse will occupy the whole time” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 92; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 64).



■ The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that study of the restored gospel is not a casual activity: “The things of God are of deep import; and time, and experience, and careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts can

only find them out” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 137).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley suggested that we study the gospel as he does, from the scriptures, rather than from lengthy commentaries:

“I do not concern myself much with reading long commentary volumes designed to enlarge at length upon that which is found in the scriptures. Rather, I prefer to dwell with the source, tasting of the unadulterated waters of the fountain of truth—the word of God as he gave it and as it has been recorded in the books we accept as scripture. . . . Through reading the scriptures, we can gain the assurance of the Spirit that that which we read has come of God for the enlightenment, blessing, and joy of his children.

“I urge our people everywhere to read the scriptures more” (“Feasting upon the Scriptures,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1985, 45).

■ Scripture study methods and strategies.

The following methods and strategies can help make our scripture study more effective:

Look for principles. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: “As you seek spiritual knowledge, search for principles. Carefully separate them from the detail used to explain them. Principles are concentrated truth, packaged for application to a wide variety of circumstances” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 117; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 86). Many principles can be found succinctly stated in the scriptures, such as the Savior’s teaching on repentance (see D&C 58:42–43) and Mormon’s declaration regarding Satan (see Alma 30:60).

Mark scriptures. Marking scriptures helps you remember where certain scriptures are located, arrange scriptures into related groups, follow certain topics, and so on. Ways to mark scriptures include

underlining, outlining, shading, circling, numbering, and cross-referencing. Develop a method of marking scriptures that will best help you understand them.

Use the study aids in the scriptures. The Latter-day Saint editions of the scriptures include study aids such as the Topical Guide, the Bible Dictionary, cross-references, word and phrase helps, excerpts from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (JST), Bible and Church history maps and photographs, and chapter headings, section headings, and verse summaries. (The Guide to the Scriptures is a collection of study aids prepared for languages other than English. It can also be found on the Internet at scriptures.lds.org.)

Ask questions relating to the text. Ask such questions as: Who is speaking? To whom is the person speaking? What is the message of this verse or chapter? When and where did the events described in this scripture occur? What are some of the key words and phrases in these verses? What do these verses teach about Christ or the plan of salvation? How does this scripture apply to me right now?

Notice questions asked in the scriptures. Questions often cause us to pause and ponder important gospel truths and how well we are personally living them. For example, consider your personal response to a question the Savior asked His disciples: “Whom say ye that I am?” (Matthew 16:15) or “Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?” (Mark 4:40).

Look for definitions of unfamiliar words or phrases. Sometimes the scriptures follow a word or phrase with a definition. For example, Nephi taught that some people “trample under their feet . . . the very God of Israel,” and then he explained that the phrase meant that “they set him at naught, and hearken not to the voice of his counsels” (1 Nephi 19:7).

Notice and learn about symbols. The scriptures often use symbols and imagery. Symbolism can be found in colors, animals, names, clothing, and so on. Many symbols lead us to Christ (see Moses 6:63). For example, use the Bible Dictionary or the Guide to the Scriptures to learn the meaning of *Bethlehem*, the city of Jesus’s birth. How does its meaning testify of Christ? (see John 6:35).

“As you seek spiritual knowledge, search for principles.”

Insert your name. Use your name in a verse to help make scriptural teachings more personal. For example, “For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of [your name]” (Moses 1:39).

Notice scripture lists. The scriptures contain numerous lists that illustrate and teach the Lord’s will and doctrine. For example, qualifications for baptism are listed in Doctrine and Covenants 20:37. King Benjamin listed what we must do to put off the natural man (see Mosiah 3:19).

Memorize key scriptures. The ability to recall important scripture references and their content is beneficial to missionaries. Following are some ways you might find helpful in memorizing scriptures:

- Write or print the scripture on a small card or piece of paper and carry it with you. Read it several times a day.
- Divide a scripture passage into phrases. Repeat the first phrase until you can recite it. Add the second phrase, and repeat the phrases until you can recite them both. Add the third phrase, and so on.
- Write the passage down numerous times each day.
- Record yourself reading the passage several times, and play the recording back while traveling to school, work, or other places.
- Using your scriptures, copy the first letter of each word of the scripture on a piece of paper. Then try to write the scripture from memory.
- Ask family members, roommates, or friends to help you learn the passage by listening to you recite the scripture, reading the scripture to you and leaving out groups of words that you must fill in, or reading to you random phrases unique to a particular scripture and having you identify and recite the scripture.

Ponder and pray about specific passages.

Pondering and praying are essential elements in scripture study. You may choose or even feel prompted to seek the meaning of a specific verse or passage of scripture. Take time to think about the scripture, pray specifically for understanding, and then be prepared for insights that enter your mind as you listen for impressions. Look to other scriptures and the teachings of the current prophets and apostles to be sure your understanding is

consistent with the doctrines of the Church. When impressions come, write them down in a study journal.



■ Creating a lesson plan enhances learning and teaching.

A written lesson plan helps us organize our thoughts. It is a means of organizing information in a clear and brief manner. A lesson plan begins with a single idea or topic and is supported

by information that relates to the main idea. An organized lesson plan makes the information easier to recall and present to an investigator. It also helps us identify principles we may have overlooked in our preparation. Lesson plans can be as basic as writing a topic and listing under it a few related items. Or it can be a more complex collection of related information divided into several subcategories.

There are many ways to make lesson plans. Try several to determine what methods work best for you. In preparation, you may develop some general questions to answer or categories of information to look for whenever you study a doctrine, or you may change them each time to fit a specific situation. You may find that organizing material visually with simple pictures is helpful to you, or you may prefer a simple table or list. Learn the principles of preparing a lesson plan, and then choose the methods that best serve the needs of those you will be teaching.

Use a lesson plan as an aid, but speak from the heart as directed by the Spirit while you are actually teaching. Elder Charles Didier of the Presidency of the Seventy stated, “What we’re asking is for the missionary to prepare an outline [lesson plan] during personal and companion study, personalized

for who will be taught that day” (in “Be One of the Greatest,” *New Era*, Mar. 2004, 14). He also explained: “Every investigator is different. So the missionaries prepare outlines to plan how they are going to teach an investigator according to his or her needs. The outline [lesson plan] helps the missionaries conceive the presentation in their own minds. If the presentation is well conceived, it is clear, and then the words will come easily as

*Use a lesson plan
as an aid, but speak
from the heart.*

missionaries teach by the Spirit” (in “Teaching from the Heart,” *Ensign*, June 2004, 8).

The following are some general guidelines for preparing lesson plans:

1. Determine the main ideas and supporting concepts that are to be taught, and organize them in a logical order.
2. Use the scriptures and statements of the living prophets as your main resources. You may also use the Topical Guide, the Bible Dictionary (or the Guide to the Scriptures in some international settings), and *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* for additional insights.

3. Allow for sharing your personal testimony of the principles you teach.

Your general lesson plans can be enlarged and modified as you use them throughout your mission. From those you will be able to develop specialized lesson plans for the various investigators you teach. Each teaching experience is different, and a variety of ideas and approaches will help you teach effectively.

The following lesson plan considerations are provided to help stimulate ideas of how you may develop or outline a lesson presentation. A sample lesson plan is also included.

LESSON PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

Doctrine, Principle, or Event

State the central message you will teach. This could be a word or short phrase (for example, “Baptism,” “Faith,” or “The First Vision”) or a simple statement (for example, “Baptism is necessary for salvation,” “Faith is necessary to come to Jesus Christ,” or “Joseph Smith saw the Father and the Son”). The central message may also be a more complex study of doctrine (for example, “The Plan of Salvation”).

What to Teach

List the points you need to cover in teaching the main doctrine, principle, or event.

Scriptures

List scriptures that support and help teach each of the points you will cover in teaching the main doctrine, principle, or event. Use scripture references cited in the Topical Guide, the Bible Dictionary or Guide to the Scriptures, and *True to the Faith* and verses you find in your ongoing scripture study.

Study Aids

Find and write summaries of statements from the Bible Dictionary or Guide to the Scriptures,

True to the Faith, Church magazines, and similar sources that teach or clarify the various points of the main doctrine, principle, or event. Where possible, use the words of living prophets and apostles.

How to Teach

List the specific teaching methods you plan to use. These might include scriptures, pictures, and personal stories.

Testify

Consider how you might express your feelings about the doctrine, principle, or event. For example, you could bear your testimony or use faith-promoting examples from your own life. Remember, “faith is kindled by hearing the testimony of those who have faith” (Bible Dictionary, “Faith,” 669).

Central Commitments

List what you will do to invite your investigators to live and apply gospel principles and keep the commitments you have given them.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Doctrine, Principle, or Event

The gospel of Jesus Christ was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

What to Teach

1. Joseph Smith sought for truth and went to God in prayer.
2. God and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith.
3. Like prophets in earlier dispensations (Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses), Joseph Smith was called as the prophet of this last dispensation.
4. God restored the fulness of the gospel through Joseph Smith.
5. Other heavenly messengers restored priesthood authority, and Christ’s Church was organized.
6. A living prophet directs the Church today.

Scriptures and Study Aids

1. Joseph Smith—History 1:5–15
2. Joseph Smith—History 1:16–19

3. Bible Dictionary, “Dispensations,” 657–58; or Guide to the Scriptures, “Dispensation,” 67; Doctrine and Covenants 1:17.

4. Doctrine and Covenants 35:17; 135:3
5. Doctrine and Covenants 13; 27:12; 21:1–3
6. *True to the Faith*, 129–30

How to Teach

1. Use pictures (if available) and summarize events leading up to the First Vision; read Joseph Smith—History 1:10–14 with the investigators.
2. Read or have investigators read Joseph Smith—History 1:15–17.

Testify

1. Testify that Joseph Smith was the prophet of God who restored the Church of Jesus Christ with its divine truths and authority.
2. Briefly tell how you studied and prayed in order to gain a testimony of the Restoration.

Central Commitments

Ask the family to pray about this message. Ask them to read selected portions of the Book of Mormon before the next visit.

POINTS TO PONDER

- How would you describe the difference between scripture reading and scripture study?
- What is the value of written preparation in teaching the restored gospel?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Think about where you are in your gospel knowledge compared with where you would like to be when you enter the mission field. Determine what you will need to do to reach that level and write some goals to help you gain that growth in your gospel understanding.

- Select a doctrine or principle of the restored gospel that you would like to understand better. Study that doctrine or principle, and develop a lesson plan for teaching from your study. Use your lesson plan to teach a friend or family member.
- Begin or enhance a scripture-marking program for your own set of scriptures.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Education” (pp. 50–51)

NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS

[illegible]



WE LEARN TO TEACH “BY STUDY AND ALSO BY FAITH,” PART 2

INTRODUCTION

It has been said that you can’t teach what you don’t know anymore than you can come back from where you’ve never been. You must first learn and understand the doctrines and principles of the restored gospel to enable you to teach with the Spirit. You must exercise faith as you study the scriptures, the teachings of the living prophets and apostles, and *Preach My Gospel* in preparation for teaching investigators. As you live worthily and work diligently, the Holy Ghost will help you become a proficient teacher of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Bearing testimony invites the Spirit into our teaching.
- We obtain the word by faith.
- God promises the Holy Ghost to those who treasure up His word.

“An effective missionary teaches, testifies, and invites others to do things that build faith in Jesus Christ.”

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Bearing testimony invites the Spirit into our teaching.



■ “A testimony is a spiritual witness and assurance given by the Holy Ghost. To bear testimony is to give a simple, direct declaration of belief—a feeling, an assurance, a conviction of gospel truth. Sharing your testimony often is one of the most powerful ways of inviting the Spirit and helping others feel the Spirit. It adds a current, personal witness to the truths you have taught from the scriptures. An effective missionary teaches, testifies, and invites others to do things that build faith in Jesus Christ. This includes making promises that

come from living true principles” (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 198).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 2 Nephi 33:1
- Doctrine and Covenants 100:5–8

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained “how testimony is instilled in our hearts”: “Since it is the Holy Ghost who testifies of sacred truth, we can do at least three things to make that experience more likely for [those we teach]. First, we can teach some sacred truth. Then we can testify that we know what we have taught is true. And then we must act so that those who hear our testimony see that our actions conform with what we said was true. The Holy Ghost will then confirm to them the truth of what we said and that we knew it to be true” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 84; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 62).



■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles emphasized the importance of testimony and the Holy Ghost in personal conversion: “The true church does not convert by signs and wonders, but by the testimony of the Holy

Ghost. The Lord’s way of teaching religious truths is not by a public miracle or sign, but by a personal testimony” (*The Lord’s Way* [1991], 88).

We obtain the word by faith.

■ When we study the restored gospel “by faith,” we seek understanding from Heavenly Father by praying, applying gospel principles, and searching

scriptures. Our understanding and our faith in what we study grows as we live according to the truths we learn. “Like all blessings from God, faith is obtained and increased through individual obedience and righteous action” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 55). This principle concerning faith is true for both missionaries and investigators. Heavenly Father rewards our faithful efforts with increased revelation. The Lord taught, “If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal” (D&C 42:61). One of the challenges in teaching investigators is communicating these principles of happiness in such a way that they will apply them in their own lives and thus become converted.

“The true church does not convert by signs and wonders, but by the testimony of the Holy Ghost.”



Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Romans 10:17
- Doctrine and Covenants 42:14
- Doctrine and Covenants 88:118; see also 109:7

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, “Learning is

to be accompanied by faith, and as the Book of Mormon teaches us, learning ‘is good if [we] hearken unto the counsels of God.’ (2 Ne. 9:29.)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, 121; or *Ensign*, May 1982, 84).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained how gospel study works together with faith: “Profound spiritual truth cannot simply be poured from one mind and heart to another. It takes faith and diligent effort. Precious truth comes a small piece at a time through faith, with great exertion, and at times wrenching struggles. The Lord intends it be that way so that we can mature and progress” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 119; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 88).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained:

“In modern revelation the Lord has told us to ‘seek learning even by study and also by faith.’ (D&C 109:7.) Seeking learning by study, we use the method of reason. Seeking learning by faith, we must rely on revelation. Obedient to heavenly decree, we should seek learning by reason and also by revelation. . . .

“The things of God cannot be learned solely by study and reason. . . . We cannot come to know the things of God while rejecting or failing to use the indispensable method God has prescribed to learn these things. The things of God must be learned in his own way, through faith in God and revelation from the Holy Ghost” (*The Lord’s Way*, 16, 56).

■ Elder Henry B. Eyring used the Prophet Joseph Smith as an example of how the Lord blesses those who study the scriptures with faith: “Pondering the scriptures will lead you to ask the right questions in prayer. And just as surely as the heavens were opened to Joseph Smith after he pondered the scriptures in faith, God will answer your prayers and He will lead you by the hand” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2002, 81; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 76).

■ Elder Eyring also spoke about two keys to receiving the Spirit:

“There are two great keys to inviting the Spirit to guide what words we speak as we feed others. They are the daily study of the scriptures and the prayer of faith.

“The Holy Ghost will guide what we say if we study and ponder the scriptures every day. The words of the scriptures invite the Holy Spirit. . . .

“We treasure the word of God not only by reading the words of the scriptures but by studying them. We may be nourished more by pondering a few words, allowing the Holy Ghost to make them treasures to us, than by passing quickly and superficially over whole chapters of scripture.

“Just as pondering the scriptures invites the Holy Ghost, so does daily pleading in prayer. If we do not ask in prayer, He will rarely come, and without our petition He is not likely to linger. . . . Heartfelt, constant pleading for the companionship of the Holy Ghost, with the pure intent to nourish our Father’s children, will surely bring blessings to us and to those we love and serve” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1997, 114–15; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 83–84).

God promises the Holy Ghost to those who treasure up His word.

■ When missionaries pay the price to learn the restored gospel by study and faith, the Holy Ghost blesses them with power to teach in a manner that quenches the spiritual thirst of sincere investigators of truth and motivates them to draw closer to Jesus Christ by accepting the principles and ordinances of salvation restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Alma 17:2–3
- Doctrine and Covenants 84:85

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder D. Todd Christopherson of the Presidency of the Seventy gave insight regarding how to learn by the Spirit: “For the gospel to be written in your heart, you need to know what it is and grow to understand it more fully. That means you will study it. When I say *study*, I mean something more than reading. It is a good thing sometimes to read a book of scripture within a set period of time

to get an overall sense of its message, but for conversion you should care more about the amount of time you spend in the scriptures than about the amount you read in that time. I see you sometimes reading a few verses, stopping to ponder them, carefully reading the verses again, and as you think about what they mean, praying for understanding, asking questions in your mind, waiting for spiritual impressions, and writing down the impressions and insights that come so you can remember and learn more. Studying in this way, you may not read a lot of chapters or verses in a half hour, but you will be giving place in your heart for the word of God, and He will be speaking to you” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2004, 9–10; or *Ensign*, May 2004, 11).



■ The manner in which the Lord wants us to teach requires that we prepare ourselves for the Spirit. Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve taught: “Our teaching will be effective if we approach it

humbly through prayer and study. We will then be assisted by the Spirit in imparting the word, consistent and in harmony with what the Lord would have us teach” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 7; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 8).

■ President Spencer W. Kimball explained how reading the scriptures brings the influence of the Holy Ghost: “The years have taught me that if we will energetically pursue this worthy personal goal [to read and study the scriptures in depth] in a determined and conscientious manner, we shall indeed find answers to our problems and peace in our hearts. We shall experience the Holy Ghost broadening our understanding, find new insights, witness an unfolding pattern of all scripture; and the doctrines of the Lord shall come to have more meaning to us than we ever thought possible. As a consequence, we shall have greater wisdom with which to guide ourselves and our families, so that we may serve as a light and source of strength to our nonmember friends with whom we have an obligation to share the gospel” (“Always a Convert Church: Some Lessons to Learn and Apply This Year,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1975, 3).

“Our teaching will be effective if we approach it humbly through prayer and study.”

POINTS TO PONDER

- Why is it important that missionaries bear their testimonies often?
- In what ways can you study by faith?
- What does it mean to “treasure up in your minds continually the words of life” (D&C 84:85)?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Consider bearing your testimony in the next fast and testimony meeting in your ward or branch.
- Select a favorite chapter from the Book of Mormon or a favorite section in the Doctrine and Covenants and spend significant time “studying by faith.” Take time to pray regarding the scripture, ponder, analyze, identify principles, and determine how you can apply what you learn in your life. Talk about your efforts with a close friend or priesthood leader.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Importance of Daily Scripture Study” (pp. 155–56)
- “Testimony” (pp. 178–80)

NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS



HEAVENLY FATHER'S PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Heavenly Father desires a fulness of joy for all of His children. He provided a plan whereby His children may become like Him and receive a fulness of joy. This plan is often referred to as the plan of salvation, the plan of redemption, or the plan of happiness. Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice are essential in this plan.

