

ELDER ALMA SONNE

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Thank you, brethren and sisters, for singing that good hymn so well. ["Praise to the Man."] It is always full of inspiration, especially when it is sung by so many as are present here this afternoon.

I would like to say a word about our missionaries—past and present—the men and the women who have kept alive the memory of the Lord Jesus and the gospel of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men. The missionary spirit is resting upon the Church. I believe it has rested upon the Church since its beginning. It is reflected in the messages which we have heard today. You are aware that there is a struggle going on in the world for the hearts and minds of the people. The enemies of truth and freedom are exerting themselves as never before to destroy moral and spiritual values.

The battle is being waged with relentless and determined vigor. The adversary is alert and active, and the powers of darkness are pressing forward at home and abroad.

The Apostle Paul recognized that power when he said, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." (2 Thess. 2:7.) It is at work in our schools, in the colleges, in the universities, in the newspapers, in the books, in the magazines, on the television, and in the picture halls.

To counteract these unholy influences the Church is sending into the world thousands of missionaries to proclaim the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the only weapon, my brethren and sisters, that will eventually crush and destroy the evil designs and bring to naught the devious plans of unscrupulous, untrustworthy, and godless leaders of men. Missionary service is the life, the vitality, and the obligation of the Church. Jesus commanded his servants, whom he called and commissioned, to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature and to every nation, and tongue, and people.

In doing this he launched the greatest program of all time. It is not yet finished, nor will it be finished until every knee shall bow and every tongue

confess that Jesus is the Christ. These servants, although few in number, responded with remarkable success. Under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Ghost they went forth and appeared openly in the streets, in the synagogues, and even in the temple courts in Jerusalem. They spoke with great boldness to the public officials, to the magistrates, and to the rabble in crowded places where mobs are wont to congregate. The gospel was for everyone—rich and poor, high and low, slave and aristocrat—for God is no respecter of persons.

It was not the gospel submitted by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John which first drew attention to the Christ, for gospel teaching had already taken hold upon the world before the four gospels were generally known. Then as now it required the energy of individuals, personal contacts, patience, diligence, love, and the inspiration and enthusiasm of devoted missionaries to plant the gospel message in the hearts and lives of people.

The missionary method of the Church today is almost identical with that carried on by Jesus Christ and his apostles nineteen hundred years ago. It has been similarly successful. The work was neither professionalized nor commercialized. You will recall these humble emissaries of the Lord were to go forth two by two. One was to be the support of the other. They were to be witnesses before God of their respective testimonies. Together they could better face hostile receptions and bitter opposition. Together they could preserve their faith and their enthusiasm and withstand temptation and wrongdoing. It was God's plan of proselyting, and it was very effective.

I know most of you here have read the Lord's instructions to his servants whom he sent forth. "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

"Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes nor yet staves: . . .

Friday, April 6

First Day

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:

". . . beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, . . ." (Matt. 10:9-10, 16-18.)

If you are familiar with the story and life of Jesus, you will know that prophecy came true in the minutest detail. He said further, "He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

"And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me." (*Ibid.*, 10:37-38.)

Then he admonished them, "And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." (*Ibid.*, 10:7-8.) And you will see there was to be no interference and nothing was to supersede the solemn, almost drastic, injunction of the Savior to these wonderful men. No halfhearted effort was acceptable. The work to be done was important and required every sacrifice, if necessary, even life itself. It must have required great courage for these young humble, unsophisticated men to preach Jesus crucified and resurrected, and to preach the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and to teach the children of God to be perfect, even as their Father in heaven is perfect.

Some men stand in terror of public opinion. Not so with the disciples of Jesus. They were unafraid. From such teaching over the centuries came our

Declaration of Independence, setting forth the doctrine of equal rights. The world owes much to the missionaries—men like Paul, the apostle; men like Wilford Woodruff, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Parley and Orson Pratt, Charles W. Penrose, and a thousand others; and men like those who today are blazing the trail into Asia, Europe, the islands of the sea, and to every part of North and South America.

To meet the demand and to discharge the responsibility resting heavily upon the Church, the missionary spirit must possess its members, for everyone is expected to be a missionary. The world must learn that man cannot live by bread alone, that beyond the power of materialism there is a greater power which determines the destiny of men and nations. That power is generated by the missionaries.

We can say to all the world that Christ's word is taught today as Christ and his apostles taught it two thousand years ago. They teach the same gospel without thought of material reward, with faith and good works, strengthened by firm and unshakable testimonies against which there is no argument.

May God bless the missionaries everywhere that they may be magnified before all men in every nation and kindred and tongue and people is my humble prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr., also Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us.

ELDER WILLIAM J. CRITCHLOW JR.

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

People in all of the nations of the earth need to repent. The need is urgent. This declaration of need constitutes an indictment of guilt—transgressions are implied.

For what need we repent I may be asked? My answer:

For the same sins that brought low the impenitent inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah;

for the identical sins that brought extinction to the impenitent Nephites on this continent;

for the same sins that brought destruction to the impenitent souls in Noah's day;

for the same sins that will bring the judgments of God upon the impenitent people in our day—unless we repent.

". . . as it was in the days of Noe, so