

ELDER JOHN H. TAYLOR

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I trust, my brethren and sisters, that I may have the blessings of the Lord with me while addressing you.

The preaching of the Gospel has always been one of the major activities of the Church. The responsibility for this work rests on the Priesthood, especially on the Seventies, because of the nature of their calling to be special witnesses of the Lord in traveling among the people, both at home and abroad. This assignment to preach and teach will always be ours because the Lord has indicated that during the time that his people are upon the earth, all men and women shall have the opportunity of understanding and accepting the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Before any punishment has been meted out to a people because of their disobedience or their lack of faithfulness, the Lord, in sending his servants to preach and teach among the people, has always given them an opportunity of repenting of their sins and of coming back to him.

This missionary work has been in existence even from the time when Adam was placed upon the earth. It was given to him that he should preach and that he should teach his family that they should repent of their sins and do the things which ought to be done in order that they might find their way back into the presence of God.

Perhaps at times we forget this obligation which rests upon us as heads of families. I believe that if we were more faithful we would feel the responsibility of teaching our boys and girls, praying with them, and bearing testimony to them of the truthfulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We would then have greater influence with them and thus help them avoid many things which are contrary to the word of the Lord.

When the Gospel has been upon the earth the Lord has indicated that his Priesthood shall preach and teach among the people. All through the early days down to the time of Christ prophets were assigned to this labor, to warn the people, and to entreat them to repent of their sins and come back and worship the Lord in order that they might not be destroyed. When the Christ came upon the earth he preached and taught among the people and chose disciples and chose Seventies that they might represent him in preaching and teaching. When the Christ was crucified and the work was given to the Apostles to preach and teach, they went out and even gave their lives that men and women might know this Gospel.

When the Church was established in these latter days, missionaries were sent out under all kinds of circumstances and conditions. They went out when they were sick, they went out when they were poor, they went out in the days of persecution, in order to do something for the nations of the earth, that the people might not be destroyed or die without having the privilege of understanding the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This assignment has come down to us through all the days of the Church and

*Wednesday, April 6**Third Day*

we are therefore still sending missionaries into the world to preach this wonderful Gospel so that men and women may not be lost.

In recent years we have not only been doing this foreign missionary work, but the Church has established in the stakes of Zion the home mission work. The presidents of stakes and those associated with them have seen the value of this work, and they are assigning men and women to go among the people who are living in the stakes of Zion, but are not members, so that they might have an understanding of the plan of life and salvation as revealed to us through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Reports from the stakes indicate that because of the labors of the missionaries, many of these people are accepting the Gospel and many members who have been inactive in their Church duties are coming back into Church service.

Our mission in the stakes of Zion is of course to endeavor to convince men and women of the truthfulness of the Gospel. We also have another mission,—that of bringing to the attention of our good friends and neighbors the real value of many of the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As they live among us they have not acquainted themselves with many of the truths that we have in the Church. They know something about the Word of Wisdom; they know a little about the Temple work; they know something about how we care for the needs of our young people,—but the majority of the principles of the Gospel of Jesus Christ have not been explained to them.

While we have no hope of getting everybody that we contact to come into the Church, we do have the hope, the prayer and the desire to acquaint them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ so that if they move away they can carry with them a correct knowledge and understanding of why we worship God and a correct conception of our religion.

Just recently I boarded the train at Salt Lake City with a number of other people. Among them was a young lady who, soon after being seated, was approached by fellow passengers for information concerning the Mormon people. As they talked with this young lady they soon found that she was not a member of the Church and that she had been going to school at the University. She had had some contact with the Mormon people, especially with the boys and girls.

Practically the only thing that she could tell about the Mormon people was that they had a doctrine in the Church called the Word of Wisdom and because of it none of the people of the Church smoked or drank. Of course that was good information. Then she qualified it in a minute or two and said the older people do not drink or smoke but some of the young people do. When she had finished telling what little she knew about the Church she said: "Well, after all is said and done, the Mormon people are a very fine, splendid people."

As I sat in my seat and listened to her vague ideas regarding the doctrines of the Church I thought of the splendid opportunities we have in Salt Lake City and all of our towns where our stakes are organized, to go to these fine friends of ours and help them to understand what we really believe. We all ought to be missionaries and help our neighbors

and friends to understand the principles of the Gospel and perhaps this understanding will gradually grow and increase until they shall become well informed regarding the things we have in the Church.

May the Lord bless us and help us to keep his commandments and to do the things we ought to do. May we be a good example to the people who live among us. May the Lord bless the missionaries in the stakes of Zion so that they will know how to approach people in such a humble and intelligent way that they shall be convinced that this is indeed the Church of Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless us and help us in this great work, I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Choir and congregation sang the hymn, "Praise to the Man."

ELDER ALMA L. PETERSEN

Former President of the Danish Mission

My brethren and sisters: I trust that the short time I stand before you, you will offer a prayer to our Heavenly Father in my behalf.

I bring to you a greeting from President Richard R. Lyman and his dear wife, who are doing a very fine work in the European Mission. I bring to you also a greeting from President Mark Garff of the Danish Mission, also the Elders and Saints there.

I am glad to report to you—and I believe that I can say it truthfully—that never before in the history of the Danish Mission have we been so respected and so well thought of as we are at the present time. We had a wonderful harvest in the past three and a half years, and have brought many fine people into the Church. We have brought into the Church some very good Catholic people who have become faithful Latter-day Saints and are doing a fine work.

I would be ungrateful were I not to say that we were very fortunate, while I was presiding over the Danish Mission, to have some fine brethren and sisters visit us. Brother George D. Pyper visited Denmark and visited our Sunday Schools. He did a lot of good for the Sunday School cause in the Danish Mission. We had the pleasure of having President Grant visit our mission, and I do not know of anything that did our mission so much good as the visit of himself and associates.

I am going to call to your attention just one thing that happened. The day that President Grant arrived in Copenhagen one sister, who was a faithful Latter-day Saint, came to me and said: "President Petersen, if I can but shake his hand I know that I will be well."

I am just citing that to show you the faith that our Saints have in the work. They are living the Gospel; I think I dare say that many of them are living the Gospel better than we are here at home. I am going to refer to one thing that happened just last month. A large convention was held in the State of New Jersey, where many of the teachers and the professors of different states were present. Helen Keller was one of the speakers at this convention, and after she had delivered her paper the reporters came to her and asked if they might