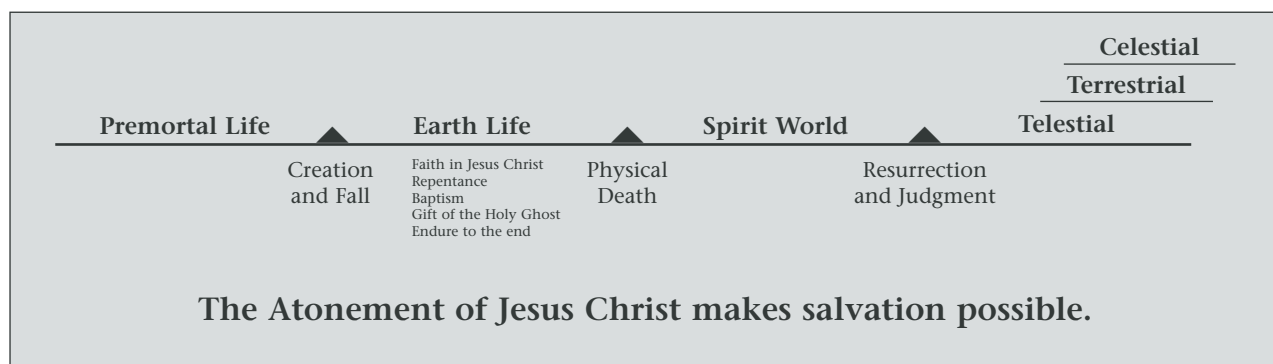
There are three stages of Heavenly Father's plan: premortal, mortal, and postmortal. Three vital elements that make the plan possible are the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement. In our premortal existence as spirit children of Heavenly Father, we could not become fully like Him without the experience of living in mortality with a physical body. Accordingly, under the direction of the Father, Jesus Christ created the earth (see Hebrews 1:1–3). The Fall of Adam and Eve made it possible for us to be born of mortal parents, receive a physical body, and exercise agency in choosing between good and evil (see 2 Nephi 2:25–27). The Atonement of Jesus Christ provides for a

resurrection, forgiveness of sin, and a judgment into a degree of glory (see 1 Corinthians 15:40–42; Revelation 20:12–13; 2 Nephi 9:22; Alma 42:23).

Jesus Christ is central to all parts of our Heavenly Father's plan. He suffered and died to bring to pass our immortality and eternal life (see Moses 1:39). We accept His atoning sacrifice by having faith in Him, repenting, being baptized by one having authority from God, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and living in harmony with His commandments.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- There are three stages of Heavenly Father's plan: premortal, mortal, and postmortal.
- Jesus Christ is central to Heavenly Father's plan.
- The Atonement of Jesus Christ makes it possible to overcome the obstacles of spiritual and physical death.
- Heavenly Father prepared degrees of glory for His children.



SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

There are three stages of Heavenly Father's plan: premortal, mortal, and postmortal.

■ Knowing where we came from and why we are here in this mortal life helps us understand that we are living in a three-stage journey. The first stage was our premortal life, the second is mortality, and the third is our postmortal life. Mortality prepares the faithful to return to live in the presence of our Heavenly Father.



Pre-Existence, by Jerry Hartson, © IIR

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Jeremiah 1:5
- Alma 12:25
- Alma 34:32
- Alma 42:11
- Moses 3:4–5
- Moses 5:11

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ As a member of the Quorum of the Seventy, Elder Alexander B. Morrison taught that there is a plan that will enable us to return to the presence of our Heavenly Father: “Latter-day Saints affirm that life is a three-stage process, to be viewed within the context of the Father’s ‘great plan of happiness’ (Alma 42:8). Long ago, before the earth on which we now

dwell came into existence, God our Father, the mighty Elohim whose children we are, established a plan whereby his offspring would experience life in mortality, with all its trials, temptations, and opportunities, and then return to dwell with Him in eternal glory. The plan provided the perfect way for all of God’s children to receive immortality and gain eternal life. Indeed, the very purpose of God’s existence—His work and glory—is to ‘bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’ (Moses 1:39)” (“Life—the Gift Each Is Given,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1998, 15–16).

■ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave the following analogy: “This is the day of our mortal probation. We might compare our eternal journey to a race of three laps around the track. We have completed the first lap [our pre-earth life] successfully and have made wonderful progress. We have started on the second lap. Can you imagine a world-class runner stopping along the track at this point to pick flowers or chase a rabbit that crossed his path? Yet this is what we are doing when we occupy our time with worldly pursuits that do not move us closer to the third lap toward eternal life, the greatest of all the gifts of God [see D&C 14:7]” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 15; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 14).

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave perspective and hope regarding man’s eternal existence: “Life does not begin with birth, nor does it end with death. Prior to our birth, we dwelled as spirit children with our Father in Heaven. There we eagerly anticipated the possibility of coming to earth and obtaining a physical body. Knowingly we wanted the risks of mortality, which would allow the exercise of agency and accountability. ‘This life [was to become] a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God’ (Alma 12:24). But we regarded the returning home as the best part of that long-awaited trip, just as we do now. Before embarking on any journey, we like to have some assurance of a round-trip ticket. Returning from earth to life in our heavenly home requires passage through—and not around—the doors of death. We were born to die, and we die to live (see 2 Corinthians 6:9). As seedlings of God, we barely blossom on earth; we fully flower in heaven” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 102; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 72).

*“Life does not begin
with birth, nor does it
end with death.”*

■ President Thomas S. Monson, a counselor in the First Presidency, described some of the reasons we chose to come to mortality and be separated from our Heavenly Father: “Clearly, one primary purpose of our existence upon the earth is to obtain bodies of flesh and bones. We are here to gain experience that could come only through separation from our heavenly parents. In a thousand ways, we are privileged to choose for ourselves. Here we learn from the hard taskmaster of experience. We discern between good and evil. We differentiate as to the bitter and the sweet. We learn that decisions determine destiny” (“Invitation to Exaltation,” *Ensign*, June 1993, 4).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke about our feelings in the premortal life regarding our coming to mortality:

“One of the most exhilarating moments of your life—when you were filled with anticipation, excitement, and gratitude—you are not able to remember. That experience occurred in the premortal life when you were informed that finally your time had come to leave the spirit world to dwell on earth with a mortal body.

“You knew you could learn through personal experience the lessons that would bring happiness on earth—lessons that would eventually lead you to exaltation and eternal life as a glorified, celestial being in the presence of your Holy Father and His Beloved Son.

“You understood that there would be challenges, for you would live in an environment of both righteous and evil influences. Yet surely you resolved that no matter what the cost, no matter what the effort, suffering, and testing, you would return victorious” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 5; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 6).

Jesus Christ is central to Heavenly Father's plan.

■ The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that the Savior's Atonement was essential to the plan of salvation: “The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only

appendages to it” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 121).

“We are here to gain experience that could come only through separation from our heavenly parents.”

Elder Earl C. Tingey of the Presidency of the Seventy taught: “When we speak of the Atonement, we speak of the voluntary act of Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, who came to earth to provide a means whereby all mankind could elect to return to their loving Father. This ‘great plan of happiness’ is important to us and should inspire us to qualify under the provisions of the Atonement to receive salvation and eternal life” (*The Atonement: Fulfilling God's Great Plan of Happiness* [2000], 8).



Recognizing that Jesus Christ was foreordained as the Redeeming Messiah before the foundation of this earth enables us to better recognize our dependence upon Him. He was central to Heavenly Father's plan in our first estate and is central to His plan in our second estate and postmortal existence. Without the Atonement of Christ, immortality and eternal life would not be possible. Only in and through Christ can the Father's plan for our salvation be accomplished.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 2 Nephi 2; 9
- Mosiah 3–5; 14–16
- Alma 5; 7; 34; 42
- Moses 6:62–63

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that Christ is the central figure in the plan of salvation:

“Our Father in Heaven understood the need for His children to be reminded of the promises He has made to us if we would obey His laws. In making such covenants, the Lord offered blessings in exchange for obedience to particular

commandments. A plan was laid out for us from the very beginning. The central figure in His plan of salvation is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. His atoning sacrifice for all mankind is the centerpiece of the history of our Father in Heaven's children here on earth.

"Each of us who accepts the divine plan must accept the role of our Savior and covenant to keep His laws that our Father has developed for us. As we accept Christ in spirit and in deed, we may win our salvation. We read in the scriptures: 'Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore' (Moses 5:8)" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 77–78; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 53).

■ From the beginning, Jesus Christ was the key to Heavenly Father's plan for His children:

"Before you were born on the earth, you lived in the presence of your Heavenly Father as one of His spirit children. In this premortal existence, you attended a council with Heavenly Father's other spirit children. At that council, Heavenly Father presented His great plan of happiness (see Abraham 3:22–26).

"In harmony with the plan of happiness, the premortal Jesus Christ, the Firstborn Son of the Father in the spirit, covenanted to be the Savior (see Moses 4:2; Abraham 3:27). Those who followed Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ were permitted to come to the earth to experience mortality and progress toward eternal life. Lucifer, another spirit son of God, rebelled against the plan and 'sought to destroy the agency of man' (Moses 4:3). He became Satan, and he and his followers were cast out of heaven and denied the privileges of receiving a physical body and experiencing mortality (see Moses 4:4; Abraham 3:27–28)" (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 115–16).

■ Elder Bruce R. McConkie, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained the roles Christ plays in the salvation of man:

"Before we can even begin to understand the temporal creation of all things, we must know how and in what manner these three eternal verities—the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement—are inseparably woven together to form one plan of salvation. No one of them stands alone; each of

them ties into the other two; and without a knowledge of all of them, it is not possible to know the truth about any one of them.

"Be it known, then, that salvation is in Christ and comes because of his atoning sacrifice. The Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ is the heart

and core and center of revealed religion. It ransoms men from the temporal and spiritual death brought into the world by the Fall of Adam. All men will be resurrected because our blessed Lord himself died and

rose again, becoming thus the firstfruits of them that slept.

"And further: Christ died to save sinners. He took upon himself the sins of all men on conditions of repentance. Eternal life, the greatest of all the gifts of God, is available because of what Christ did in Gethsemane and at Golgotha. He is both the resurrection and the life. Immortality and eternal life are the children of the Atonement. There is no language or power of expression given to man which can set forth the glory and wonder and infinite import of the ransoming power of the great Redeemer" ("Christ and the Creation," *Ensign*, June 1982, 9).

The Atonement of Jesus Christ makes it possible to overcome the obstacles of spiritual and physical death.



The Greatest of All, by Del Parson, © 1987 IRI

■ Why do we need the Atonement to return to Heavenly Father's presence? Is not our best effort enough to return us to our Father? President Joseph Fielding Smith described our condition and the reason for our dependence on the Savior's sacrifice:

"A man walking along the road happens to fall into a pit so deep and dark that he cannot climb to the surface and regain his freedom. How can he save himself from his predicament? Not by any exertions on his part, for there is no means of escape in the pit. He calls for help and some kindly disposed

"Salvation is in Christ and comes because of his atoning sacrifice."

soul, hearing his cries for relief, hastens to his assistance and by lowering a ladder, gives to him the means by which he may climb again to the surface of the earth.

"This was precisely the condition that Adam placed himself and his posterity in, when he partook of the forbidden fruit. All being together in the pit, none could gain the surface and relieve the others. The pit was banishment from the presence of the Lord and temporal death, the dissolution of the body. And all being subject to death, none could provide the means of escape.

"Therefore, in his infinite mercy, the Father heard the cries of his children and sent his Only Begotten Son, who was not subject to death nor to sin, to provide the means of escape. This he did through his infinite atonement and the everlasting gospel" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 1:126–27).

The great joy and good news of the gospel is that we will live again because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Through Jesus Christ all obstacles can be overcome by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. He alone can succor and save the children of men because He "descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things" (D&C 88:6). He paid the price for our sins; therefore, as we come unto Christ with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, we can return to the presence of the Father (see D&C 45:3–5). In addition, "as we rely on the Atonement of Jesus Christ, He can help us endure our trials, sicknesses, and pain. We can be filled with joy, peace, and consolation. All that is unfair about life can be made right through the Atonement of Jesus Christ" (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 52).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 1 Corinthians 15:19–23
- 2 Nephi 2:25–27
- 2 Nephi 9:10–13
- Alma 34:8–10
- Doctrine and Covenants 93:33

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson shared his feelings about the Atonement:

"I weep for joy when I contemplate the significance of it all. To be redeemed is to be atoned—received in the close embrace of God with an expression not only of His forgiveness, but of our oneness of heart and mind. What a privilege! And what a comfort to those of us with loved ones who have already passed from our family circle through the gateway we call death!" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 46; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 34).

■ "As used in the scriptures, to atone is to suffer the penalty for an act of sin, thereby removing the effects of sin from the repentant sinners and allowing them to be reconciled to God. Jesus Christ suffered in Gethsemane and on the cross. He was the only one capable of making a perfect Atonement for all mankind. He suffered the penalty for our sins in Gethsemane and died on the cross. He took upon Himself the pains, sicknesses, temptations, afflictions, and infirmities of us all (see Alma 7:11–12)" (*Preach My Gospel*, 58).

■ Spiritual death is described as "separation from God and his influences; to die as to things pertaining to righteousness. Lucifer and a third part of the hosts of heaven suffered a spiritual death when they were cast out of heaven (D&C 29:36–37).

"Spiritual death was introduced into the world by the fall of Adam (Moses 6:48). Mortals with evil thoughts, words, and works are spiritually dead while still alive on earth (1 Tim. 5:6). Through the atonement of Jesus Christ and by obedience to the principles and ordinances of the gospel, men and women can become clean from sin and overcome spiritual death" (Guide to the Scriptures, "Death, Spiritual," 62–63).

■ Elder Earl C. Tingey explained the need for overcoming physical death:

"Physical death is the separation of the spirit from the physical body. At death, the body is laid in the ground, and the righteous spirit is received into a state of happiness called paradise (Alma 40:11–12). Those who are wicked and choose evil rather than good while in mortality go to a place within the postmortal spirit world referred to as 'darkness' (Alma 40:13–14) or spirit prison. From among the righteous in paradise, missionaries are selected to teach the gospel to those in spirit prison (D&C 138:30).

"It was never intended that the spirit and the body remain forever separated. After all, 'the spirit and the body are the soul of man' (D&C 88:15). Man was created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26–27), who is a glorified personage possessing a spirit and a perfected physical body (Joseph Smith—History 1:17). When we, as personages of spirit, were in the pre-earthly existence, we recognized that God had a spirit and a perfected body. Could we, in a spirit state only, become like God? No. We had to gain physical bodies through birth on a physical earth. That process began when Adam and Eve became the first physical beings on earth, possessing bodies that housed their spirits (Moses 3:7). When Adam and Eve died physically, as does every other human being, their spirits were separated from their bodies.

"One of the missions of Jesus Christ was to overcome physical death by providing a literal and universal resurrection for all mankind" (*The Atonement*, 56–57).

■ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles bore testimony of the Savior: "The Atonement of Jesus Christ, an act of pure love, overcame the effects of the Fall and provided the way for all mankind to return to the presence of God. As part of the Atonement, the Savior overcame physical death and provided immortality for every one of God's children through the Resurrection. He also overcame spiritual death and provided the possibility of eternal life, the life that God lives and the greatest of all the gifts of God. This He did by taking upon Himself the suffering for the sins of all humankind" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 96–97; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 71).

■ The Savior's suffering for our sins was a part of His Atonement. We needed the Atonement to be rescued from our physical and spiritual deaths. Elder Bruce R. McConkie described the Lord's ordeal:

"We do not know, we cannot tell, no mortal mind can conceive the full import of what Christ did in Gethsemane. . . .

"We know that in some way, incomprehensible to us, his suffering satisfied the demands of justice, ransomed penitent souls from the pains and

penalties of sin, and made mercy available to those who believe in his holy name. . . .

". . . On a hill called Calvary . . . the Roman soldiers laid him upon the cross.

"With great mallets they drove spikes of iron through his feet and hands and wrists. Truly he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. . . .

". . . While he was hanging on the cross . . . all the infinite agonies and merciless pains of Gethsemane recurred.

"The Atonement of Jesus Christ [was] an act of pure love."

"And, finally, when the atoning agonies had taken their toll—when the victory had been won, when the Son of God had fulfilled the will of his Father in all things—then he said, 'It is finished' (John 19:30), and he voluntarily gave up the ghost. . . .

"His rising from death on the third day crowned the Atonement. Again, in some way incomprehensible to us, the effects of his resurrection pass upon all men so that all shall rise from the grave" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1985, 9–11; or *Ensign*, May 1985, 9–10).

■ Elder Bruce C. Hafen of the Seventy taught what we must do to overcome spiritual death: "The Savior has atoned for our *personal sins* on the condition of our repentance. Personal repentance is a necessary condition of salvation but is not by itself sufficient to assure salvation. Without the Atonement, our repentance will not save us. One must also accept the ordinances of baptism and receive the Holy Ghost, by which one is born again as a spiritual child of Christ" ("The Restored Doctrine of the Atonement," *Ensign*, Dec. 1993, 12).

Heavenly Father prepared degrees of glory for His children.

■ Both ancient and modern scripture help us understand that all the children of God, except the sons of perdition, will be saved in a degree of glory (see D&C 76:41–43). The glories of the celestial, terrestrial, and telestial kingdoms surpass our ability to comprehend. The celestial kingdom is the highest degree of glory and is the only kingdom where we can become like our Heavenly Father.



The City Eternal, © 2000 Keith Larson. Do not copy.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- John 14:2
- 1 Corinthians 15:40–42
- Doctrine and Covenants 98:18

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles described how comprehensive the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is: “The theology of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is comprehensive, universal, merciful, and true. Following the necessary experience of mortal life, all sons and daughters of God will ultimately be resurrected and go to a kingdom of glory. The righteous—regardless of current religious denomination or belief—will ultimately go to a kingdom of glory more wonderful than any of us can comprehend. Even the wicked, or almost all of them, will ultimately go to a marvelous—though lesser—kingdom of glory. All of that will occur because of God’s love for his children and because of the atonement and resurrection of Jesus Christ, ‘who glorifies the Father, and saves all the works of his hands’ (D&C 76:43)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 115; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 87).

■ Elder David B. Haight, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught how we are all equal as we seek to inherit the celestial kingdom: “Revelations to Joseph Smith expand man’s knowledge that Jesus Christ was crucified to save the world from sin, that through his act of redemption

all mankind will be resurrected from the grave and given the possibility of eternal life if obedient to gospel principles.

“We are taught further enlightenment on Jesus’ statement ‘In my Father’s house are many mansions’ (John 14:2). We learn not only of the degrees of glory and those eligible, but that man should strive for the highest ‘heaven’ which is available, and is reachable only through obedience to all of God’s commandments. President George Albert Smith said: ‘One of the beautiful things to me in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that it brings us all to a common level. It is not necessary for a man to be a president of a stake, or a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, in order to attain a high place in the celestial kingdom. The humblest member of the Church, if he keeps the commandments of God, will obtain an exaltation just as much as any other man in the celestial kingdom. The beauty of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that it makes us all equal. . . . As we keep the commandments of the Lord . . . we have equal opportunities for exaltation’ (in Conference Report, Oct. 1933, p. 25)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 33–34; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 23–24).

