

ELDER FRANKLIN D. RICHARDS

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My dear brothers and sisters, I have enjoyed the spirit of this conference as you have—the beautiful music that has been rendered and the wonderful counsel that has been given us by our Prophet and the other leaders that have spoken to us.

Truly, "The Spirit of God like a fire is burning," and the "veil o'er the earth is beginning to burst." (William W. Phelps.)

This is so noticeable as we travel throughout the missions. Since the first of the year Sister Richards and I have visited all of the eight eastern American missions from Canada to Florida. We have met with more than 1,700 missionaries and thousands of Saints. I would like to report that their spirit is wonderful, and they are very happy and dedicated. The "Every Member a Missionary" program is being used more and more, and convert baptisms are double those of a year ago.

President McKay, in the film, "Every Member a Missionary," stated that the purpose of the gospel of Jesus Christ is to change men's lives, to change human nature. Does this mean "to be born again"? Brothers and sisters, I am certain it does. The Savior, in speaking to Nicodemus, said, ". . . Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3.) Nicodemus replied: "How can a man be born when he is old? . . ."

The Savior then answered, ". . . Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. . . . Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." (*Ibid.*, 3:3-7.)

Invariably missionaries testify that their greatest joy and happiness comes from seeing men and women born again as they are baptized. Yes, in seeing the change that comes into their lives as they accept and live the simple gospel truths. Missionaries are truly seeing miracles occur in the lives of the converts they baptize as they accept the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the eight eastern American missions, convert baptisms in 1960 were 4,527; in 1961, 10,209, and for the first three months of this year are more than double a year ago. Recently I received a letter from the members and missionaries of the Elkins (West Virginia) Branch which indicates what is happening. Let me quote a part of it.

"We as missionaries and members of the Elkins Branch are so thrilled with the success and growth of our branch that we want to write and tell you about it. We have been blessed with this growth since you came a year ago and told us of the 'Every Member a Missionary' plan. In the five years from 1955 through 1960 there were 42 converts baptized in the Elkins Branch. With the 'Every Member a Missionary' program we, as a team in the Elkins Branch, began to ask people the Golden Questions, and those that wanted to know about the Church we invited into our homes for group meetings. Because of this the Lord blessed our branch membership with 121 convert baptisms in 1961, which nearly doubled our branch membership.

"Yes, 121 convert baptisms in 1961 compared with 42 in the five years before. In the first two months of 1962 the Lord has blessed us with 51 convert baptisms, which is almost half of the total number of baptisms in 1961.

"The branch president and his family have been having group meetings in their home regularly for all age groups. By their screening the people through asking the Golden Questions before they invite them into their home, the missionaries have baptized about 20 people from this one family's meetings alone. The effect it has had is tremendous. The people are really baptismal conscious and are doing everything they can to have group meetings.

"We testify to you that asking the Golden Questions and having group meetings is a very effective way to bring souls into the Kingdom of God. The love, enthusiasm, and spirituality has never been higher. We love to baptize

people." Signed, The Elkins Branch members and missionaries.

Again, in the Oakridge, (Tennessee), Branch there were twenty-three convert baptisms in 1961, and in January and February of this year there were thirty—more in the first two months of this year than all of last year.

At Louisville, Kentucky, the East Central States Mission office staff of five missionaries, by holding group meetings Sundays and evenings, baptized 124 wonderful converts in the year 1961.

At a recent stake conference in California, a great deal of interest and enthusiasm was shown in the "Every Member a Missionary" program. After the morning session a woman came up and introduced herself and presented her friend, saying, "She is mine." Both of their faces reflected great joy and happiness. Then she explained that she had asked her friend the Golden Questions, and her friend replied that she was interested and would like to know more about the Church. The woman then arranged for the missionaries to come to her home and teach her friend the beautiful truths of the gospel as contained in the six discussions. Her friend prayed, studied, and attended Church to further her understanding. She soon gained a testimony and was baptized.

No wonder this good sister felt so much joy as she put her arm around her friend, and said, "She is mine."

Are you one of those who are wondering about the spirit of the missionaries? I tell you as a whole they have never been happier; they have never worked more effectively and have never been more richly rewarded. The great number of convert baptisms are their reward. Who does the Lord's work gets the Lord's pay. Yes, they are reaping while the day lasts, that they may treasure up for their souls everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God.

