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Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My brethren and sisters, I seek the Spirit of the Lord that what I say may be consonant with the inspirational things to which we have listened during the past three days. As I look into your faces, I see the fulfilment of prophecy. In your presence I see a realization of the words of Jeremiah: ". . . I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion."

"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." (Jer. 3:14-15.)

You are here, each of us is here, enjoying the blessings of the Lord because the servants of the Lord have gone into the world to teach the glad tidings of the gospel for the blessing of our Father's children. More than eighty thousand of them have gone. They have given more than two hundred thousand man-years of dedicated service. I am sure that few of us appreciate the cost, the heartaches, the sorrows, the sacrifices, and the results of this magnificent effort.

I read the other day a story written by a little girl whose father was on a mission in Denmark when she and her mother lived in Parowan. She writes:

"My little mother had to work like a slave to keep her children while Father was on his mission. I remember how every night she would spin, and how in the daytime, I would split fine splinters off from the pitchy wood, and at night I would sit with her and tend the baby and keep holding and lighting these pitchy sticks for her to see to spin by, and how I would cry when I went to bed to think my sweet little mother had to work so hard. . . ."

"I remember the Christmas of 1862. All of us children hung up our stockings. We jumped up early in the morning to see what Santa had brought, but there was not a thing in them. Mother wept bitterly. She went to her box and got a little apple and cut it in little tiny pieces and that was our Christmas, but I have never forgotten to this day how I loved her dear little

hands as she was cutting that apple." (Hannah Daphne Smith Dalton)

A few years ago I did some research on the discovery of gold in California, in which men of the Mormon Battalion participated. I learned that while men were traveling westward over land and sea in search of gold, missionaries from these valleys were traveling eastward over land and sea in search of souls. And the days of sacrifice are not over. As you heard this morning among the statistics that were read to you, the parents and friends of our missionaries last year sent them between five and six million dollars. That money was spent not only in dollars, but also in pounds and shillings, in crowns and kroner, in francs and marks, in yen, in pesos, and cruzeros.

Add to that the value of the time of the missionaries. Estimate it conservatively at another five or six million dollars, and you have a consecration of at least ten million dollars a year for the purpose of declaring the reality and personality of God, the deep meaning of the Atonement, and the restoration of the Lord's Church, guided by apostles and prophets.

I think you may be interested in these remarkable words of the Prophet Joseph Smith written in 1842, two years before his death:

". . . no unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done." (*History of the Church* IV:540.)

That is the magnitude of our mission, brethren and sisters, and it shall not be accomplished until the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.

I am sure we are all gratified by the many good things said concerning the Church. We are deeply grateful for the opportunities of radio and tele-

vision, and the generosity of the public press, all of which help to build a favorable atmosphere in which to teach the gospel. But I am confident that the time will never come when we shall not need vigorous men and women of faith to go into the world as missionaries for this cause. We have never found, and I think we never shall find, an adequate substitute for the situation in which two wholesome young men meet with a family, reason with them, teach them, testify to them, and pray with them. We shall always need missionaries. With that thought in mind I should like to suggest a five point program for the membership of the Church, a program which I feel is easy of attainment, and which would prove fruitful to this great cause.

1. That we cultivate in our homes a proper attitude toward missionary service. We enjoy the blessings we so greatly treasure because of those who have gone before us. Out of a sense of appreciation, out of simple gratitude, we should make an effort to extend these same blessings to others. Our young people have an obligation to prepare themselves for missionary service.

We should also build the attitude that there is nothing of a vacation, nothing of a holiday in this great missionary service. It is hard, and at times discouraging, work. Last year our missionaries averaged sixty-seven hours a week in actual proselyting effort. Let those who contemplate missions realize that they will work as they have never worked before, and that they may expect such joy as they have not previously known.

2. That we foster training for missionary service. One of the great compliments paid the Savior was that he taught as one having authority. The missionary who knows scripture and can quote it speaks with the voice of authority. It is not essential to memorize five hundred citations, nor even three hundred. Fifty well chosen verses of scripture will become a remarkably effective tool in the hands of a missionary. May I suggest that in our family night gatherings we make it a project to memorize one scripture citation a week pertinent to this work. At the conclusion of a year our children

will have on their lips a fund of scripture which will remain with them throughout their lives.