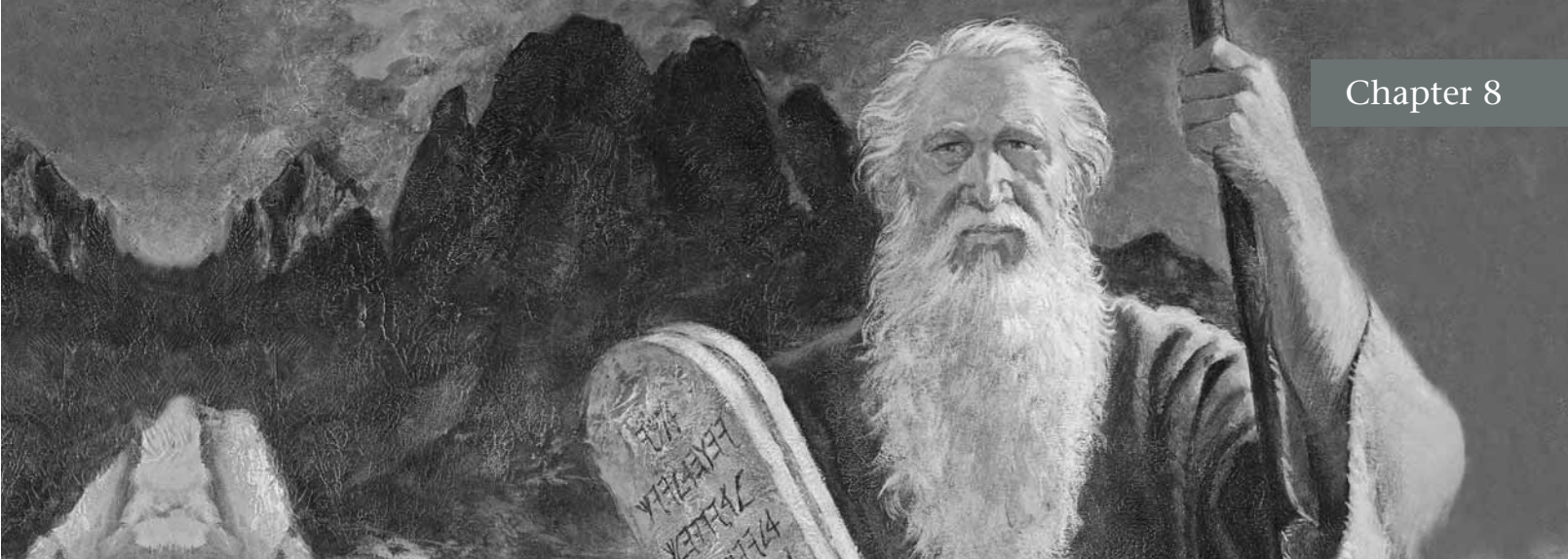
POINTS TO PONDER

- What is the importance of agency and accountability in the three stages of our eternal existence?
 - How does our immortality and eternal life depend upon Jesus Christ?
 - In what ways can the Fall be considered a positive event for mankind?
 - Why is the combining of spirit and body essential to our salvation?

“The righteous . . . will ultimately go to a kingdom of glory more wonderful than any of us can comprehend.”

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Study “Atonement” in the Bible Dictionary (p. 617) or “Atone, Atonement” in the Guide to the Scriptures (pp. 22–23). You may want to mark information you intend to use when you teach about the Atonement.
- Make a one-page summary or illustration of the plan of salvation.



Moses and the Tablets, by Jerry Harston

PROPHETS AND APOSTASY

INTRODUCTION

The Lord calls prophets to teach His children the plan of salvation. Adam was the first prophet, followed by others, such as Noah, Abraham, and Moses. Time and again throughout the history of the world, the people eventually rejected the prophets' message. When this happened, prophets, ordinances, and priesthood authority were taken away and the people lived in spiritual darkness. These periods of darkness are referred to as periods of *apostasy*.

Because of His mercy, in time the Lord called and sent new prophets to restore His gospel. Understanding this pattern of teaching, rejection, and restoration prepares a person to recognize the Lord's hand in the latter-day Restoration through the Prophet Joseph Smith, who opened the dispensation of the fulness of times.

"A dispensation of the gospel is a period of time in which the Lord has at least one authorized servant on the earth who bears the holy priesthood and the keys, and who has a divine commission to dispense the gospel to the inhabitants of the earth. When this occurs, the gospel is revealed anew, so that people of that dispensation do not have to depend basically on past dispensations for knowledge of the plan of salvation. . . .

"The plan of salvation, which is older than the earth, has been revealed and taught in every dispensation beginning with Adam and is the same in every age of the world" (Bible Dictionary, "Dispensations," 657–58).

"The plan of salvation . . . has been revealed and taught in every dispensation."

There have been many dispensations on the earth. The first dispensation began with Adam. He was commanded to teach his family the gospel (see Moses 5:12). As time passed, many chose not to listen or obey and rejected God's plan of salvation (see Moses 5:13). Because of His great love and

mercy, Heavenly Father also revealed anew the gospel of Jesus Christ through the prophet Noah (see Moses 8:16–17). But as with Adam's family, many people chose darkness over light and ultimately turned away (see Moses 8:20).

Other dispensations were brought forth through prophets such as Abraham (see Abraham 1:2–5) and Moses (see Exodus 3:1–10). All dispensations provided the opportunity for people to come unto Christ through faith in Him, repentance, baptism, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- The Lord provides truth, priesthood authority, ordinances, and organization through His prophets.
- Throughout history there has been a recurring pattern of apostasy and restoration.
- The rejection of the Savior, His teachings, and priesthood authority resulted in the Apostasy of the New Testament Church.
- The European Reformation helped prepare the way for the final Restoration.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

The Lord provides truth, priesthood authority, ordinances, and organization through His prophets.



■ God loves His children and has provided a plan of salvation and happiness for them. This plan includes saving truths and ordinances. He always reveals His plan through His prophets. Under divine guidance, these prophets ensure that

the teaching of gospel truths and the performance of saving ordinances are done in the correct manner and by the proper authority. Prophets also have a commission to ensure that the Church is organized properly and functions for the benefit of those who accept the Lord's commandments. To those who are not familiar with the role of prophets, missionaries teach why these inspired men are necessary.

"[The Melchizedek Priesthood] is the channel through which . . . every important matter is revealed from heaven."

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Amos 3:7
- Matthew 16:18–19
- Ephesians 2:19–20
- Ephesians 4:11–14
- Alma 12:27–30
- Doctrine and Covenants 1:38
- Articles of Faith 1:6

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that one of the roles of prophets has always been to provide truth to the Lord's children: "Ancient prophets warned not only of things to come, but, more

importantly, they became the revealers of truth to people. It was they who pointed the way men should live if they were to be happy and find peace in their lives" (*Be Thou an Example* [1981], 124).

■ The Prophet Joseph Smith explained that the Melchizedek Priesthood "is the channel through which all knowledge, doctrine, the plan of salvation and every important matter is revealed from heaven. . . . It is the channel through which the Almighty commenced revealing His glory at the beginning of the creation of this earth, and through which He has continued to reveal Himself to the children of men to the present time, and through which He will make known His purposes to the end of time" (*History of the Church*, 4:207; paragraphing altered).

■ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that the Lord provides and directs the use of His sacred ordinances through His prophets: "In every age when the gospel is on earth, it must be revealed to the Lord's prophets, and they must be called to stand as legal administrators to perform and to direct the performance of the ordinances of salvation for their fellowmen" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 6).

■ President Marion G. Romney, who was a counselor in the First Presidency, taught about the reasons for the Restoration of the gospel and the reestablishment of the Church of Jesus Christ: "For the purpose of saving mankind in this world, and in the world to come, the Lord revealed it anew in this dispensation through the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jun. Through him also the Lord . . . reestablished his Church, ' . . . even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' (D&C 115:4). . . . This Church is the Lord's appointed custodian and legal administrator of the ordinances of his gospel" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1965, 105).

Throughout history there has been a recurring pattern of apostasy and restoration.

■ Heavenly Father loves His children and provided a plan for them to return to live with Him. To show His love, He calls prophets to whom He gives priesthood authority and revelation. Prophets have always taught Heavenly Father's plan to His children. Those who follow the prophets' words

are blessed with great happiness. However, those who choose to disregard or distort the principles and ordinances of the gospel begin to live in spiritual darkness. The Lord often removes His prophets from among those people who reject them. When prophets are no longer present, truth, priesthood authority, ordinances, and Church organization become corrupted, changed, or lost (*apostasy*). When the time is right, God calls a new prophet to restore His truth, priesthood authority, ordinances, and Church organization (*restoration*).

The repeated cycle of apostasy and restoration through the Lord's prophets continued through much of the Old Testament times.



The Restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood, by Kenneth Riley, © 1965 RRI

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Amos 8:11–12
- Matthew 21:33–43
- 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3
- 2 Nephi 25:17; see also Isaiah 11:11–12

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Marion G. Romney described the repeating pattern of apostasy and restoration: “This has been the pattern now for nearly 6,000

years. In each gospel dispensation, men have rejected the gospel and as a consequence have sunk into apostasy, debauchery, and darkness. In each dispensation, the true nature of the Godhead—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—has been revealed anew. The fundamental principles and ordinances have also been revealed anew and emphasized. The importance of complying with gospel teachings has been stressed” (“‘Choose Ye This Day,’” *Ensign*, Feb. 1977, 2).

■ “Adam was the first prophet on the earth. By revelation, Adam learned of mankind’s proper relationship with God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost; of the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ; and of the first principles and ordinances of the gospel. Adam and Eve taught their children these truths and encouraged them to develop faith and to live the gospel in all aspects of their lives. Adam was followed by other prophets, but over time the posterity of Adam rejected the gospel and fell into apostasy, choosing to be unrighteous.

“Thus began the pattern of prophetic dispensations that makes up much of the recorded history of the Old Testament. Heavenly Father revealed His gospel through direct communication to prophets such as Noah, Abraham, and Moses. Each prophet was called by God to begin a new dispensation of the gospel. To each of these prophets God granted priesthood authority and revealed eternal truths. Unfortunately, in each dispensation people eventually used their agency to reject the gospel and then fell into apostasy” (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 33).

■ Elder Charles Didier of the Presidency of the Seventy explained the role of prophets in the restoration of truth during dispensations:

“Because of what Adam heard and what he saw, he qualified to be called the first prophet on earth, a personal witness of revelation given to man. His major responsibility now was to preserve the truth of the gospel and to teach it as it was given to him. Satan, on the other hand, representing the opposition, was going to do and teach anything to deny, to reject, or to ignore the gospel received by revelation, thus inducing the people who had accepted it into apostasy—a state of confusion, division, abandonment, or renunciation of their previous faith!

“The rest of the story of the Old Testament became, then, a religious history of continuous

revelation through various prophets like Noah, Abraham, and Moses, at various times—called dispensations—to restore what had been lost because of renewed apostasy. These prophets were always called by God. They were given divine authority; they had the keys of the priesthood; they had a divine commission to speak in the name of the Lord and to teach and prophesy of the coming and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of the world (see Amos 3:7)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 77; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 74).

The rejection of the Savior, His teachings, and priesthood authority resulted in the Apostasy of the New Testament Church.

■ Several hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, the people again fell into apostasy. Heavenly Father sent His Son to atone for our sins and restore His gospel. The Savior taught the gospel and performed many miracles during His ministry. He called twelve men to be His Apostles and laid His hands upon their heads to give them priesthood authority. He organized His Church and fulfilled prophecy. Most importantly, He completed the Atonement. The Son of God completed all that His Heavenly Father sent Him to do.

Jesus Christ gave His Apostles authority to teach His gospel, perform the ordinances of salvation, and establish His Church. However, most people rejected Jesus, and He was crucified. The wickedness of the people resulted in the persecution, killing, and scattering of the Apostles and Church members. Without revelation or priesthood authority, false doctrines began to be taught and the true Church of Jesus Christ was lost. God allowed truth, as well as His priesthood authority, ordinances, and Church organization to be taken once again from the earth because of the apostasy of His children.

This apostasy eventually led to the emergence of many churches. False ideas were taught and knowledge of the true character and nature of the Father, His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost was lost. The doctrine of repentance became distorted. Baptism and other ordinances and covenants were changed or forgotten. The gift of the Holy Ghost was no longer available. This period of time when the true Church no longer existed on the earth has come to be known as the Great Apostasy. It lasted until the Restoration through the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Prospective missionaries should have an understanding of this apostasy and be able to teach it in a simple manner to their investigators.



Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Matthew 24:24
- Acts 20:29–30
- 1 Corinthians 11:18–19
- Galatians 1:6–8
- 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3
- 2 Timothy 1:15

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Thomas S. Monson, a counselor in the First Presidency, described factors leading to the Great Apostasy:

“Most men did not come unto Christ, nor did they follow the way He taught. Crucified was the Lord, slain were most of the Apostles, rejected was the truth. The bright sunlight of enlightenment slipped away, and the lengthening shadows of a black night enshrouded the earth.

“Generations before, Isaiah had prophesied, ‘Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people’ [Isaiah 60:2]. Amos had foretold of a famine in the land, ‘not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord’ [Amos 8:11]. The dark ages of history seemed never to end. Would no heavenly messengers make their appearance?” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 73; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 51).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

“[Greek] philosophical concepts transformed Christianity in the first few centuries following the deaths of the Apostles. For example, philosophers then maintained that physical matter was evil and that God was a spirit without feelings or passions. Persons of this persuasion, including learned men who became influential converts to Christianity, had a hard time accepting the simple teachings of early Christianity: an Only Begotten Son who said he was in the express image of his Father in Heaven and who taught his followers to be one as he and his Father were one, and a Messiah who died on a cross and later appeared to his followers as a resurrected being with flesh and bones.

“The collision between the speculative world of Greek philosophy and the simple, literal faith and practice of the earliest Christians produced sharp contentions that threatened to widen political divisions in the fragmenting Roman empire. . . .

“In the process of what we call the Apostasy, the tangible, personal God described in the Old and New Testaments was replaced by the abstract, incomprehensible deity defined by compromise with the speculative principles of Greek philosophy. The received language of the Bible remained, but the so-called hidden meanings of scriptural words were now explained in the vocabulary of a philosophy alien to their origins” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 113; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 84–85).

■ Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke about how the Lord’s priesthood authority was lost from the earth:

“Early Christians endured the challenges of persecution and hardship. Peter and his brethren had a difficult time holding the Church together and keeping the doctrine pure. They traveled extensively and wrote to one another about the problems they were facing, but information moved so slowly and the Church and its teachings were so new that heading off false teachings before they became firmly entrenched was difficult [see 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 2 Timothy 4:3–4]. . . .

“Eventually, with the known exception of John the Beloved, Peter and his fellow Apostles were martyred. The Apostle John and members of the Church struggled for survival in the face of horrifying oppression. To their

everlasting credit, Christianity did survive and was truly a prominent force by the end of the second century A.D. Many valiant Saints were instrumental in helping Christianity to endure.

“Despite the significance of the ministries of these Saints, they did not hold the same apostolic authority that Peter and the other Apostles had received through ordination under the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. When that authority was lost, men began looking to other sources for doctrinal understanding. As a result, many plain and precious truths were lost” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 84–85; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 65–66).

The European Reformation helped prepare the way for the final Restoration.

■ Elder James E. Talmage, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained that “a general apostasy developed during and after the apostolic period, and that the primitive Church lost its power, authority, and graces as a divine institution, and degenerated into an earthly organization only” (*The Great Apostasy* [1958], iii).

With the Apostles gone, some local Church officers gradually assumed more control without priesthood authority. These local leaders determined policy and doctrine for their local areas, claiming to be the proper successors to the Apostles. These local leaders relied upon logic and rhetoric rather than upon revelation and compromised the true teachings of Jesus Christ.

“After centuries of spiritual darkness, truth-seeking men and women protested against the current religious practices. They recognized that many of the doctrines and ordinances of the gospel had

been changed or lost. They sought for greater spiritual light, and many spoke of the need for a restoration of truth. They did not claim, however, that God had called them to be a prophet. Instead, they tried to reform teachings and practices that they believed had been changed or corrupted. Their efforts led to the

organization of many Protestant churches. This Reformation resulted in an increased emphasis on religious freedom, which opened the way for the final Restoration” (*Preach My Gospel*, 35).

“[The] Reformation resulted in an increased emphasis on religious freedom, which opened the way for the final Restoration.”



Martin Luther Posts His Religious Theeses, Dale Kibour, © IRI

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Joel 2:28–29

Write impressions from this scripture in your study journal.

■ Elder M. Russell Ballard explained how God helped create an environment where the gospel could be restored:

“In 1517 the Spirit moved Martin Luther, a German priest who was disturbed at how far the church had strayed from the gospel as taught by Christ. His work led to a reformation, a movement that was taken up by such other visionaries as John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, John Wesley, and John Smith.

“I believe these reformers were inspired to create a religious climate in which God could restore lost truths and priesthood authority. Similarly, God inspired the earlier explorers and colonizers of America and the framers of the Constitution of the United States to develop a land and governing principles to which the gospel could be restored” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 85; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 66).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley taught that the reformers were doing their best to find the truths that had been lost to the Great Apostasy:

“This was . . . a season of growing enlightenment. As the years continued their relentless march, the sunlight of a new day began to break over the earth.

It was the Renaissance, a magnificent flowing of art, architecture, and literature.

“Reformers worked to change the church, notably such men as Luther, Melancthon, Hus, Zwingli, and Tyndale. These were men of great courage, some of whom suffered cruel deaths because of their beliefs. Protestantism was born with its cry for reformation. When that reformation was not realized, the reformers organized churches of their own. They did so without priesthood authority. Their one desire was to find a niche in which they might worship God as they felt He should be worshiped” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1999, 92–93; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 73).

■ President Thomas S. Monson taught about the crucial contributions of the reformers:

“Honest men with yearning hearts, at the peril of their very lives, attempted to establish points of reference, that they might find the true way. The day of the reformation was dawning, but the path ahead was difficult. Persecutions would be severe, personal sacrifice overwhelming, and the cost beyond calculation. The reformers were like pioneers blazing wilderness trails in a desperate search for those lost points of reference which, they felt, when found would lead mankind back to the truth Jesus taught.

“When John Wycliffe and others completed the first English translation of the entire Bible from the Latin Vulgate, the then church authorities did all they could to destroy it. Copies had to be written by hand and in secret. The Bible had been regarded as a closed book forbidden to be read by the common people. Many of the followers of Wycliffe were severely punished and some burned at the stake.

“Martin Luther asserted the Bible’s supremacy. His study of the scriptures led him to compare the doctrines and practices of the church with the teachings of the scriptures. Luther stood for the responsibility of the individual and the rights of the individual conscience and this he did at the imminent risk of his life. Though threatened and persecuted, yet he declared boldly: ‘Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise. God help me.’

“John Huss [or Hus], speaking out fearlessly against the corruption within the church, was taken outside

the city to be burned. He was chained by the neck to a stake, and straw and wood were piled around his body to the chin and sprinkled with resin; and he was asked finally if he would recant. As the flames arose, he sang, but the wind blew the fire into his face, and his voice was stilled.

“Zwingli of Switzerland attempted through his writings and teachings to rethink all Christian doctrine in consistently biblical terms. His most famous statement thrills the heart: ‘What does it matter? They can kill the body but not the soul.’

“And who cannot today appreciate the words of John Knox? ‘A man with God is always in the majority.’

“John Calvin, prematurely aged by sickness and by the incessant labors he had undertaken, summed up his personal philosophy with the statement: ‘Our wisdom . . . consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves.’

“Others could indeed be mentioned, but a comment concerning William Tyndale would perhaps suffice. Tyndale felt that the people had a right to know what was promised to them in the scriptures. To those who opposed his work of translation, he declared: ‘If God spare my life, . . . I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the scripture than thou dost.’

“Such were the teachings and lives of the great reformers. Their deeds were heroic, their contributions many, their sacrifices great—but *they did not restore the gospel of Jesus Christ*” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1975, 20–21; or *Ensign*, May 1975, 15–16).

■ President Monson concluded that the work of the reformers was not in vain. It prepared an environment where the Bible was available to honest truth seekers, including young Joseph Smith Jr.: “Of the reformers, one could ask: ‘Was their sacrifice in vain? Was their struggle futile?’ I answer with a reasoned ‘no.’ The Holy Bible was now within the grasp of the people. Each person could better find his or her way. Oh, if only all could read and all could understand! But some could read, and others could hear, and all had access to God through prayer” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 74; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 51).

■ President Joseph Fielding Smith explained that the work of all these reformers prepared the way for the Restoration of the gospel:

“In preparation for this restoration the Lord raised up noble men, such as Luther, Calvin, Knox and others whom we call reformers, and gave them power to break the shackles which bound the people and denied them the sacred right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. . . .

“Latter-day Saints pay all honor to these great and fearless reformers, who shattered the fetters which bound the religious world. The Lord was their Protector in this mission, which was fraught with many perils. In that day, however, the time had not come for the restoration of the fulness of the gospel. The work of the reformers was of great importance, but it was a preparatory work” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 1:174–75).