Recently I received a letter from a sister in Athens, Tennessee. She had been searching for the truth for forty-five years, and when she heard the gospel, she knew she had found what she was looking for. The missionaries met her in October 1960, and she was baptized November 23. When she was baptized, she was the only member in Athens. Within three months five of

her family and friends had been baptized, having been influenced by her powerful testimony. Now a little more than a year later they have a branch of thirty, with a Sunday School, MIA, and Primary. This sister is quite typical of the many converts coming into the Church at this time.

Increased membership in the Church requires more and larger chapels for worship, for teaching, and for cultural purposes. Last year there were twenty beautiful chapels completed in the eight eastern American missions. This year there are forty-two new chapels either under construction or soon to start. Also in the east coast stakes many more new chapels or additions to present chapels are being started. Adequate places to hold church services are really wonderful missionary aids.

Of particular interest is the site recently purchased in New York City, just off Fifth Avenue between 57th and 58th streets. The proposed construction of a church facility at this site received nationwide publicity and opened many doors and minds to the missionaries. Also, with the increased membership on the east coast more districts are becoming ready for stake organizations. Three stakes have been organized within the last few months, and twelve more areas are presently under consideration. There are now fifteen stakes in the area of the eight eastern American missions.

I was especially pleased to be selected to accompany Elder Delbert L. Stapley to organize the Cumorah Stake at Palmyra, New York, the birthplace of the Church. I tell you the Spirit of the Lord and that of the Prophet Joseph was truly there.

Yes, my brothers and sisters, the Spirit of the Lord is being poured out upon all flesh, and men's hearts are being softened. One branch president in the east asked me, "How long is this missionary explosion going on in the Church?" The answer is found in the sixty-fifth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, verse 2.

"The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain with-

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out hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth."

This prophecy cannot be fulfilled by the full-time missionaries and the part-time missionaries alone. It is necessary for "Every member to be a missionary," as our Prophet has declared.

Let me again remind you how you can be a missionary. First, by living the gospel so that others seeing your good works may be led to join the Church; by asking your friends and neighbors what they know about the Church, and if they would like to know more. Many will say yes. Then, invite them into your homes, and have the missionaries, stake or full-time, give them the simple gospel discussions.

Take your friends who want to know more about the Church to our Church meetings, and love them into the Church. When the people who want to know more about the Church do not live near you, send their names, addresses, and telephone numbers to the nearest stake or mission where they live.

In the beautiful hymn, "Praise to the Man," we sing: "Wake up the world for the conflict of justice. Millions shall know 'Brother Joseph' again." (William W. Phelps.) I love the Prophet Joseph Smith, and I am certain that as this great missionary work goes forward, millions will know Brother Joseph again.

ELDER NATHAN ELDON TANNER

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

President McKay, my beloved brethren and sisters, after listening to this wonderful music and these inspiring talks that we have heard in conference and facing this vast body of priesthood and these fine women, I had a strong feeling, as someone has said, that the greatest eloquence I could indulge in would be silence. However, I have been called, and in all humility I want to say that I love and sustain President David O. McKay as the prophet of the Lord and all these wonderful brethren associated with him and express my appreciation to them for the great strength and inspiration that they have been to me as I am sure they have been to all of you.

I should also like to express my sincere appreciation of the fine, devoted leader-

Brothers and sisters, I know that our Father in heaven lives; that Jesus is the Christ, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. I bear witness that Joseph Smith is one of the great prophets of all time; and that we have a great prophet at the head of the Church at this time.

David O. McKay is one of the greatest missionaries that has ever lived, and I sustain, love, and support him. May the Lord bless us that we may, each and every one of us, be missionaries, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. The Ricks College Choir will now lead the Congregation, under Brother Richard W. Robison, in singing, "O Say, What is Truth?" Elder Nathan E. Tanner will follow.

The Ricks College Choir and the Congregation joined in singing the hymn, "O Say, What Is Truth?"

President David O. McKay:

Elder Nathan Eldon Tanner, Assistant to the Twelve and President of the West European Mission, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Theodore M. Burton.

ship and the faithful members throughout this Church.

Sister Tanner and I are most grateful for the privilege and honor that came to us just a year ago, when we were called to serve in this great missionary work, to cry repentance unto this people and seek to bring forth the cause of Zion.

We sincerely hope and continually pray that we shall prove worthy of the call, and I humbly pray this morning, that the Lord will bless me while I speak to you.

I wish, first, to recognize the presence of the faithful representatives of the stake presidents and bishoprics and branch presidents from the stakes in Great Britain and in Holland. Nearly