3. That we make financial preparation. Missionary work, like everything else, has become more costly. I was heartened by my experience in interviewing a young man in Arizona recently. I asked whether he had a sincere desire to go on a mission. He replied, "I have wanted to go since I was seven, and, moreover, since that time I have saved for it. I have \$1600 in the bank to make certain that I shall have the means to go." A little at a time, systematically saved, will assure our children that the necessary means will be available when a missionary call comes.

4. That we see that our public and private deportment backs up the missionary cause. No member of this Church can let down his standards without throwing an obstacle in the way of those who are striving to teach the gospel in the world. Likewise, no member can uphold the standards of the Church in public and private life without reflecting strength to the cause.

5. Finally, that we all get the missionary spirit, that we seek opportunities to teach the gospel, to distribute the Book of Mormon, to let people know what we believe. I am having a delightful correspondence with a man in England with whom I struck up conversation on a plane while flying across the Atlantic. He has now read the Book of Mormon and some of our other literature. I am pleased to note a significant change in his attitude toward the Church.

One of the most fruitful sources of contact for our missionaries lies in referrals sent to them. A member of the Church will suggest to an associate or a relative that he invite the missionaries to come to his home. President J. Leonard Love tells me that in the Northern California Mission their experience indicates that forty percent of the referrals given them join the Church. Think of it! Forty percent of the names sent to them result in convert baptisms! In the British Mission at one time it was discovered that sixty-eight percent of those who had

come into the Church had made their first acquaintance with the doctrines through members of the Church.

My brethren and sisters, this assignment to teach the gospel belongs to all of us, not only to the fifty-five hundred devoted men and women who presently

are serving in the field. It belongs to each of us, and we shall not be through with it until the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.

God help us to sense and fulfil our mission honorably, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRESIDENT DAVID O. McKAY

And now we come to that moment when we should like to express our thanks and appreciation. We have had a glorious conference. Many have contributed to its inspiration and success. Will all who have participated in the inspiration of these gatherings please accept of the gratitude of our hearts.

The singing for this session, as we have already informed you, has been furnished by the Ricks College choir under the direction of Chester W. Hill, with Frank W. Asper at the organ. We wish to express appreciation to these young men and women of the Ricks College for the hours they have spent in practice in weeks that have gone by, resulting in the inspiration of their singing to this congregation today. The Lord bless you young people. We are proud of you! We have enjoyed your presence as well as your inspirational singing. May the Lord's protecting care be with you as you go back to your homes, and may this experience ever be a happy memory for you, as it will be for all of us.

I should like to express again our appreciation to the Brigham Young University combined choruses. They occupied these seats last Saturday—another choice group of young people. We cannot help feeling confident that the Church is in good hands when we see such representatives of youth as have participated in this conference.

We wish to express appreciation to the Tabernacle Choir, and the Tabernacle Choir men's chorus for their participation during the various sessions of our annual conference. Forty-five thousand two hundred eighty-seven men of the priesthood were moved by the inspirational singing of those young men from the choir last Saturday night.

We are not unmindful of the public press and you reporters for your fair

and accurate reports throughout sessions of the conference. We want the city officials to know that we are not unmindful of the help they have rendered during the last five days, to Chief W. Cleon Skousen, and his associates, the traffic officers—in handling increased traffic, for the fire department, and the Red Cross, who stood on hand ready for an emergency; for you tabernacle ushers who have rendered service early and late in seating the great audiences.

We are grateful for the radio and television service—twenty-seven television and twenty radio stations throughout our own city and the nation have carried the messages of this conference to untold thousands of people who have listened to the proceedings of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Annual Conference of the Church.

We have already named those who have sent these lovely flowers, sweet messages of their love, and best wishes for a successful and inspirational conference.

The closing prayer of this session will be offered by Elder Alfred E. Rohner, formerly president of the South-west Indian Mission.

Now I should like to say, brothers and sisters, the Lord bless us with a desire to live better than we have ever done before. No individual can go away from this conference, even as a listener, without a heavier responsibility upon him. One of the happiest experiences that I have had has been to meet young people, and hear the young man or young woman say, as he or she introduced his or her companion, "I want you to meet my friend who is an investigator." And that has happened frequently during this conference.

In 1923 in the British Mission there