■ President Smith explained that the Reformation “was really the dawn of our present day. The yoke of that great power, which kept the nations bound, not merely physically but spiritually, was broken; and rays of light commenced to find their way through so that freedom of religious belief and liberty were established” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:177). The time and circumstances were now right for young Joseph Smith Jr. to be called as the first prophet of the Restoration.

POINTS TO PONDER

- What lessons can be learned from the recurring cycle of apostasy and restoration?
- In what ways did the reformers help make the Restoration possible?
- What can we do to detect and protect ourselves from personal apostasy?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Memorize at least two scriptures that teach about the Apostasy. Some references include Isaiah 29:13–14; Amos 8:11–12; Acts 20:29–30; Galatians 1:6–8; 2 Thessalonians 2:1–3; 2 Nephi 27:1; Mormon 8:28; and Doctrine and Covenants 1:14–16.

- Read the account of the First Vision in Joseph Smith—History 1:5–20.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Apostasy” (pp. 13–14)
- “Prophets” (pp. 129–30)

NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS

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THE RESTORATION AND THE COMING FORTH OF NEW SCRIPTURE

INTRODUCTION

We live in the dispensation of the fulness of times. This final gospel dispensation opened with the First Vision. President Joseph F. Smith taught: “The greatest event that has ever occurred in the world, since the resurrection of the Son of God from the tomb and his ascension on high, was the coming of the Father and of the Son to that boy Joseph Smith, to prepare the way for the laying of the foundation of his kingdom—not the kingdom of man—never more to cease nor to be overturned” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 5th ed. [1939], 495).

The First Vision began a restoration of truth, authority, scripture, sacred ordinances, and the true Church organization from God through the Prophet Joseph Smith. We share this message with the world by duty and sacred privilege.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- God called Joseph Smith to be the prophet of the Restoration.
- Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon and brought forth other scriptures by the gift and power of God.
- The Book of Mormon helps bring people to Christ.
- The Book of Mormon is convincing evidence of the Restoration.

“The greatest event that has ever occurred in the world, since the resurrection of the Son of God . . . was the coming of the Father and of the Son to that boy Joseph Smith.”

- Under the direction of Jesus Christ, the priesthood and the Church were restored through His servants.

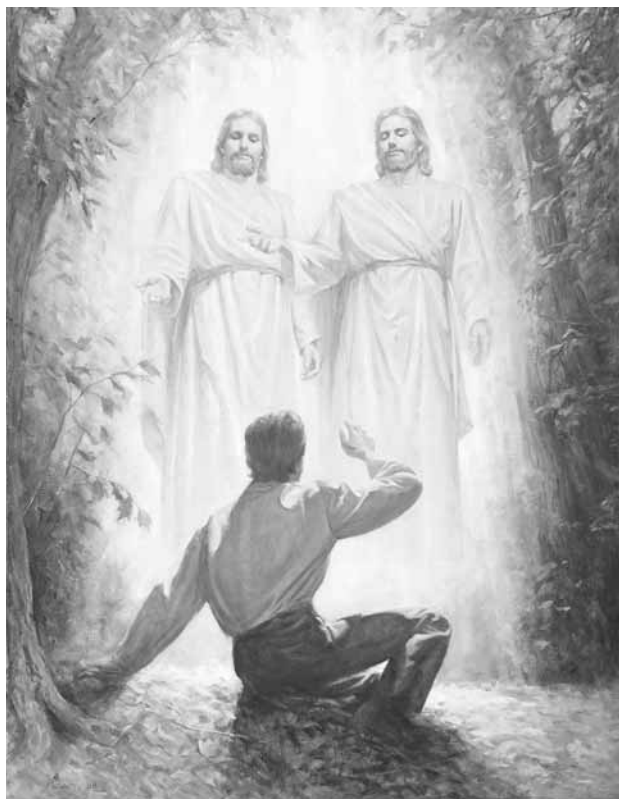
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

God called Joseph Smith to be the prophet of the Restoration.

■ One of the glorious events of the latter days is the appearance of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, to the Prophet Joseph Smith. The First Vision opened the work of Joseph Smith as a latter-day prophet and the Lord’s anointed to usher in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

Joseph Smith was not the first prophet called of God. As discussed in chapter 8 of this student manual, God has always called prophets. Through His prophets He gives or restores truths, authority, ordinances, and scripture. He organizes His Church on the earth for the benefit and salvation of His children. If, through apostasy, the truth and

authority of the gospel are lost, God eventually calls another prophet at the appropriate time and place to restore His authority and truth. The Prophet Joseph Smith was called to usher in the gospel dispensation that will lead to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the Millennium.



Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 1:17
- Doctrine and Covenants 136:37
- Joseph Smith—History 1:17

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught about the restoration of essential priesthood authority:

“Jesus called and ordained Apostles and gave them the keys of the kingdom. These keys authorized them to bind the ordinances for eternity. . . .

“The Apostles were martyred, and in time an apostasy took place. The doctrines of the Church were corrupted and the ordinances changed. The keys of priesthood authority were lost. This universal Apostasy required a restoration of authority—of the priesthood keys, of doctrines, and of ordinances.

“Joseph Smith was visited in person by God the Eternal Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. They told him they had a special work for him to do. Through him the keys would be restored, and the Church, as had been established by Jesus Christ when He was on the earth, would be restored. . . .

“Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood by John the Baptist (see Joseph Smith—History 1:68–69). They were ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood by the ancient Apostles Peter, James, and John (see D&C 27:12). These ordinations restored the authority and the keys for the kingdom of God, never again to be taken from the earth.

“In April of 1830, the Prophet Joseph Smith organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The true church of Jesus Christ was once again among men, with authority ‘to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof’ (Articles of Faith 1:5)” (“Restoration,” *First Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 2003, 2).

■ President Alvin R. Dyer, who was a counselor in the First Presidency, emphasized the important and unique character of this final gospel dispensation: “Joseph Smith was informed that he had been foreordained and consequently called to be the instrument through whom God would work to establish his kingdom here upon the earth as it had been in former intermittent dispensations. But this, the last of all dispensations, is to be characterized by even greater truth, a depository period when all truths, all laws, all covenants, all promises planned by God our Heavenly Father in the pre-existence and revealed to man in part at various times in mortality for the redemption and exaltation of his spirit children, were now to be fully revealed and made available to mankind. The Lord had thus spoken unto the Prophet Joseph Smith” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1963, 50).

■ The Prophet Joseph Smith stated: “The ancient prophets declared that in the last days the God of heaven should set up a kingdom which should never be destroyed, nor left to other people. . . . I calculate to be one of the instruments of setting up the kingdom of Daniel by the word of the Lord, and I intend to lay a foundation that will revolutionize the whole world” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 365–66; paraphrasing altered).

Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon and brought forth other scriptures by the gift and power of God.



■ We may not know all of the details about how the Prophet Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon, but we do know that the process was inspired. Spiritual gifts, combined with Joseph Smith's faith and diligent work,

enabled him to accomplish the divine purposes for the translation. He was also instrumental in bringing forth additional scripture, including the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Joseph Smith Translation of the King James Version of the Bible.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Book of Mormon title page, paragraph 1
- 1 Nephi 13:39–40
- 2 Nephi 3:11–12
- Doctrine and Covenants 1:29
- Doctrine and Covenants 17:6
- Doctrine and Covenants 124:125

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles spoke about the remarkable accomplishment of translating the Book of Mormon and bringing forth other revelations by God's power:

"Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon by the gift and power of God!

"Compare this unique accomplishment with that of other scriptural translations. The King James Version of the Bible, for example, was produced by 50 English scholars who accomplished their work in seven years, translating at the rate of *one* page per day. Expert translators today

do well if they can also translate scripture at the rate of one page per day.

"In contrast, Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon at the rate of about *10* pages per day, completing the task in approximately 85 days! . . .

"Such a pace is even more remarkable considering the circumstances under which the Prophet labored. In that same period, while enduring constant distractions and incessant hostility, Joseph Smith moved more than 100 miles from Harmony, Pennsylvania, to Fayette, New York. He applied for a copyright. He received revelations comprising 12 sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. Heavenly beings restored the holy priesthood. Yet he completed the translation in less than three months" (*Helping Missionaries Understand the Role of the Book of Mormon in Conversion* [address at seminar for new mission presidents, June 23, 2000], 4–5).

■ Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, also referred to the impressive rate of translation accomplished by the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"The process of translation was truly 'a marvellous work and a wonder,' or, as rendered in Hebrew, 'a miraculous miracle' (Isaiah 29:14). Depending upon his sequence of translation, scholars estimate that Joseph in 1829 was translating at a rapid daily equivalent of from eight to thirteen of today's printed pages (see John W. Welch and Tim Rathbone, "The Translation of the Book of Mormon: Basic Historical Information" [Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1986], pp. 38–39). An able, professional translator recently told me he considers one page a day productive.

"From Joseph the translator—untrained in theology—more printed pages of scripture have come down to us than from any other mortal" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1992, 54–55; or *Ensign*, May 1992, 38).

■ President Ezra Taft Benson referenced the timing of the Book of Mormon in the Restoration as evidence of its importance:

"A . . . powerful testimony to the importance of the Book of Mormon is to note where the Lord placed its coming forth in the timetable of the

"From Joseph the translator . . . more printed pages of scripture have come down to us than from any other mortal."

unfolding Restoration. The only thing that preceded it was the First Vision. In that marvelous manifestation, the Prophet Joseph Smith learned the true nature of God and that God had a work for him to do. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon was the next thing to follow.

“Think of that in terms of what it implies. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon preceded the restoration of the priesthood. It was published just a few days before the Church was organized. The Saints were given the Book of Mormon to read before they were given the revelations outlining such great doctrines as the three degrees of glory, celestial marriage, or work for the dead. It came before priesthood quorums and Church organization. Doesn’t this tell us something about how the Lord views this sacred work?” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 3; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 4).

■ President Benson emphasized that the Prophet Joseph Smith brought forth scriptures in addition to the Book of Mormon: “‘This generation,’ said the Lord to Joseph Smith, ‘shall have my word through you’ (D&C 5:10). And so it has through the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and other modern revelations” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 104; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 83).

The Book of Mormon helps bring people to Christ.



and people. As was revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, ‘The ends of the earth shall inquire after thy name’ (D&C 122:1). And why are they seeking after the name of Joseph Smith? Because the Book of Mormon testifies of the divinity and atonement of the Savior, Jesus Christ. Because Joseph is the prophet of the Restoration” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 11; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 11).

■ Elder Robert K. Dellenbach of the Seventy said: “All over the world people are seeking the witness of Jesus Christ as found in the Book of Mormon. They come from every nation, kindred, tongue,

“All over the world people are seeking the witness of Jesus Christ as found in the Book of Mormon.”

When we read the Book of Mormon with a sincere heart and real intent, it will convince us “that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God” (Book of Mormon title page).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 1 Nephi 6:4
- 1 Nephi 19:18
- 2 Nephi 25:23, 26

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President James E. Faust, a counselor in the First Presidency, taught that “a confirming testimony of the Book of Mormon convinces ‘that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God’ and also spiritually verifies the divine calling of Joseph Smith and that he did see the Father and the Son” (“The Keystone of Our Religion,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2004, 4).

■ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained why the Book of Mormon is important in bringing people to Christ:

“This inspired book of scripture is the heart of missionary proselyting. Conversion to it is conversion to

Christ, because this book contains the words of Christ. The very title page of the Book of Mormon proclaims its purpose: ‘To the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ.’

“Additionally, conversion to this inspired book is conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ, because it contains the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord told Joseph Smith in the Doctrine and Covenants, ‘And again, the elders, priests and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel’ (D&C 42:12)” (“The Book of Mormon: The Heart of Missionary Proselyting,” *Ensign*, Sept. 2002, 14).

■ President Ezra Taft Benson described the Christ-centered influence of the Book of Mormon:

“The honest seeker after truth can gain the testimony that Jesus is the Christ as he prayerfully ponders the inspired words of the Book of Mormon.

“Over one-half of all the verses in the Book of Mormon refer to our Lord. Some form of Christ’s name is mentioned more frequently per verse in the Book of Mormon than even in the New Testament.

“He is given over one hundred different names in the Book of Mormon. Those names have a particular significance in describing His divine nature. . . .

“ . . . Let us read the Book of Mormon and be convinced that Jesus is the Christ. Let us continually reread the Book of Mormon so that we might more fully come to Christ, be committed to Him, centered in Him, and consumed in Him” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 101, 104; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 83, 85).

The Book of Mormon is convincing evidence of the Restoration.



■ The truthfulness of the Book of Mormon is evidence for other truths about the Restoration. The Book of Mormon stands as a witness not only for Jesus Christ, but also

for His servant Joseph Smith, who translated it and laid the foundation for the latter-day kingdom of God.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 1 Nephi 13:40
- Doctrine and Covenants 20:8–12

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley explained the importance of the Book of Mormon in relation to the Church and the Bible:

“If the Book of Mormon is true, the Church is true, for the same authority under which this sacred record came to light is present and manifest among us today. It is a restoration of the Church set up by the Savior in Palestine. It is a restoration of the Church set up by the Savior when he visited this continent as set forth in this sacred record.

“If the Book of Mormon is true, the Bible is true. The Bible is the Testament of the Old World. The Book of Mormon is the Testament of the New. The one is the record of Judah, the other is the record of Joseph, and they have come together in the hand of the Lord in fulfillment of the prophecy of Ezekiel. Together they declare the Kingship of the Redeemer of the world, and the reality of his kingdom” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1959, 119).

■ President Ezra Taft Benson testified that the Book of Mormon is the keystone to a testimony of the truthfulness of the Restoration: “The Book of Mormon is the keystone of testimony. Just as the arch crumbles if the keystone is removed, so does all the Church stand or fall with the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. The enemies of the Church understand this clearly. This is why they go to such great lengths to try to disprove the Book of Mormon, for if it can be discredited, the Prophet Joseph Smith goes with it. So does our claim to priesthood keys, and revelation, and the restored Church. But in like manner, if the Book of Mormon be true—and millions have now testified that they have the witness of the Spirit that it is indeed true—then one must accept the claims of the Restoration and all that accompanies it” (*A Witness and a Warning* [1988], 19).

■ President Benson also offered inspired counsel regarding how to use the Book of Mormon to respond to objections investigators may have to the restored truths of the gospel:

“We are to use the Book of Mormon in handling objections to the Church. . . .

“ . . . All objections, whether they be on abortion, plural marriage, seventh-day worship, etc., basically hinge on whether Joseph Smith and his successors were and are prophets of God receiving divine revelation. Here, then, is a procedure to handle most objections through the use of the Book of Mormon.

“First, understand the objection.

“Second, give the answer from revelation.

“Third, show how the correctness of the answer really depends on whether or not we have modern revelation through modern prophets.

“Fourth, explain that whether or not we have modern prophets and revelation really depends on whether the Book of Mormon is true.

“Therefore, the only problem the objector has to resolve for himself is whether the Book of Mormon is true. For if the Book of Mormon is true, then Jesus is the Christ, Joseph Smith was his prophet, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true, and it is being led today by a prophet receiving revelation.

“Our main task is to declare the gospel and do it effectively. We are not obligated to answer every objection. Every man eventually is backed up to the wall of faith, and there he must make his stand” (*A Witness and a Warning*, 4–5).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles gave counsel that we can follow personally and share with investigators: “Try reading the Book of Mormon because you want to, not because you have to. Discover for yourself that it is true. As you read each page, ask, ‘Could any man have written this book, or did it come as Joseph Smith testified?’ Apply the teachings you learn. They will fortify you against the evil of Satan. Follow Moroni’s counsel. Sincerely ask God the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, with real intent, if the teachings of the Book of Mormon are true (see Moroni 10:3–5). Ask with a desire to receive a confirmation personally, nothing doubting. . . . I know that you can receive a spiritual confirmation that the book is true. You will then know that Jesus Christ lives, that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord’s Church (see introduction to the Book of Mormon, especially the last paragraph). You will confirm that the Savior guides His Church through a living prophet. These truths will become a foundation for your productive life” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 45; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 42–43).

Under the direction of Jesus Christ, the priesthood and the Church were restored through His servants.

■ The Restoration dispelled the darkness of the Apostasy. Priesthood authority was restored. Through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord organized His Church again upon the earth so that the saving principles and ordinances of the gospel could be correctly administered in order to help people come unto Christ.



Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Acts 3:20–21
- Doctrine and Covenants 1:30
- Doctrine and Covenants 13:1
- Doctrine and Covenants 27:12–13
- Joseph Smith—History 1:72
- Articles of Faith 1:5–6

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke reverently of the Melchizedek Priesthood Peter, James, and John held and restored:

“Try reading the Book of Mormon because you want to, not because you have to.”

“No king, no president, no head of state, no man of business or secular activity of any kind has such authority. . . . And yet it was given to these humble men who walked with Jesus as His Apostles.

“Three of these chosen apostles—Peter, James, and John—appeared to Joseph and Oliver somewhere ‘in the wilderness’ along the Susquehanna River. They placed their hands upon their heads and conferred upon them this holy authority.

“We do not have the date, but evidence points to the fact that likely it was late May or some time in June of the same year 1829” (address given at the Priesthood Restoration 175th Anniversary, May 16, 2004).

■ Elder David B. Haight, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, testified: “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

proclaims to the world that this church is a restoration of Christ's church. A restoration was necessary because prophets and Apostles, who were the foundation of the Lord's original church, were put to death or otherwise taken. The Church today is built on a foundation of prophets and Apostles, with Jesus Christ as its chief cornerstone. It is therefore not a reformation, a revision, a reorganization, or a mere sect. It is the Church of Jesus Christ restored in these latter days" (in Conference Report, Apr. 1986, 7; or *Ensign*, May 1986, 7).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley also bore witness that the Church of Jesus Christ has been restored: "This is the restored Church of Jesus Christ. . . . We testify that the heavens have been opened, that the curtains have been parted, that God has spoken, and that Jesus Christ has manifested Himself, followed by a bestowal of divine authority.

"Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of this work, and it is built upon a 'foundation of . . . apostles and prophets' (Ephesians 2:20)" (in Conference Report, Oct. 2002, 87; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 81).

POINTS TO PONDER

- In what ways is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints different from other churches?
- In what ways has the Book of Mormon brought you closer to the Savior?
- How will you use the Book of Mormon to help others gain a testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith and the Restoration?
- How do you feel knowing that the Lord has shared priesthood authority He gave to Peter, James, and John with young elders?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Teach one or more of the principles covered in this chapter in a home evening or other appropriate setting. Use basic scriptures and bear testimony of the truth of these principles. (It would be good practice to make a lesson plan before teaching.)
- Memorize the following scriptures: Acts 2:37–38; 7:55–56; Ephesians 2:19–20; 4:11–14.
- Memorize the two paragraphs of the introduction on the Book of Mormon title page.

- Select and memorize key verses in Joseph Smith—History.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- "Restoration of the Gospel" (pp. 135–39)
- "Joseph Smith" (pp. 89–90)
- "Priesthood" (pp. 124–28)
- "Aaronic Priesthood" (pp. 3–4)
- "Melchizedek Priesthood" (pp. 101–2)

NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS



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FAITH AND CONVERSION

INTRODUCTION

Is the first principle of the gospel *faith*? No! The fourth article of faith teaches that the first principle of the gospel is *faith in the Lord Jesus Christ*. Faith in Christ includes having a firm belief that He is the Son of God and the Savior and Redeemer of the world. We recognize that we can return to live with our Heavenly Father only by relying on His Son's grace and mercy while being obedient to His commandments. When we have faith in Christ, we accept His Atonement and His teachings, thus leading to baptism "of water and of the Spirit" (John 3:5).

Faith in Jesus Christ motivates missionaries to work hard, obey mission rules, and seek diligently to find sincere investigators. Faith brings assurance that they are doing the work of the Lord and representing Him as they teach the message of salvation. As missionaries increase their personal faith, they increase their power to teach and help their investigators become converted to the Savior Jesus Christ and His restored gospel.

Note: This chapter focuses on the importance of faith in Jesus Christ, how you can increase your faith, its role in one's conversion, and how faith relates to repentance, baptism, and the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost. You will recall that repentance is discussed in more detail in chapter 2 of this student manual.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is essential to spiritual growth.
- Faith can increase.
- Faith leads to conversion.
- Conversion includes repentance, baptism, and the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is essential to spiritual growth.



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■ Faith that leads to salvation must be centered in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Having faith in Jesus Christ means relying completely on Him—trusting in His infinite power, intelligence, and love. It includes believing His teachings. It means believing that even though you do not understand all

things, He does. . . . He is always ready to help you as you remember His plea: 'Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not' (D&C 6:36)" (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 54).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 1 Nephi 7:12
- 2 Nephi 9:23
- 2 Nephi 31:19
- Alma 37:33
- Moroni 7:26
- Articles of Faith 1:4

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Ezra Taft Benson explained why we must place our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ:

“The fundamental principle of our religion is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Why is it expedient that we center our confidence, our hope, and our trust in one solitary figure? Why is faith in Him so necessary to peace of mind in this life and hope in the world to come? . . .

“ . . . Only Jesus Christ is uniquely qualified to provide that hope, that confidence, and that strength to overcome the world and rise above our human failings. . . .

“Faith in Him is more than mere acknowledgment that He lives. It is more than professing belief.

“Faith in Jesus Christ consists of complete reliance on Him. As God, He has infinite power, intelligence, and love. There is no human problem beyond His capacity to solve. Because He descended below all things (see D&C 122:8), He knows how to help us rise above our daily difficulties” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1983, 5, 7; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 6, 8).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that faith centered in Jesus Christ helps us develop a trust in God:

“Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is a conviction and trust that God knows us and loves us and will hear our prayers and answer them with what is best for us.

“In fact, God will do more than what is best for us. He will do what is best for us and for all of our Heavenly Father’s children. The conviction that the Lord knows more than we do and that he will answer our prayers in the way that is best for us and for all of his other children is a vital ingredient of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

“Faith must include trust. . . . When we have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we must have trust in him. We must trust him enough that we are content to accept his will, knowing that he knows what is best for us. . . .

“ . . . The exercise of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is always subject to the order of heaven, to the goodness and will and wisdom and timing of the Lord. That is why we cannot have true faith in the Lord without also having complete trust in the Lord’s will and in the Lord’s timing.

When we have that kind of faith and trust in the Lord, we have true security in our lives. . . .

“Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ prepares you for whatever life brings.

This kind of faith prepares you to deal with life’s opportunities—to take advantage of those that are received and to persist through the disappointments of those that are lost” (“‘Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,’” *Ensign*, May 1994, 99–100).

■ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained how we can know when our faith is in harmony with the will of God:

“How do we know when our faith conforms to the will of our Heavenly Father and He approves of that which we seek? We must know the word of God. One of the reasons we immerse ourselves in the scriptures is to know of Heavenly Father’s dealings with man from the beginning. If the desires of our heart

are contrary to scripture, then we should not pursue them further.

“Next, we must heed the counsel of latter-day prophets as they give inspired instruction.

“Additionally, we must ponder and pray and seek the guidance of the Spirit. If we do so, the Lord has promised, ‘I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart’ [D&C 8:2].

“Faith in Jesus Christ consists of complete reliance on Him.”

“Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ prepares you for whatever life brings.”

"Only when our faith is aligned with the will of our Heavenly Father will we be empowered to receive the blessings we seek" (in Conference Report, Oct. 2002, 90; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 84).

Faith can increase.

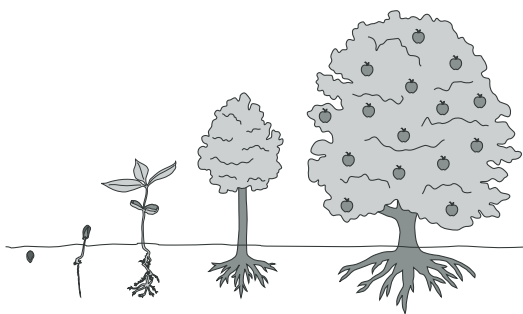
■ How do we get more faith? Faith is a gift from God that we must desire and seek. The Bible Dictionary teaches that "although faith is a gift, it must be cultured and sought after until it grows from a tiny seed to a great tree" ("Faith," 670). Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained, "Faith requires deliberate nurturing, for it is not static; it is either increasing or decreasing" (*Lord, Increase Our Faith* [1994], 1).

The Savior's Apostles understood the need for greater faith. They pled, "Lord, Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). Understanding how to increase one's faith is vital to successful missionary work.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Romans 10:17
- Jacob 4:6
- Helaman 3:35

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.



■ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin explained what we can do to increase our faith: "If we study, ponder, and pray, our faith in the unseen but true things of God will grow. Even if we start with only 'a particle of faith, . . . even if [we] can no more than desire to believe' [Alma 32:27; see also vv. 28–43], with nurturing attention a tiny seed of faith can grow into a vibrant, strong, fruitful tree of testimony"

(in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 32; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 26).

■ When he was a member of the Seventy, Elder John K. Carmack suggested ways of increasing our faith:

"Increasing our faith requires trusting the Lord with our whole souls."

"Increasing our faith requires trusting the Lord with our whole souls. We cannot say, 'We have done enough and deserve to rest.' Nor does the increase come through definitions, logic, or philosophy. Rather, we must:

- Do what is right and serve the Lord because we know, trust, and love Him with all of our souls.
- Harbor no thought that we deserve a reward or thanks for what we do, although rewards will surely come.
- Humbly ask, seek, and knock.
- Never demand anything of our Lord, because we are always in His debt.
- Leave to Him the final decision in all things, having the attitude 'Not my will, but thine be done.'
- Be prepared to sacrifice, even unto death, for our entire mortal lives.

"As members of the Lord's Church, we can increase our faith, if we desire, by going beyond the minimum requirements of the gospel and developing complete trust in the Lord" ("Lord, Increase Our Faith," *Ensign*, Mar. 2002, 57).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles related ways to increase faith in order to achieve a sustaining power in our lives:

"Faith is not illusion nor magic but a power rooted in eternal principles. Are you one who has tried to exercise faith and has felt no benefit? If so, you likely have not understood and followed the principles upon which faith is founded. . . .

"You will gather the fruits of faith as you follow the principles God has established for its use. Some of those principles are:

- Trust in God and in His willingness to provide help when needed, no matter how challenging the circumstance.
- Obey His commandments and live to demonstrate that He can trust you.
- Be sensitive to the quiet prompting of the Spirit.
- Act courageously on that prompting.

- Be patient and understanding when God lets you struggle to grow and when answers come a piece at a time over an extended period. . . .

“You can learn to use faith more effectively by applying this principle taught by Moroni: ‘Faith is things which are hoped for and not seen; wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the *trial of your faith*’ [Ether 12:6; italics added]. Thus, every time you *try your faith*—that is, act in worthiness on an impression—you will receive the confirming evidence of the Spirit. Those feelings will fortify your faith. As you repeat that pattern, your faith will become stronger. . . .

“Even if you exercise your strongest faith, God will not always reward you immediately according to your desires. Rather, God will respond with what in His eternal plan is best for you. He loves you to a depth and completeness you cannot conceive of in your mortal state. Indeed, were you to know His entire plan, you would never ask for that which is contrary to it even though your feelings tempt you to do so. Sincere faith gives understanding and strength to accept the will of our Heavenly Father when it differs from our own. We can accept His will with peace and assurance, confident that His infinite wisdom surpasses our own ability to comprehend fully His plan as it unfolds a piece at a time” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2003, 78–79; or *Ensign*, May 2003, 76–77).

■ President James E. Faust, a counselor in the First Presidency, suggested ways to sustain faith: “To sustain faith, each of us must be humble and compassionate, kind and generous to the poor and the needy. Faith is further sustained by daily doses of spirituality that come to us as we kneel in prayer. It begins with us as individuals and extends to our families, who need to be solidified in righteousness. Honesty, decency, integrity, and morality are all necessary ingredients of our faith and will provide sanctuary for our souls” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2000, 22; or *Ensign*, May 2000, 18).

Faith leads to conversion.

■ Missionaries must not only understand how to increase their own faith, but they must learn to help strengthen the faith of those they teach. As the restored gospel is taught, a seed of hope is planted in the investigator’s heart and faith begins to develop. This faith can lead

to a recognizable feeling that confirms the truth of the message. When that feeling comes, faith increases and leads to a desire to accept the message and live by gospel standards. Gaining a testimony and becoming converted result from strengthened faith.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 2 Nephi 31:19–20
- Alma 32:7–8, 28–29, 41

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that faith is part of the fertile ground that nourishes conversion:

“The first seeds of conversion begin with an awareness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and a desire to know the truth concerning His restored Church. ‘Let this desire work in you’ (Alma 32:27). A desire to know the truth is like a seed which grows in the fertile ground of faith, patience, diligence, and long-suffering (see Alma 32:27–41). . . .



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“ . . . In the conversion process, we experience repentance, which brings about humility and a broken heart and contrite spirit, preparing us for baptism, remission of sins, and receiving the Holy Ghost. Then, over time and through our faithfulness, we overcome trials and tribulations and

endure to the end” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1997, 111; or *Ensign*, May 1997, 80).

■ President Marion G. Romney, who was a counselor in the First Presidency, emphasized that faith is an essential ingredient in conversion: “Converted means to turn from one belief or course of action to another. Conversion is a spiritual and moral change. *Converted* implies not merely mental acceptance of Jesus and his teachings but also a motivating faith in him and his gospel[, a] faith which works a transformation, an actual change in one’s understanding of life’s

“Conversion is a spiritual and moral change.”

meaning and in his allegiance to God in interest, in thought, and in conduct. In one who is really wholly converted, desire for things contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ has actually died. And substituted therefore is a love of God, with a fixed and controlling determination to keep his commandments” (in Conference Report, Guatemala Area Conference 1977, 8).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley noted that conversion begins with small steps of faith: “In the process of conversion, the investigator of the Church hears a little. He may read a little. He does not, he cannot comprehend the wonder of it all. But if he is earnest in his search, if he is willing to get on his knees and pray about it, the Spirit touches his heart, perhaps ever so lightly. It points him in the right direction. He sees a little of what he has never seen before. And with faith, whether it be recognized or not, he takes a few guarded steps. Then another, brighter vista opens before him” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2002, 84; or *Ensign*, May 2002, 72).

■ President Hinckley also spoke of the nourishment the faith of members can provide for the budding faith of investigators:

“The faith of an investigator is like a piece of green wood, thrown on a blazing fire. Warmed by the flames, it dries and begins to burn. But if it is pulled away, it cannot sustain itself. Its flickering flame dies. But if left with the fire, it gradually begins to burn with brightness. Soon it is part of the flaming fire and will light other, greener wood.

“And so goes, my brothers and sisters, this great work of faith, lifting people across this broad earth to increased understanding of the ways of the Lord and greater happiness in following His pattern” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2002, 86; or *Ensign*, May 2002, 74).

Conversion includes repentance, baptism, and the reception of the gift of the Holy Ghost.



■ In the process of conversion, faith and repentance prepare investigators for the ordinances of baptism and confirmation. Baptism and the reception of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of

hands are necessary to become members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Matthew 3:16
- John 3:5
- 2 Nephi 31:13, 17
- Articles of Faith 1:3–4

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught that conversion requires a complete willingness to give up all practices contrary to the teachings of the restored gospel: “The gospel of Jesus Christ challenges us to change. ‘Repent’ is its most frequent message, and repenting means giving up all of our practices—personal, family, ethnic, and national—that are contrary to the commandments of God. The purpose of the gospel is to transform common creatures into celestial citizens, and that requires change” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 39; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 37).

■ The Prophet Joseph Smith taught the following principle regarding the ordinance of baptism:

“You might as well baptize a bag of sand as a man, if not done in view of the remission of sins and getting of the Holy Ghost. Baptism by water is

but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half—that is, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. . . .

“ . . . The baptism of water, without the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost attending it, is of no use;

they are necessarily and inseparably connected” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith [1976], 314, 360).

■ President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught that missionaries should understand that baptism is more than just the water ordinance:

“When you are teaching investigators and preparing them for baptism by water, you must also think of the gift of the Holy Ghost—baptism by fire. Think of it as one sentence. First comes the baptism of water and then the baptism of fire.

“The gospel of Jesus Christ challenges us to change.”

“Someone may ask you, ‘How are things going?’ or ‘Are you teaching anyone?’

“You automatically answer, ‘Yes, we have a family preparing for baptism and confirmation, *for receiving the Holy Ghost*.’ I repeat, to be *baptized* and to *receive the Holy Ghost*—link those two together” (*The Gift of the Holy Ghost: What Every Missionary Should Know—and Every Member As Well* [address at seminar for new mission presidents, June 24, 2003], 2).



■ Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, speaking of those who have not received the gift of the Holy Ghost, explained: “The Holy Ghost can be their constant companion only after they have been faithful and after they have received the

ordinances of baptism and the laying on of hands by those with proper authority. But even before baptism, a child or an adult can have the Holy Ghost testify to their hearts of sacred truth. They must act on that testimony to retain it, but it will guide them toward goodness, and it can lead them to accept and keep the covenants which will in time bring them the companionship of the Holy Ghost” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 84; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 62).

■ President James E. Faust explained that a witness to the truth can come to an individual before baptism, but without the gift of the Holy Ghost, administrations of the Spirit are limited:

“Many outside the Church have received revelation by the power of the Holy Ghost, convincing them of the truth of the gospel. Through this power, sincere investigators acquire a testimony of the Book of Mormon and the principles of the gospel before baptism. However, administrations of the Holy Ghost are limited without receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost.

“Those who possess the gift of the Holy Ghost after baptism and confirmation can receive more light and testimony. This is because the gift of the Holy Ghost is ‘a permanent witness and higher endowment than the ordinary manifestation of

the Holy Spirit’ [in James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (1965–75), 5:4]. It is the higher endowment because the gift of the Holy Ghost can act as ‘a cleansing agent to purify a person and sanctify him from all sin’ [Bible Dictionary, “Holy Ghost,” 704]” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 73; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 58).

POINTS TO PONDER

- Consider Articles of Faith 1:4. Why do you think it is important that the principles and ordinances are listed in that order? Why do you think faith in Jesus Christ is listed first?
- What can you do to increase your faith in Jesus Christ?
- What does it mean to *exercise* your faith in Jesus Christ?
- If you were working with investigators who said they wanted to be able to believe the story of the First Vision and the Book of Mormon, what would you counsel them to do? Why?
- Why is baptism by water only “half a baptism”?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Memorize Hebrews 11:1; Alma 32:21; and Ether 12:6.
- Review the bulleted points in the statements by Elder John K. Carmack (p. 83) and Elder Richard G. Scott (pp. 83–84). Think about how your attitude and ability fit each of their points. Select one or two areas in which you would like to improve and develop a plan that will lead to improvement. Share that plan with your Heavenly Father in prayer and ask for help to increase your faith.

RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Baptism” (pp. 21–26)
- “Conversion” (pp. 40–43)
- “Faith” (pp. 54–56)
- “Holy Ghost” (pp. 81–84)

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PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL PREPARATION

INTRODUCTION

Prospective missionaries must prepare themselves for the rigors of missionary work. President Gordon B. Hinckley emphasized the importance of having good mental and physical health while serving a full-time mission:

“This work is rigorous. It demands strength and vitality. It demands mental sharpness and capacity. . . .

“ . . . Missionary work is not a rite of passage in the Church. It is a call extended by the President of the Church to those who are worthy and able to accomplish it. . . .

“Good physical and mental health is vital. . . .

“There are parents who say, ‘If only we can get Johnny on a mission, then the Lord will bless him with health.’

“It seems not to work out that way. Rather, whatever ailment or physical or mental shortcoming a missionary has when he comes into the field only becomes aggravated under the stress of the work.

“We simply must face up to the facts. We are spending millions of dollars on medical care and countless hours assisting those with problems that make it impossible for them to perform the work. . . .

“Good physical and mental health is vital.”

“ . . . There are other areas where those with serious limitations may work and have a satisfying experience. And the Lord will bless them for what they are able to do. . . .

“Permit me to emphasize that we need missionaries, but they must be capable of doing the work. . . .

“There should be an eagerness and a desire to serve the Lord as His ambassadors to the world. And there must be health and strength, both physical and mental, for the work is demanding, the hours are long, and the stress can be heavy” (“Missionary Service,” *First Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 2003, 17–18).

An understanding of the rigorous nature of missionary service and proper physical and emotional preparation will enhance a prospective missionary’s ability to adjust to a new lifestyle and succeed in the work of the Lord.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Prospective missionaries should prepare for the physical and emotional demands of a full-time mission.
- There are honorable alternatives to full-time missionary service for those individuals excused by priesthood leaders because of their physical or emotional circumstance.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Prospective missionaries should prepare for the physical and emotional demands of a full-time mission.



■ Missionary work is rigorous and demanding. Prospective missionaries are expected to qualify for service in the mission field. This involves not only their level of worthiness but also their physical, mental, and emotional preparation. If a missionary is struggling with physical or mental health, he or she will be at a disadvantage in this aspect of building the kingdom of God. Mental and emotional health is also critical to the success of a missionary in serving the Lord with “all your heart, might, mind and strength” (D&C 4:2). Developing good habits of eating, exercising, sleep, and personal hygiene before the mission call will enhance the likelihood of successfully adapting to the environment of missionary service.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 4:2
- Doctrine and Covenants 88:124

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley counseled priesthood leaders on their responsibility to judge the physical and emotional readiness of missionaries: “We ask you brethren to be more selective in those you recommend. Let your young people know what will be expected of them if they are to serve missions. Let their parents know what will be expected of their sons and daughters. . . .

“I recognize that the position we have taken will appear unreasonable and harsh to many parents, who will plead that their sons and daughters have the opportunity of missionary service. But, brethren, we feel that we must bring back into focus the real purpose of missionary work and the need for certain qualifications in order to accomplish that purpose. I hope that all concerned will realize that it is better not to go, than to go out and have to return in disappointment and with a sense of failure after a very short time. Brethren, may the Lord bless you with inspiration, with direction and guidance, with love for those for whom you are responsible, and with the courage to stand up for what you know to be right and reasonable. . . .

“Permit me to emphasize that we need missionaries, but they must be capable of doing the work. . . .

“There should be an eagerness and a desire to serve the Lord as His ambassadors to the world. And there must be health and strength, both physical and mental, for the work is demanding, the hours are long, and the stress can be heavy.

“We are not asking for perfection. The work of the Lord is done by ordinary people who work in an extraordinary way” (*First Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 2003, 18).

■ Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles emphasized the importance of daily care for our bodies: “Many people . . . have difficulty finding the time for sufficient rest, exercise, and relaxation. We must schedule time on our daily calendars for these activities if we are to enjoy a healthy and balanced life. Good physical appearance enhances our dignity and self-respect” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 17; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 15).

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, a former heart surgeon, spoke of how physical exercise benefits mental health: “Appropriate physical activity helps to combat depression” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1988, 8; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 8).

■ Missionaries should not begin their mission with bad habits that have the potential to grow into serious problems. Every person can change and improve. Prospective missionaries who have developed poor diet, hygiene, and physical activity habits can begin now to change their behavior. Self-discipline can be learned at any age, but the

process is not always easy. If you master the task before entering missionary service, you will save yourself from much grief and frustration.

Prospective missionaries should evaluate their lives in the following areas and make changes that prepare them physically and emotionally to serve the Lord:

Nutrition: Missionaries should be good examples of following the Lord's law of health—the Word of Wisdom (see D&C 89). In addition to avoiding harmful substances, “the Lord declares that the following foods are good for our bodies:

- “• Vegetables and fruits, which should be used ‘with prudence and thanksgiving’ (see D&C 89:10–11).
- “• The flesh [meat] ‘of beasts and of the fowls of the air,’ which is ‘to be used sparingly’ (see D&C 89:12–13).
- “• Grains such as wheat, rice, and oats, which are ‘the staff of life’ (see D&C 89:14–17)” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 187).

Since missionaries are often responsible for choosing and preparing their own food, prospective missionaries can begin preparing themselves now by learning to make proper food choices and then maintaining proper dietary patterns throughout their missions. A steady diet of high-calorie fast foods, carbonated drinks, and high-sugar treats should not be the norm. A balanced diet that includes the basic food groups, where possible, is preferred. Missionaries who serve in foreign countries may need to adapt by seeking the most nutritional and healthful foods available.



Regular exercise:

All young men and women should participate in regular exercise. Three basic requirements of a

physical activity program, regardless of a person's age or ability, are exercises for flexibility, strength, and cardiovascular endurance (aerobic or oxygen-using exercise).

1. Flexibility—These exercises stretch muscles, tendons, and ligaments and should be done daily.
2. Strength—Each major muscle group should be exercised.
3. Cardiovascular endurance—These exercises strengthen the heart, increase overall fitness, and improve mood. Walking and bicycling are good activities to prepare for missionary service.

Proper hygiene: Proper hygiene can prevent many infectious illnesses. It includes regular hand washing (probably the single most important procedure for good hygiene and prevention of many illnesses) and frequent bathing or showering.



Dental care: Teeth should be brushed and flossed daily. Prospective missionaries who are not already involved in a regular dental care program should see a dentist as soon as possible to allow time for evaluation

and treatment before their missionary service. Prospective missionaries should request information and instruction on preventive dental care.

All young men and women should participate in regular exercise.

Living quarters: Missionaries are expected to keep their apartments clean and orderly. The physical surroundings in which they live should reflect the dignity of their calling.

Immunizations: The Missionary Department will provide additional direction on immunizations once a missionary is assigned to a mission. However, there are standard immunizations every potential missionary should obtain. Consult with a doctor regarding the recommended immunizations.

Treatment of illness and injury: Missionaries should be healthy when they enter the mission field. Prospective missionaries who suffer from a physical or emotional difficulty should obtain counsel and treatment from qualified individuals in order to facilitate their recovery before entering the mission field.

Prospective missionaries must disclose accurate health information as part of their mission application. The interruption or premature

termination of a mission because of unresolved health problems is often personally devastating to the missionary and his or her family. Accurate and complete health information, as requested on the missionary application, is essential and must be available to the General Authorities making the mission assignment.

Preparing emotionally: Along with physical preparations, mental and emotional preparations are necessary to be a happy and effective missionary. Learning to deal with change and challenges in a positive manner while keeping focused on the purpose of the mission is an important part of a prospective missionary's preparation.

Individuals with good emotional characteristics often possess several of the following traits:

1. They feel comfortable about themselves.
 - Their emotions (fear, anger, jealousy, guilt, worry, love) are under control.
 - They can deal with the normal disappointments of life.
 - They have an easy-going attitude and are able to deal with most situations.
 - They appropriately deal with their own shortcomings.
 - They respect themselves and others.
 2. They feel good about other people.
 - They are able to consider the interests of others.
 - They have friendships.
 - They are accepting and are well received by others.
 - They respect differences in other people.
 - They can be bold but not overbearing.
 - They can feel they are part of a group.
 - They feel a sense of responsibility to others.
 3. They are able to meet the demands of life.
 - They do something about the problems that arise.
 - They accept their responsibilities.
- They adjust to their environment when necessary.
 - They plan ahead and do not fear the future.
 - They welcome new experiences.
 - They make use of their natural talents.
 - They set realistic goals for themselves.
 - They are able to think and make their own decisions.
 - They put their best effort into what they do and get satisfaction from doing it.
- Young men and women can involve themselves in activities to enhance their emotional preparation for missionary service. Valuable activities include:
- Learning to control emotions while working out problems and relationship issues with others.
 - Talking with parents, a bishop or branch president, or a professional counselor, when needed, to resolve personal issues and relationship problems.
 - Participating actively in the Church by taking part in missionary lessons, offering prayers, giving talks, and conducting meetings when requested to gain confidence in speaking in front of others.
 - Doing one's best in school, attending school regularly, completing homework assignments on time, attaining satisfactory grades, and abiding by the school's rules.
 - Pursuing hobbies and interests.
 - Spending some time away from home so that the separation from family during the mission will not be so dramatic.
 - Developing friendships and learning to feel comfortable in groups.
 - Learning how to work.
 - Learning to manage money by paying tithing and bills and saving money for one's mission.
 - Volunteering to work with the full-time missionaries.

■ Understanding that a mission includes many of the same challenges we face in regular life will aid in your emotional preparation. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, spoke of life's frequent trials:

"It was meant to be that life would be a challenge. To suffer some anxiety, some depression, some disappointment, even some failure is normal.

"Teach our members that if they have a good, miserable day once in a while, or several in a row, to stand steady and face them. Things will straighten out.

"There is great purpose in our struggle in life" (*"That All May Be Edified"* [1982], 94).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley shared an early mission experience that influenced his labors the remainder of his mission:

"I was not well when I arrived. Those first few weeks, because of illness and the opposition which we felt, I was discouraged. I wrote a letter home to my good father and said that I felt I was wasting my time and his money. He was my father and my stake president, and he was a wise and inspired man. He wrote a very short letter to me which said, 'Dear Gordon, I have your recent letter. I have only one suggestion: forget yourself and go to work.' Earlier that morning in our scripture class my companion and I had read these words of the Lord: 'Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.' (Mark 8:35.)

"Those words of the Master, followed by my father's letter with his counsel to forget myself and go to work, went into my very being. With my father's letter in hand, I went into our bedroom in the house at 15 Wadham Road, where we lived, and got on my knees and made a pledge with the Lord. I covenanted that I would try to forget myself and lose myself in His service.

"That July day in 1933 was my day of decision. A new light came into my life and a new joy into my heart. The fog of England seemed to lift, and I saw the sunlight. I had a rich and wonderful mission experience, for which I shall ever be grateful" (*"Taking the Gospel to Britain: A Declaration of Vision, Faith, Courage, and Truth,"* *Ensign*, July 1987, 7).

*"Forget yourself
and go to work."*

■ A common challenge confronting many missionaries is homesickness. President Ezra Taft Benson offered a solution to the problem of homesickness: "I have often said one of the greatest secrets of missionary work is work! If a missionary works, he will get the Spirit; if he gets the Spirit, he will teach by the Spirit; and if he teaches by the Spirit, he will touch the hearts of the people and he will be happy. There will be no homesickness, no worrying about families, for all time and talents and interests are centered on the work of the ministry. Work, work, work—there is no satisfactory substitute, especially in missionary work" (*The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [1988], 200).

■ On another occasion President Benson taught: "If you want to keep the Spirit, to love your mission and not be homesick, you must work. But, remember the words of President Thomas S. Monson: 'Work without vision is drudgery. Vision without work is dreaming. Work coupled with vision is destiny.' There is no greater exhilaration or satisfaction than to know, after a hard day of missionary work, that you have done your best" (*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 200–201).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley quoted a journalist to help illustrate our need to keep a proper and positive view through times of trial. His advice is timely for those preparing for the daily rigors of a full-time mission.

"I enjoy these words of Jenkins Lloyd Jones which I clipped from a column in the *Deseret News* some years ago. . . . Said he:

" 'Anyone who imagines that bliss is normal is going to waste a lot of time running around shouting that he's been robbed.

" 'Most putts don't drop. Most beef is tough. Most children grow up to be just people. Most successful marriages require a high degree of mutual toleration. Most jobs are more often dull than otherwise.

" 'Life is like an old-time rail journey—delays, sidetracks, smoke, dust, cinders, and jolts, interspersed only occasionally by beautiful vistas and thrilling bursts of speed.

" 'The trick is to thank the Lord for letting you have the ride.' (*Deseret News*, 12 June 1973.)" (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* [1997], 254).

■ If a person is suffering or has suffered with an emotional illness (such as depression, anxiety, or obsessive compulsive behavior), then preparing for a mission may include seeking professional treatment and perhaps medication. Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles counseled: “Missionary work is extremely demanding. If you have emotional challenges that can be stabilized to meet the rigors of a full-time mission, you can be called. It is vital that you continue to use your medication during your mission or until competent medical authority counsels otherwise. Recognize that emotional and physical challenges are alike. One needs to do all that is possible to improve the situation, then learn to live within the remaining bounds. God uses challenges that we may grow by conquering them” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 45; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 43).

Counseling early with your bishop and stake president about such concerns is vital to your mission preparation.

There are honorable alternatives to full-time missionary service for those individuals excused by priesthood leaders because of their physical or emotional circumstance.



■ As prospective missionaries work with their priesthood leaders, it may be determined that some may not have adequate health to serve a full-time mission. There are other worthwhile

opportunities for service that will aid in furthering the work of the Lord.

■ Bishop Richard C. Edgley of the Presiding Bishopric explained that some are excused from full-time missionary service: “There are those worthy young men and young women who have in their hearts the greatest desire to serve a mission, but because of physical, health, or other limiting circumstances are honorably excused” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 83; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 62).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley spoke of those who have limitations restricting their service: “There are other areas where those with serious limitations may work and have a satisfying experience. And the Lord will bless them for what they are able to do” (*First Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 2003, 18).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott spoke of alternatives for individuals who are honorably excused from full-time missionary service: “Your physical or emotional circumstance may be such that you have been excused by the President of the Church from full-time missionary service (see “Statement on Missionary Work” attached to First Presidency letter, Dec. 11, 2002). For you there are other ways to render meaningful service compatible with your condition. Your bishop or stake president can help you identify such service where you live. It could be in a Church family history center, temple, welfare project, or employment center, or in a local hospital, care center, shelter, or elsewhere. There are many places where help is needed. You can live at home and contribute powerfully. Such a call can be for a few months or longer. Your stake president will come to know where you should serve and for how long. He will then issue a formal call. Whatever your call may be, study the message of the Restoration with materials the full-time missionaries can provide. Then look for opportunities to share that message. As you conscientiously do that, you will be led to individuals who will be touched to learn more” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 45–46; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 43).

“There are other areas where those with serious limitations may work and have a satisfying experience.”



USING TIME WISELY TO BRING PEOPLE TO CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

Speaking of missionaries, the Lord declared: “They have been sent to preach my gospel . . . ; wherefore, I give unto them a commandment, thus: Thou shalt not idle away thy time” (D&C 60:13). Working together in harmony, missionary companions focus their labors by prayerfully setting meaningful goals and planning carefully how to use the allotted mission time to the best advantage for the growth of God’s kingdom.

A missionary’s purpose is to find people and teach them the restored gospel, leading them to have faith in Christ, repent of their sins, be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Learning to approach potential investigators in a positive and friendly manner and being guided by the Spirit are important for a missionary’s success. Furthermore, Church members are invaluable and underused resources for finding investigators who will eventually accept the restored gospel. A prepared and organized missionary is more effective in finding, teaching, and baptizing those whom the Lord has prepared to receive the blessings of the restored gospel.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Finding people to teach is a responsibility for missionaries and Church members.

- Effective planning, goal setting, and time management help focus missionary efforts and increase success.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Finding people to teach is a responsibility for missionaries and Church members.

- As a representative of the Savior, you will be finding “them that will receive you” (D&C 42:8). The Lord said:

“Lift up your voices unto this people; speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men;

“For it shall be given you in the very hour, yea, in the very moment, what ye shall say” (D&C 100:5–6).

“Thou shalt not idle away thy time.”

Missionaries do not carry alone the duty of finding people to teach. They also work with Church members to find investigators. President Gordon B. Hinckley taught: “The process of bringing new people into the Church is not the responsibility alone of the missionaries. They succeed best when members become the source from which the new investigators are found” (“Find the Lambs, Feed the Sheep,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 106). Your efforts to find people to teach will be multiplied as you seek the help of Church members, serve others, speak with everyone you meet, and use other helpful resources.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 123:12–13

Write impressions from this scripture in your study journal.

■ Members are important in finding investigators who will eventually be baptized and stay active and faithful. Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said: “Not long ago we did a study on convert baptisms, and only 10 percent of the investigators being taught by missionaries were found through referrals from members. But 60 percent of the investigators who were baptized came from those referrals” (*The Role of Members* [address at seminar for new mission presidents, June 24, 2003], 3).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles also emphasized the vital role of members in sharing the gospel: “An investigator who is brought to the missionaries through the members is 10 times more likely to be baptized than one the missionaries have found through their own contacting efforts. [Does this figure] catch your attention on the importance of the members’ role in finding people for the missionaries to teach?” (“The Role of Members in Conversion,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2003, 54).

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley described the benefits of using members to find and support investigators:

“Whenever there is a member who introduces an investigator, there is an immediate support system. The member bears testimony of the truth of the work. He is anxious for the happiness of his investigator friend. He becomes excited as that friend makes progress in learning the gospel.

“The full-time missionaries may do the actual teaching, but the member, wherever possible, will back up that teaching with the offering of his home to carry on this missionary service. He will bear sincere testimony of the divinity of the work. He will be there to answer questions when the missionaries are not around. He will be a friend to the convert who is making a big and often difficult change” (*Ensign*, May 1999, 105).

Members are important in finding investigators who will eventually be baptized and stay active and faithful.



■ Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles summarized how Church members can be a support in bringing others to Christ: “Members can participate in the conversion process by finding investigators, by being there as friends during the conversion process, and by bearing testimony at critical points. But after baptism, converts need strength to move from the world they’ve been in into a new environment. And that’s probably where members can most easily serve in missionary work. It’s not difficult for members who understand what the need is and who seek guidance from the Lord to respond to it, whether it’s inviting new members to their home or sitting

next to them in sacrament meeting or helping them better understand who we are and how we live” (in “Teaching from the Heart,” *Ensign*, June 2004, 11).

■ Follow the example of Jesus Christ, “who went about doing good” (Acts 10:38). Watch for opportunities to serve. This service may be planned or spontaneous. Serving others will often lead to opportunities to teach the restored gospel. In every way you serve, you should do so because you love all of the Lord’s children and hope, pray, and earnestly desire to teach them the restored gospel.

The Lord will help you find people to teach. People will be placed in your path who have been prepared for the message of the Restoration. Your good acts and words will help bring people to Christ. Pray and look for opportunities to serve, help, and lift others. While you serve, talk with everyone you meet and encourage them to learn more about the restored gospel.

■ Elder Earl C. Tingey of the Presidency of the Seventy offered the following suggestion to full-time missionaries:

“Open your mouth. The Lord tells us, ‘And thou must open thy mouth at all times, declaring my gospel with the sound of rejoicing’ [D&C 28:16].

“Speak to everyone: shopkeepers, passengers riding buses, people on streets, and everyone you meet” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 53; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 40).



■ Your efforts in finding people with whom you can share the message of the Restoration will be aided by your testimony. While looking for people to teach,

frequently testify of Jesus Christ and His restored gospel. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles affirmed: “When you declare the truth, it will bring an echo, a memory, even if it is an unconscious memory to the investigator, that they have heard this truth before—and of course they have. A missionary’s testimony invokes a great legacy of testimony dating back to the councils in heaven before this world was. There, in an earlier place, these same people heard this same plan outlined and heard there the role that Jesus Christ would play in their salvation” (“Missionary Work and the Atonement,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2001, 11).

■ Pray to see and recognize opportunities to serve and teach. Visit with as many people as you can each day. Use every honorable means available to find people who are willing to listen to your message. Pray for help to be bold in speaking with those you meet. Develop the ability to converse in a friendly and nonthreatening manner with others.

■ In many finding situations, you will need to be able to present a message in a short amount of time. Elder Richard G. Scott commented on this skill: “We have missionaries for whom the gospel message is such a part of their very beings that at a corner bus stop they can give a one-and-a-half-

minute overview, a five-minute overview. They are much better equipped to begin with individuals at whatever level they are on and to introduce them to the magnificent message of the Restoration” (in *Ensign*, June 2004, 11).



■ People who are experiencing significant changes in their lives—such as births, deaths, or moving into new homes—are often ready to learn about the restored gospel and make new friendships. For example, missionaries who come in contact with a person who has recently suffered the death of a loved one could share the message that they can be reunited after this mortal life.

■ The worldwide interest in family history may also help you find people to teach. Learn what Church family history resources are available in the areas in which you work. Meet Church members who understand family history and invite them to help introduce the Church’s resources to non-Latter-day Saints.

■ There are many other honorable ways to find potential investigators. Missionary training will suggest several methods. Prayer and

pondering will also inspire other ideas of how to find people to teach and invite them to come unto Christ through acceptance of the principles and ordinances of the restored gospel.

Effective planning, goal setting, and time management help focus missionary efforts and increase success.

■ Missionaries who prayerfully prioritize their activities are able to accomplish much. The mission president will provide a general schedule

“A missionary’s testimony invokes a great legacy of testimony dating back to the councils in heaven.”

appropriate to the culture, including when to arise in the morning, study times, preparation days, proselyting hours, and when to retire in the evening. Missionaries will be responsible to plan their daily activities within mission guidelines in order to accomplish the Lord's work. Knowing how to schedule the most important missionary activities at the most productive times will enhance mission success. Goal setting will aid in focusing upon the most productive missionary activities.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 109:8

Write impressions from this scripture in your study journal.

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks specified what our first priority should be when he explained:

“Our priorities determine what we seek in life. . . .

“Jesus taught about priorities when He said, ‘Seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you’ (Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 6:38; in Matthew 6:33; footnote a).

“ ‘Seek . . . first to build up the kingdom of God’ means to assign first priority to God and to His work. The work of God is to bring to pass the eternal life of His children (see Moses 1:39), and all that this entails in the birth, nurturing, teaching, and sealing of our Heavenly Father’s children. Everything else is lower in priority. . . . As someone has said, if we do not choose the kingdom of God first, it will make little difference in the long run what we have chosen instead of it. . . .

“Our priorities are most visible in how we use our time. . . . With time, we have only one opportunity for choice, and then it is gone forever” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 108–9; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 83–84).

■ As missionaries evaluate their schedules and activities, they should ask, “How much effective missionary work is actually being done?” Elder Oaks explained:

“None of us should be like the fisherman who thinks he has been fishing all day when in reality he has

spent most of his time getting to and from the water, eating lunch, and fussing with his equipment.

Fishing success is related to how long you have your line in the water, not to how long you are away from the apartment. Some fishermen are away from home for twelve hours and have their line in the water for ten hours. Other fishermen are away from home for twelve hours and have their line in the water for only two hours. This last type may wonder why they do not have the same success as others.

“The same principle applies to missionaries, whom the Master called ‘fishers of men.’ A missionary’s line should drop into the fishing water the moment he or she leaves the apartment” (*Introduction* [address at seminar for new mission presidents, June 20, 2000], 6).

■ Efforts that lead people to faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end will fulfill the call you received from the Lord. Church leaders have identified some key indicators for helping people experience enduring conversion. You will record and report your progress on these indicators regularly to your mission president:

- Referrals received and contacted
- New investigators
- Lessons taught to investigators with a member present
- Other lessons taught
- Progressing investigators (those who have been taught two or more times and are keeping their commitments regarding reading, praying, and so on)
- Investigators who attend sacrament meeting
- Investigators with a baptismal date
- Investigators baptized and confirmed
- Lessons taught to recent converts and less-active Church members

■ Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught the importance of planning each day and setting goals with a companion: “Missionaries cannot do this work by just saying, ‘Well, what are we going to do?’ Missionaries have to set goals. In companionship study two missionaries set their goals. They realize that if they have good goals, they will be much more

successful in finding, in teaching, in progressing investigators, and in baptizing them so that they can be confirmed and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (*Planning* [address at seminar for new mission presidents, June 25, 2003], 2).

■ Elder Neal A. Maxwell, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, encouraged extending beyond what we think we can accomplish as we seek to set and attain goals:

"Our goals should stretch us bit by bit. So often when we think we have encountered a ceiling, it is really a psychological or experiential barrier that we have built ourselves. We built it and we can remove it. . . .

". . . We must not expect personal improvement without pain or some 'remodeling' " (*Deposition of a Disciple* [1976], 33–34).

■ "Goals reflect the desires of our hearts and our vision of what we can accomplish. Through goals and plans, our hopes are transformed into action. Goal setting and planning are acts of faith. Prayerfully set goals that are in harmony with the Savior's command to 'teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' (Matthew 28:19).

". . . Do everything within your power to achieve your goals while respecting the agency of others. The ultimate measure of success is not in achieving goals alone but in the service you render and the progress of others. Goals are a means of helping you bring about much good among Heavenly Father's children. They are not to be used to receive recognition.

"Carefully considered goals will help you have clear direction and will help you fill your days with activities that help people strengthen their faith in the Savior and progress toward baptism, confirmation, and full activity in the Church. Challenging goals will help you work effectively and lead you to stretch and grow" (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 146).



■ President Thomas S. Monson, a counselor in the First Presidency, quoted an important principle when teaching about the impact of reporting progress in reaching goals: "When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported, the rate of improvement accelerates" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1970, 107).

POINTS TO PONDER

- What specific actions can you take to better prepare to serve the Lord in the mission field?
- Whom do you know who is ready for you to refer to the missionaries?
- What are some ways you could fellowship others to prepare them to be taught by the missionaries?
- What are some ways you could fellowship a recent convert or a member who is less active in the Church?
- How do Doctrine and Covenants 88:119 and 109:8 relate to both temples and missionaries?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- If you are not already doing so, begin using an activity planner to organize and prioritize your daily activities.
- Set and prioritize realistic goals to help you prepare for and progress toward your mission.
- Write four different brief approaches for sharing a message of the restored gospel with someone who is not a member of the Church. Practice verbalizing each approach—first with notes and then without.



True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Love” (pp. 96–97)
- “Missionary Work” (pp. 104–6)

NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS

[illegible]



PREPARING INVESTIGATORS FOR BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

INTRODUCTION

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has God's priesthood authority to administer ordinances that are binding on earth and in heaven. Through these ordinances we make covenants with the Lord that can lead us to salvation and exaltation. These covenants and ordinances, when faithfully accepted, allow us to be cleansed from our sins through the Atonement of Jesus Christ and become members of the Lord's Church on earth. By making and keeping our covenants, we protect ourselves from the wickedness of the world and receive blessings reserved for those who choose to follow the Lord.

Missionaries have a sacred trust from the Lord to prepare investigators for baptism and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. Missionaries should also understand that the baptism and confirmation of their investigators is not the end goal. Newly baptized members should begin to prepare themselves to receive temple ordinances.

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- As investigators come unto Christ and prepare to become Church members, they must understand the covenants associated with saving ordinances

and be willing to make and keep these sacred obligations.

- Missionaries help those who are converted prepare for baptism, confirmation, and membership in the Lord's Church.
- Covenants and ordinances necessary for exaltation are received in the house of the Lord.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

As investigators come unto Christ and prepare to become Church members, they must understand the covenants associated with saving ordinances and be willing to make and keep these sacred obligations.

■ One of the defining moments in teaching is when you, the missionary, invite an investigator to be baptized. As the investigator makes the transition from investigator to convert, he or she must understand the sacred nature of making covenants with the Lord, as well as be willing to take personal responsibility in accepting and keeping the covenants. Gospel blessings cannot be fully received without making covenants and receiving the saving ordinances of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. The first covenants converts

make are when they receive the ordinances of baptism by water and by the Spirit. These and other covenants bring blessings and open the doors to salvation in God's kingdom.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Moroni 6:1–4
- Doctrine and Covenants 20:37
- Doctrine and Covenants 42:78
- Doctrine and Covenants 45:9

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ “[A covenant is] an agreement between God and man, but they do not act as equals in the agreement. God gives the conditions for the covenant, and men agree to do what he asks them to do. God then promises men certain blessings for their obedience.

“Principles and ordinances are received by covenant. Members of the Church who make such covenants promise to honor them. For example, members covenant with the Lord at baptism and renew those covenants by partaking of the sacrament. They make further covenants in the temple. The Lord's people are a covenant people and are greatly blessed as they keep their covenants with the Lord” (Guide to the Scriptures, “Covenant,” 55).

God always keeps His covenants. A covenant can only become invalid if the man or the woman disobeys and fails to keep his or her part of the covenant.

■ President James E. Faust, a counselor in the First Presidency, identified a major purpose for covenants: “Covenants are not simply outward rituals; they are real and effective means of change. ‘Being born again, comes by the Spirit of God through ordinances’ [Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (1976), 162]. We should always honor and keep sacred the saving covenants we make with the Lord. If we do, He has promised, ‘Thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things—that

which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal’ [D&C 42:61]” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 19; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 17).

■ Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught: “The Latter-day Saints are a covenant people. From the day of baptism through the spiritual milestones of our lives, we make promises with God and He makes promises with us. He always keeps His promises offered through His authorized servants, but it is the crucial test of our lives to see if we will make and keep our covenants with Him” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1996, 40; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 30).



“Principles and ordinances are received by covenant.”

■ Elder F. Burton Howard of the Seventy described what it means to make covenants and keep them: “We are a covenant people. If there is a distinguishing feature about members

of the Church, it is that we make covenants. We need to be known as a covenant-keeping people as well. Making promises is easy, but to follow through and do what we have promised is another matter. That involves staying the course, being constant and steadfast. It means keeping the faith and being faithful to the end despite success or failure, doubt or discouragement. It is drawing near to the Lord with all our hearts. It is doing whatever we promise to do with all our might—even when we might not feel like it” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1996, 38; or *Ensign*, May 1996, 28).

“It is the crucial test of our lives to see if we will make and keep our covenants with [God].”

■ Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained that there is more to covenant making than knowing and understanding the doctrines: “Our duty lies in assisting others, through the power of the Spirit, to *know* and

understand the doctrines and principles of the gospel. Everyone must come to *feel* that the doctrines of the Restoration are true and of great value. And everyone who accepts the message must strive to *live* the gospel by making and keeping sacred covenants and by participating in all the ordinances of salvation and exaltation” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2000, 97; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 75).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught why it is important that we live so the Holy Ghost will ratify our covenants: “Our Savior is the light of the world. We should live so that we can be enlightened by his Spirit, and so that we may hear and heed the ratifying seal of the Holy Ghost, which testifies of the Father and the Son (see D&C 20:26). . . . We should be faithful to the covenants we have made in the name of Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1987, 79; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 66).

Missionaries help those who are converted prepare for baptism, confirmation, and membership in the Lord’s Church.

■ Missionaries teach investigators the Lord’s commandments and then invite them to act on what they have learned. Investigators are invited to have faith in the Lord, repent, and make commitments to keep the commandments. This helps prepare them for their baptismal interviews, when they will be asked about their commitment to keep these commandments the rest of their lives. When investigators commit to be baptized, a standard of worthiness is required of them (see Moroni 6:1–4).

Heavenly Father loves His children and desires to bless them. Commandments bring opportunities for blessings (see D&C 130:20–21). The commandments discussed in this section are some of the commandments investigators need to understand and commit to before they are baptized. Obeying each of these commandments is essential to being worthy to be baptized. These commandments are:

- Keep the Sabbath day holy.
- Follow the prophets.

- Live the law of chastity.
- Obey the Word of Wisdom.
- Live the law of tithing.

Keep the Sabbath Day Holy

Our Sabbath day behavior is a reflection of our commitment to honor and worship God. By keeping the Sabbath day holy, we show God our willingness to keep our covenants. Latter-day Saints should set this holy day apart from activities of the world and consecrate themselves by entering into a spirit of worship, thanksgiving, service, and family-centered activities appropriate to the Sabbath. As Church members endeavor to make their Sabbath activities compatible with the intent and Spirit of the Lord, their lives will be filled with joy and peace.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Exodus 20:8–11
- Doctrine and Covenants 59:9–10

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley gave the following counsel concerning proper Sabbath observance:

“There is no need for people to shop and desecrate the Sabbath day by buying things on Sunday. That is not the time to buy groceries. You have six days of the week. . . . You do not have to shop on Sunday. . . . You will not lose anything if you do your

shopping the other days and do not do it on Sunday. Let this day be a day of meditation, of reading the scriptures, of talking with your families, and of dwelling on the things of God. If you do so you will be blessed” (“Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 74).

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained how the Sabbath was honored in past dispensations: “Timeless truths and principles of the gospel were and are important to people of ancient and modern Israel. The Sabbath day, for example, was honored for

When investigators commit to be baptized, a standard of worthiness is required of them.

different reasons through the generations. From the time of Adam to Moses, the Sabbath was observed as a day of rest from the labor of creation (see Ex. 20:8–11; 31:16–17). From the time of Moses to the Resurrection of the Lord, the Sabbath also commemorated the liberation of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt (see Deut. 5:12–15; Isa. 58:13; Ezek. 20:20; 44:24; Mosiah 13:19). In latter days, Saints keep the Sabbath day holy in memory of the Atonement of Jesus Christ (see Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10; D&C 59:9–19) (“The Exodus Repeated,” *Ensign*, July 1999, 10–11).

Follow the Prophets

Christ built His Church upon the foundation of prophets and apostles. Those apostles and prophets directed the Church by revelation. The Lord called Joseph Smith as the first prophet to lead His Church in this last dispensation. Those who lead The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today are also prophets and apostles. The President of the Church is a living prophet. We have faith in God’s chosen prophets and follow their counsel and teachings.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Amos 3:7
- Doctrine and Covenants 1:38
- Doctrine and Covenants 21:4–6

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President James E. Faust described blessings that come by sustaining a prophet of God:

“Those who wish to come out of darkness and into the light must make sure they are in harmony with the inspiration and revelation which comes through our prophets, seers, and revelators. . . . These are the prophetic oracles who have tuned in over the centuries to the celestial transmitting station with the responsibility to relay the Lord’s words to others.

“The best way for you young people to come in closer harmony with the Savior is to sustain His

living prophet on the earth, the President of the Church—in our day and time, President Gordon B. Hinckley. If we do not follow the living prophet, whoever he may be, we are in danger of dying spiritually. . . .

“I can testify that the process of continuous revelation comes to the Church very frequently. It comes daily” (*Come out of the Darkness into the Light* [CES fireside for young adults, Sept. 8, 2002], 4).

■ Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles discussed the importance of following living prophets:

“Living prophets are leading this church today. The greatest security of members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints comes from learning to listen to and obey the words and commandments that the Lord has given through living prophets. . . .

“ . . . Our spiritual safety lies in turning to the clear voice of our living prophet. If we listen to his voice and obey his counsel, we will be able to live as Christ would have us live and endure to the end so that one day we, along with our families, will return back into the presence of our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 19, 21; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 17).

Live the Law of Chastity

God delights in the chastity of His sons and daughters and hates sexual sin. Chastity is sexual purity. To be chaste, we must be morally clean in our thoughts, words, and actions. There must be no sexual relations before being legally married. Those who are married must be completely faithful to their husband or wife. Pornography in any form must be avoided. God-given procreative power and our bodies are to be treated as sacred. Baptismal candidates are to live the law of chastity, which prohibits any sexual relations outside of a legal marriage, including homosexual relations. They are not to participate in abortions. If sexual sins have been committed, they must be repented of before the Lord can offer His forgiveness.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 42:22–25
- Doctrine and Covenants 63:16

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ The members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles declared, “God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

■ President James E. Faust contrasted the lives of those who violate the law of chastity with those who live morally clean lives:

“Those who engage in physical intimacies with someone outside of marriage are likely to suffer feelings of guilt as well as deep emotional and physical hurt. Intimate relationships between men and women outside the bounds the Lord has set bring great misery, shame, degradation, and unhappiness to those involved.

“In contrast, when these sacred gifts are exercised as the Lord intended within the bounds of a temple marriage, they bring us our greatest joy and happiness. We become co-creators with God in having family and posterity. Chastity before marriage followed by fidelity after marriage is a sacred passport to self-respect and happiness for everyone” (“The Virtues of Righteous Daughters of God,” *Ensign*, May 2003, 109).

■ Elder Dallin H. Oaks talked about the law of chastity:

“The power to create mortal life is the most exalted power God has given his children. Its use was mandated in the first commandment, but another important commandment was given to forbid its misuse. The emphasis we place on the law of chastity is explained by our understanding of the purpose of our procreative powers in the accomplishment of God’s plan.

“The expression of our procreative powers is pleasing to God, but he has commanded that this be confined within the relationship of marriage. President Spencer W. Kimball taught that ‘in the

context of lawful marriage, the intimacy of sexual relations is right and divinely approved. There is nothing unholy or degrading about sexuality in itself, for by that means men and women join in a process of creation and in an expression of love’ (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], p. 311).

“Outside the bonds of marriage, all uses of the procreative power are to one degree or another a sinful degrading and perversion of the most divine attribute of men and women” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 99; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 74).

Obey the Word of Wisdom



The Word of Wisdom teaches us to take care of our physical bodies. It teaches very specifically that we are to avoid harmful

substances, including alcohol, tobacco, tea, and coffee. We must also avoid harmful drugs in any form. Investigators must obey the Word of Wisdom before and after being baptized. Those who obey this law receive blessings of health, strength, and protection against evil.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- 1 Corinthians 6:19–20
- Doctrine and Covenants 89:18–21

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley warned against the violation of the Word of Wisdom: “The body which you have is the temple of God. It is sacred. It is the handiwork of Divinity. You and I cannot afford, under any circumstances, to indulge in the use of illegal drugs. They will absolutely destroy you. They will take away your self-control. They will cause you to do dishonest things to get money to buy them. Stay away from those things proscribed in the Word of Wisdom—no alcohol, no beer, no tobacco. What a blessing! What a blessing is the Word of Wisdom, that the Lord would set before His Church a pattern of living which would bless our lives” (“Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1999, 73).

Live the Law of Tithing



One of the great blessings of membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the privilege of contributing to the growth of the kingdom of God through paying tithing. Tithing is an ancient, divine law. For example, the Old Testament prophet

Abraham paid tithes of all he possessed (see Alma 13:15).

The Lord has commanded us to give a tenth of our increase annually to help build His kingdom. Our tithes are holy to the Lord, and we honor Him by paying tithing. God promises to abundantly bless those who pay an honest tithe (see Malachi 3:10–12).

Tithing funds are used to support the ongoing activities of the Church, such as building and maintaining temples and meetinghouses, supporting missionary work, conducting temple and family history work, and many other worthwhile activities. Tithing is not used to pay local Church leaders; all local congregations are presided over by lay ministers, who do not get paid for their Church service.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Malachi 3:10–12
- Doctrine and Covenants 119:4

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Gordon B. Hinckley shared why he pays tithing: “It is always a blessing to give back to the Lord just one-tenth of what He has given to us. I have a great testimony of tithing, my brethren and sisters. It has never been hard for me to pay my tithing, even in times of financial stress, because the Lord has made a promise that He would bless us if we would do so. I alone did not make that promise. The bishop didn’t make that promise. The Lord made that promise, and His is the power to keep that promise” (*Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 74).

■ President James E. Faust explained that paying tithing is not a matter of being rich or poor:

“The law of tithing is simple: we pay one-tenth of our individual increase annually. Increase has been interpreted by the First Presidency to mean income. What amounts to 10 percent of our individual income is between each of us and our Maker. There are no legalistic rules. As a convert in Korea once said: ‘With tithing, it doesn’t matter whether you are rich or poor. You pay 10 percent, and you don’t have to be ashamed if you haven’t earned very much. If you make lots of money, you pay 10 percent. If you make very little, you still pay 10 percent. Heavenly Father will love you for it. You can hold your head up proud.’ . . .

“Some may feel that they cannot afford to pay tithing, but the Lord has promised that He would prepare a way for us to keep all of His commandments [see 1 Nephi 3:7]. To pay tithing takes a leap of faith in the beginning, but as Jesus said, ‘If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine’ [John 7:17]. We learn about tithing by paying it. Indeed, I believe it is possible to break out of poverty by having the faith to give back to the Lord part of what little we have” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1998, 73–74; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 59).



Covenants and ordinances necessary for exaltation are received in the house of the Lord.

■ Temple ordinances are required for exaltation. Missionaries prepare investigators to accept the first principles and ordinances of the restored gospel. Faithful Church members continue progressing in order to qualify for exaltation in the celestial

kingdom. Not only have we been commanded to be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, but if we are to receive all of Heavenly Father's blessings, we must receive the ordinances offered only in the house of the Lord.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 131
- Doctrine and Covenants 132:15, 18–19

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ President Howard W. Hunter explained the need for temple ordinances: “The temple ordinances are absolutely crucial; we cannot return to God’s presence without them. I encourage everyone to worthily attend the temple or to work toward the day when you can enter that holy house to receive your ordinances and covenants” (“A Temple-Motivated People,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1995, 5).

■ President Hunter emphasized that baptism is not the end goal for investigators: “All of our efforts in proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead lead to the holy temple. This is because the temple ordinances are absolutely crucial; we cannot return to God’s presence without them” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 118; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 88).

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson explained how proclaiming the restored gospel leads to the temple on the path to eternal life:

“The temple is the house of the Lord. The basis for every temple ordinance and covenant—the heart of the plan of salvation—is the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Every activity, every lesson, all we do in the Church points to the Lord and His holy house. Our efforts to proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, and redeem the dead all lead to the temple. . . .

“Temple ordinances, covenants, endowments, and sealings enable individuals to be reconciled with the Lord and families to be sealed beyond the veil of death. Obedience to temple covenants qualifies us for eternal life, the greatest gift of God to man [see D&C 14:7]. Eternal life is more than immortality.

Eternal life is exaltation in the highest heaven—the kind of life that God lives” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 40; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 32–33).



■ President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that the fulness of the priesthood is required for exaltation:

“There is no exaltation in the kingdom of God without the fulness of priesthood.

. . . These blessings are obtained through obedience

to the ordinances and covenants of the house of the Lord. . . .

“ . . . The Lord has made it possible for every man in this Church, through his obedience, to receive the fulness of the priesthood through the ordinances of the temple of the Lord. This cannot be received anywhere else” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. [1954–56], 3:132).

“The temple ordinances are absolutely crucial; we cannot return to God’s presence without them.”

POINTS TO PONDER

- What is the significance of making covenants with God?
- Why are saving ordinances associated with covenants?
- In what ways do the Lord’s commandments bring joy to our lives?
- What do you think investigators should be taught about temples?

SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS

- Make a list of covenants you have made in your life, and ponder how they have influenced and protected you.
- Practice teaching one of the topics discussed in this chapter in a family home evening setting or to a friend or roommate.
- If you have not recently done so, visit with your bishop or branch president about preparing to go to the temple.

- “Baptism” (pp. 21–26)
- “Chastity” (pp. 29–33)
- “Covenant” (p. 44)
- “Prophets” (pp. 129–30)
- “Sabbath” (pp. 145–47)
- “Temples” (pp. 170–74)
- “Tithing” (pp. 180–82)
- “Word of Wisdom” (pp. 186–88)

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CHRISTLIKE ATTRIBUTES

INTRODUCTION

As sons and daughters of God, we have inherited divine qualities. Our premortal experiences prepared us for mortality, where we continue to learn and grow. A mission is a wonderful opportunity to continue developing and magnifying our divine characteristics as we strive to become more like the Savior.

Jesus Christ showed us how we should live. “Behold I am the light; I have set an example for you” (3 Nephi 18:16). Living a Christlike life is the ideal we strive for (see Matthew 5:48; 3 Nephi 12:48). One of the best ways to emulate Christlike attributes is to study the Savior’s life and try to become like Him. The Christlike attributes of effective missionaries allow investigators to witness the beauty of the restored gospel in the missionaries’ lives. Investigators desire what the missionaries have and begin to thirst for the fulness of the gospel. If we are faithful, Jesus Christ will continue to magnify our talents and abilities and help us become more like Him. President Gordon B. Hinckley said, “The most persuasive gospel tract is the exemplary life of a faithful Latter-day Saint” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1982, 68; or *Ensign*, May 1982, 45).

DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES TO UNDERSTAND

- Missionaries strive to develop Christlike attributes.

- Missionaries are commanded to serve God with all their “heart, might, mind and strength” (D&C 4:2).
- Obedience is a vital attribute in missionary work.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES AND STATEMENTS

Missionaries strive to develop Christlike attributes.



■ As ambassadors for the Lord Jesus Christ, missionaries should exemplify His qualities to everyone they teach. Investigators

often respond positively to missionaries and members who emulate the Savior. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles described the power of the examples of members who have Christlike attributes: “Surely there is no more powerful missionary message we can send to this world than the example of a loving and happy Latter-day Saint life. The manner and bearing, the smile and kindness of a faithful

member of the Church brings a warmth and an outreach that no missionary tract or videotape can convey. People do not join the Church because of what they know. They join because of what they

“The most persuasive gospel tract is the exemplary life of a faithful Latter-day Saint.”

feel, what they see and want spiritually. Our spirit of testimony and happiness in that regard will come through to others if we let it. As the Lord said to Alma and the sons of Mosiah, ‘Go forth . . . that ye may show forth good examples unto them in me, and I will make an instrument of thee in my hands unto the salvation of many souls’ [Alma 17:11]” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 16; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 14).

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Matthew 25:40
- Luke 10:30–37
- John 13:4–17
- 2 Nephi 31:9–10
- 3 Nephi 18:24
- Doctrine and Covenants 4:5–6

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles encouraged us to develop Christlike attributes in order to become effective missionaries: “If we are to fulfill the Lord’s command to open the windows of heaven to all of our brothers and sisters, we must prepare to teach the gospel. With study of the scriptures, fasting, and prayer, we fortify our testimonies. We cultivate Christlike attributes of ‘faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, [and] diligence’ [D&C 4:6]” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1995, 102; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 76).

Those Christlike attributes are discussed in the rest of this section.

Faith (see also chapter 10, “Faith and Conversion”)

■ Faith leads to knowledge and understanding. President Boyd K. Packer, Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, explained:

“As you test gospel principles by believing without knowing, the Spirit will begin to teach you. Gradually your faith will be replaced with knowledge.

“You will be able to discern, or to *see*, with spiritual eyes” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1994, 78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 60).



■ The missionary guide *Preach My Gospel* explains the relationship between faith in Jesus Christ and how we live: “Faith leads to action, including repentance, obedience, and dedicated service. When you have faith in Jesus Christ, you trust the Lord enough to follow His commandments— even when you do not

completely understand the reasons for them. You accomplish what the Lord wants you to accomplish. You help bring about good in your own life and the lives of others. You are able to do miracles according to the Lord’s will. Your faith will be manifest through diligence and work” (*Preach My Gospel* [2004], 116).

■ Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles emphasized the importance of faith: “The need to *exercise faith in Jesus Christ* is absolutely essential. It is the foundation of the plan of salvation. When that exercise of faith is coupled with sincere effort based upon a willingness to *hearken to His counsel*, great personal growth and blessings follow” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 119; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 87–88).

Virtue

■ President Ezra Taft Benson described some of the attributes of virtue:

“Virtuous behavior implies that [a priesthood holder] has pure thoughts and clean actions. . . .

“Virtue is akin to holiness, an attribute of godliness. A priesthood holder should actively seek for that which is virtuous and lovely and not that which is debasing or sordid. Virtue will garnish his thoughts unceasingly (see D&C 121:45). How can any man indulge himself in the evils of pornography, profanity, or vulgarity and consider himself totally virtuous?” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 60; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 46).

■ President James E. Faust, a counselor in the First Presidency, explained: “Many people do not fully understand the meaning of *virtue*. One commonly understood meaning is to be chaste or morally clean, but *virtue* in its fuller sense encompasses all traits of righteousness that help us form our character. An old sampler found in a museum in Newfoundland, stitched in 1813, reads: ‘Virtue is the chiefest beauty of the mind, the noblest ornament of humankind. Virtue is our safeguard and our guiding star that stirs up reason when our senses err’ ” (“The Virtues of Righteous Daughters of God,” *Ensign*, May 2003, 108).

“Virtue . . .
encompasses all traits
of righteousness.”

Knowledge

■ We need balance in seeking knowledge. President Spencer W. Kimball emphasized the need to carefully choose the kind of knowledge we seek:

“The treasures of both secular and spiritual knowledge are hidden ones—but hidden from those who do not properly search and strive to find them. . . . Spiritual knowledge is not available merely for the asking; even prayers are not enough. It takes persistence and dedication of one’s life. The knowledge of things in secular life are of time and are limited; the knowledge of the infinite truths are of time and eternity.

“Of all treasures of knowledge, the most vital is the knowledge of God: his existence, powers, love, and promises. . . .

“Secular knowledge, important as it may be, can never save a soul nor open the celestial kingdom nor create a world nor make a man a god, but it can be most helpful to that man who, placing first things first, has found the way to eternal life and who can now bring into play all knowledge to be his tool and servant” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 389–91).

“Of all treasures
of knowledge, the
most vital is the
knowledge of God.”

Temperance

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught:

“Temperance suggests sobriety and self-restraint in action. It reminds one of covenants made. . . .

“Repeatedly, scriptures teach that we be ‘temperate in all things’ (1 Corinthians 9:25; Alma 7:23; 38:10; D&C 12:8). Temperance can protect each of us from the aftermath of excess” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 81; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 60).

■ President Ezra Taft Benson described a temperate person: “A priesthood holder is *temperate*. This means he is restrained in his emotions and verbal expressions.

He does things in moderation and is not given to overindulgence. In a word, he has self-control. He is the master of his emotions, not the other way around” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 62; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 47).

Patience

■ There is a major benefit in viewing life with patience. Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin taught:

“We will have genuine joy and happiness only as we learn patience.

“Dictionaries define patience in such terms as bearing pain or sorrow calmly or without complaint; not being hasty or impetuous; being steadfast despite opposition, difficulty, or adversity. . . .

“. . . I believe that a lack of patience is a major cause of the difficulties and unhappiness in the world today. Too often, we are impatient with ourselves, with our family members and friends, and even with the Lord. We seem to demand what we want right now, regardless of whether we have earned it, whether it would be good for us, or whether it is right. . . .

“We should learn to be patient with ourselves. Recognizing our strengths and our weaknesses, we should strive to use good judgment in all of our choices and decisions, make good use of every opportunity, and do our best in every task we undertake. We should not be unduly discouraged nor in despair at any time when we are doing the best we can.

Rather, we should be satisfied with our progress even though it may come slowly at times” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 35–37; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 30, 32).

Brotherly Kindness



■ President Ezra Taft Benson said: “One who is kind is sympathetic and gentle with others. He is considerate of others’ feelings and courteous in his behavior. He has a helpful nature. Kindness pardons others’ weaknesses and faults. Kindness is extended to all—to the aged and the young, to animals, to those low of station as well as the high” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 62; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 47).

Godliness

■ Elder Russell M. Nelson said:

“Godliness is an attribute that seems as difficult to define as it is to attain. Scriptures refer to ‘the mystery of godliness’ (1 Timothy 3:16; D&C 19:10). . . .

“Simon Peter counseled us ‘to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God’ (2 Peter 3:11–12).

“ ‘The power of godliness is manifest’ in the ordinances of the priesthood (D&C 84:20). Godliness is not a product of perfection; it comes of concentration and consecration.

“Godliness characterizes each of you who truly loves the Lord. You are constantly mindful of the Savior’s atonement and rejoice in His unconditional love. Meanwhile you vanquish personal pride and vain ambition. You consider your accomplishments important only if they help establish His kingdom on earth” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1991, 83; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 61).

■ Godliness may be described as devout conformity to the will of God. Beginning with a quotation from Moroni, President Gordon B. Hinckley said:

“ ‘Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of [Christ]’ (Moroni 10:31–32). . . .

“ . . . I pray that each of us will be a little more kind, a little more thoughtful, a little more courteous. I pray that we will keep our tongues in check and not let anger prompt words which we would later regret. I pray that we may have the strength and the will to turn the other cheek, to walk the extra mile in lifting up the feeble knees of those in distress. . . .

“May God bless you, my wonderful, faithful associates, in this great work. May His peace and His love be upon you and enshrine your lives with an essence of godliness” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2003, 109–10; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2003, 103).

Charity



■ President Ezra Taft Benson taught how charity is learned by following the Savior’s example: “The final and crowning virtue of the divine character is *charity*, or the pure love of Christ (see Moroni 7:47). If we would truly seek to be more like our Savior and Master, then learning to love as He loves should be our highest goal. Mormon called charity ‘the greatest of all’ (Moroni 7:46).

“The world today speaks a great deal about love, and it is sought for by many. But the pure love of Christ differs greatly from what the world thinks

of love. Charity never seeks selfish gratification. The pure love of Christ seeks only the eternal growth and joy of others” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 62; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 47).

■ Charity must be the motive for our actions if we are to become Christlike. Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained: “We are challenged to move through a process of conversion toward that status and condition called eternal life. This is achieved not just by doing what is right, but by doing it for the right reason—for the pure love of Christ. The Apostle Paul illustrated this in his famous teaching about the importance of charity (see 1 Corinthians 13). The reason charity never fails and the reason charity is greater than even the most significant acts of goodness he cited is that charity, ‘the pure love of Christ’ (Moroni 7:47), is not an *act* but a *condition* or state of being. Charity is attained through a succession of acts that result in a conversion. Charity is something one becomes. Thus, as Moroni declared, ‘except men shall *have* charity they cannot inherit’ the place prepared for them in the mansions of the Father (Ether 12:34; italics added)” (in Conference Report, Oct. 2000, 43; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 34).

■ “Jesus Christ is the perfect example of charity. In His mortal ministry, He always ‘went about doing good,’ teaching the gospel and showing tender compassion for the poor, afflicted, and distressed (see Matthew 4:23; Mark 6:6; Acts 10:38). His crowning expression of charity was His infinite Atonement. He said, ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends’ (John 15:13). This was the greatest act of long-suffering, kindness, and selflessness that we will ever know.

...

“As you continue to receive the Savior’s perfect love and as you demonstrate Christlike love for others, you will find that your love increases. You will experience the joy of being in the Lord’s service. The Holy Ghost will be your constant companion, guiding you in your service and in your relationships with others” (*True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* [2004], 28).

Humility

■ Elder Richard G. Scott taught: “*Humility* is essential to the acquiring of spiritual knowledge.

To be humble is to be teachable. Humility permits you to be tutored by the Spirit and to be taught from sources inspired by the Lord, such as the scriptures. The seeds of personal growth and understanding germinate and flourish in the fertile soil of humility. Their fruit is spiritual knowledge to guide you here and hereafter” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1993, 118; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 87).

■ As a member of the Seventy, Elder Marlin K. Jensen spoke of the relationship between humility and our submissiveness to God’s will: “True humility will inevitably lead us to say to God, ‘Thy will be done.’ And because what we *are* does affect what we *do*, our submissiveness will be reflected in our reverence, gratitude, and willingness to accept callings, counsel, and correction” (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 2001, 10; or *Ensign*, May 2001, 10).

Diligence

■ “Diligence is steady, consistent, earnest, and energetic effort in doing the Lord’s work. The Lord expects you to work diligently—persistently and with great effort and care. A diligent missionary works effectively and efficiently. Diligence in missionary work is an expression of your love for the Lord and His work. When you are diligent, you find joy and satisfaction in your work.

“Do many good things of your own free will (see D&C 58:27). Don’t wait for your leaders to tell you what to

do. Continue until you have done all you can, even when you are tired. Focus on the most important things and avoid wasting time. Pray for guidance and strength. Plan regularly and effectively. Avoid anything that distracts your thoughts or actions” (*Preach My Gospel*, 121).

■ President Thomas S. Monson, a counselor in the First Presidency, explained why missionaries need to work diligently:

“Missionary work is difficult. It will tax your energies. It will strain your capacity. It will demand your best effort—frequently, a second effort. Remember, the race goeth ‘not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong’ (Eccl. 9:11)—but to him who endures to the end. Determine to—

“Diligence in missionary work is an expression of your love for the Lord.”

*“Stick to your task till it sticks to you.
Beginners are many, but enders are few.
Honor, power, place and praise
Will always come to the one who stays.
Stick to your task till it sticks to you;
Bend at it, sweat at it, smile at it, too—
For out of the bend and the sweat and the smile
Will come life’s victories after awhile [author
unknown]”* (in Conference Report, Mar.–Apr. 1979, 53; or *Ensign*, May 1979, 36–37).

Missionaries are commanded to serve God with all their “heart, might, mind and strength” (D&C 4:2).

■ Missionaries who serve God with all their “heart, might, mind and strength” (D&C 4:2) are able to give consistent, sincere, and energetic physical, mental, and spiritual effort to accomplish their purpose of inviting “others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end” (*Preach My Gospel*, 1). The diligent missionary will not waste time but considers every day an opportunity to serve the Lord.

Missionary work can be repetitive and difficult. Some days seem to bring little success, while other, more productive days make up for the difficult ones. The number of baptisms does not determine a missionary’s success. Working and serving effectively with the Spirit is essential for happiness in missionary service.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- Doctrine and Covenants 4:2–5
- Doctrine and Covenants 18:15–16
- Doctrine and Covenants 88:84

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Elder Jeffrey R. Holland discussed a relationship between facing the difficulties of missionary work and remembering the Savior’s Atonement:

“Anyone who does any kind of missionary work will have occasion to ask, Why is this so hard?

Why doesn’t it go better? Why can’t our success be more rapid? Why aren’t there more people joining the Church? It is the truth. We believe in angels. We trust in miracles. Why don’t people just flock to the font? Why isn’t the only risk in missionary work that of pneumonia from being soaking wet all day and all night in the baptismal font?

“You will have occasion to ask those questions. I have thought about this a great deal. I offer this as my personal feeling. I am convinced that missionary work is not easy because *salvation is not a cheap experience*. Salvation *never* was easy. We are The Church of Jesus Christ, this is the truth, and He is our Great Eternal Head. How could we believe it would be easy for us when it was never, ever easy for Him? . . .

“ . . . When you struggle, when you are rejected, when you are spit upon and cast out and made a hiss and a byword, you are standing with the best life this world has ever known, the only pure and perfect life ever lived. You have reason to stand tall and be grateful that the Living Son of the Living God knows all about your sorrows and afflictions” (“Missionary Work and the Atonement,” *Ensign*, Mar. 2001, 14–15).



■ President Thomas S. Monson explained why missionary work requires using all our resources: “Missionary work is hard work. Missionary service is demanding and requires long hours of study and preparation, that the missionary himself might match the divine message he proclaims. It is a labor of love but also of sacrifice and devotion to duty” (in Conference Report, Sept.–Oct. 1995, 66; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 49).

Obedience is a vital attribute in missionary work.

■ There is power that comes to obedient missionaries. Mission leaders stress the importance of keeping the commandments and mission rules. Missionaries need not be blindly obedient but rather faithfully obedient. Great peace comes through faithful obedience.

Scriptures to Study and Ponder

- John 14:15
- 1 Nephi 3:7
- Alma 37:35
- Doctrine and Covenants 82:10
- Doctrine and Covenants 130:20–21

Write impressions from these scriptures in your study journal.

■ Along with the general mission rules, missionaries have the opportunity to follow specific counsel given by their leaders. President Gordon B. Hinckley gave an example of the power that comes from obeying one's mission president:

"Years ago I was on a mission in England. I had been called to labor in the European Mission office in London under President Joseph F. Merrill of the Council of the Twelve, then president of the European Mission. One day three or four of the London papers carried reviews of a reprint of an old book, snide and ugly in tone, indicating that the book was a history of the Mormons. President Merrill said to me, 'I want you to go down to the publisher and protest this.' I looked at him and was about to say, 'Surely not me.' But I meekly said, 'Yes, sir.'

"I do not hesitate to say that I was frightened. I went to my room and felt something as I think Moses must have felt when the Lord asked him to go and see Pharaoh. I offered a prayer. My stomach was churning as I walked over to the Goodge Street station to get the underground train to Fleet Street. I found the office of the president and presented my card to the receptionist. She took it and went into the inner office and soon returned to say that the president was too busy to see me. I replied that I had come five thousand miles and that I would

wait. During the next hour she made two or three trips to his office; then finally he invited me in. I shall never forget the picture when I entered. He was smoking a long cigar with a look that seemed to say, 'Don't bother me.'

"I held in my hand the reviews. I do not recall what I said after that. Another power seemed to be speaking through me. At first he was defensive and even belligerent. Then he began to soften. He concluded by promising to do something. Within an hour word went out to every book dealer in England to return the books to the publisher. At great expense he printed and tipped in the front of each volume a statement to the effect that the book was not to be considered as history, but only as fiction, and that no offense was intended against the respected Mormon people. Years later he granted another favor of substantial worth to the Church, and each year until the time of his death I received a Christmas card from him.

"I came to know that when we try in faith to walk in obedience to the requests of the priesthood, the Lord opens the way, even when there appears to be no way" ("If Ye Be Willing and Obedient," *Ensign*, July 1995, 4–5).



■ Missionaries who learn to faithfully obey are blessed with power. President Ezra Taft Benson emphasized the difference between reluctant obedience and willing obedience: "When obedience ceases to be an irritant and becomes our quest, in that moment God will endow us with power" (in Donald L.

Staheli, in Conference Report, Apr. 1998, 108; or *Ensign*, May 1998, 82).

■ Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander of the Seventy spoke of the importance of obeying mission rules: "Mission rules are important in the same way commandments are important. We all need to keep them, understanding that they give us strength, direction, and limits. The smart missionary will learn the intent of the rules and make them work for him. Your mission is a time of discipline and single-minded focus. You will be required to go without some things common to your current lifestyle: music, TV, videos, novels, even girls. There is nothing wrong with any of these things, . . .

■ Elder Richard G. Scott explained how personal obedience can help a missionary testify with power: “Missionaries who have paid tithing, for example, can bear witness of the promised blessings that the Lord gives for obedience. A missionary who has lived a righteous life can bear powerful witness because he has had spiritual experiences in his life. Such experiences are conditioned upon worthiness and faith in the Savior” (in “Teaching from the Heart,” *Ensign*, June 2004, 9).

- Of the Christlike attributes discussed in this lesson, which ones do you need to concentrate on developing at this time in your life?
- What do you need to do in order to improve in those Christlike attributes selected?
- How do Christlike attitudes enable missionaries to more effectively teach the restored gospel?
- Why are both the *ability* and the *desire* to serve diligently important for missionary work?
- How can you develop a greater ability to work hard in order to be a diligent missionary?
- What are some of the blessings that result from obedience?
- What is the relationship between obedience and having the Spirit?

- Ponder your personal progress toward developing Christlike attributes. Select one or two areas to improve in and develop a specific plan for improvement.

True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference

- “Charity” (pp. 27–29)
- “Faith” (pp. 54–56)
- “Hope” (pp. 85–86)
- “Humility” (pp. 86–87)
- “Obedience” (pp. 108–9)

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