

## ELDER FRANKLIN D. RICHARDS

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

My dear brothers and sisters: I pray that the Spirit of the Lord will be with me as I speak to you today.

Throughout history the Lord has revealed his will to mankind through his prophets. In 1831 in a revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord promised that the fulness of his gospel would be restored and that the voice of warning should be unto all people; that his Church would be established and that power would be given to his servants to bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness; that his disciples should go forth and that none should stay them—all of this to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man which is the work and glory of God. (See D&C 1.)

In order for man to obtain eternal life and exaltation in God's kingdom, he must accept the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is an eternal principle. Thus we recognize that the gospel plan has been and is for all of God's children.

However, many Christians believe that the gospel plan dates only from the Savior's ministry in the flesh, but we know that the gospel was understood by the spirits which were with our Father in heaven before the world was formed or organized.

Then on this earth the gospel was taught to Father Adam, and he taught the Lord's commandments to his children. Enoch understood the gospel, and through faithfulness the Saints of the city of Enoch were translated.

Other great men including Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, and Moses understood the gospel plan and taught it to ancient Israel.

John the Baptist opened the Dispensation of the Meridian of Time by preaching in the wilderness, and he told of the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Through the personal ministry of Jesus and his apostles, the gospel was taught and The Church of Jesus Christ established on the earth.

It is my great privilege to bear witness humbly that Jesus is the Christ, the only begotten of the Father in the flesh, our Redeemer and Savior, and the only name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved.

A falling away from the Savior's teachings was predicted, and I testify that this did occur. This great apostasy made necessary the restoration of the gospel plan and the authority to act in the name of God.

When Joseph Smith, the boy Prophet, went into the woods in the spring of 1820 and asked God, "Which of all the sects is right and which shall I join?" he said, "I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong—that they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness but they deny the power thereof." (See Joseph Smith 2:18-19.)

This apostasy necessitated the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Joseph Smith was selected to be the prophet through whom the Lord re-established his Church.

The Lord set April 6, 1830, as the date that his Church should be organized on this earth—just 133 years ago yesterday. It was organized by six persons at the home of Peter Whitmer, Sen., in upper New York state. The members began to share their message with their friends and their neighbors, and the Church enjoyed rapid growth.

At the same place the next Sunday, Oliver Cowdery commenced the public ministry of the Church by giving the first gospel sermon in a public meeting called for that purpose. After the meeting, six were baptized, and seven more were baptized a week later.

About thirty members of the Church participated in the first conference held about sixty days later on June 9, 1830. (DHC 1, 77, 84.) Eleven more were baptized after that conference. The Prophet Joseph had been told that the voice of warning should be unto all people by the mouths of the Lord's

disciples and that none should stay them.

Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, Peter Whitmer, Jun., and others were sent out as missionaries in the fall of 1830. They met Sidney Rigdon in Ohio, and after a brief but prayerful investigation, Sidney Rigdon received a testimony that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and that the authority to act in the name of God had been restored. He asked to be baptized and was baptized. Shortly thereafter, he held a group meeting in which he warned his neighbors and bore his testimony that the gospel had been restored.

In the Kirtland area at this time several group meetings were held, and seventeen more were baptized.

Yes, Joseph Smith was indeed one of the great prophets of all time and through him the Lord was performing "A great and marvelous work . . . among the children of men." (D&C 11:1.)

I am sure he remembered the words of the Savior, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." (Matt. 10:37.)

Then in February 1835, in accordance with divine revelation, the Quorum of the Twelve were called.

The apostles are special witnesses of Christ and hold the keys of the foreign ministry of the Church. Accordingly, seven of the Twelve set out for England in the late summer of 1839 without purse or scrip, and leaving their families destitute of many of the comforts of life.

About a year later, in the spring of 1841, just before leaving for home, Brigham Young wrote in his journal, "It truly seemed a miracle to look upon the contrast between our landing and departing from Liverpool. We landed in the spring of 1840 as strangers in a strange land and penniless. But through the mercy of God we had gained many friends, established churches in almost every noted town and city in the Kingdom of Great Britain, baptized between seven and eight thousand souls, printed 5,000 Books of Mormon, 2,500 volumes of the Millennial Star and 50,000 tracts and emigrated to Zion 1,000 souls, established a permanent shipping agency

which will be a great blessing to the saints and have sown in the hearts of many thousands the seeds of eternal truth, which shall bring forth fruit to the honor and glory of God, and yet we have lacked nothing to eat, drink or wear—in all these things I acknowledge the hand of God."

Thus, in such beginnings, the gospel message was being taken to the peoples of the earth, and prophecy fulfilled.

Approximately ninety years later at the centennial conference held in Salt Lake City on April 6, 1930, President Heber J. Grant reported that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had a living membership of 700,000 souls, 104 stakes, twenty-nine missions, and 2,226 missionaries. Convert baptisms in 1929 amounted to 6,511.

And now—today—as in earlier days, missionaries are leaving their families, comfortable homes, and worldly interests behind and are going forth with the same dedication to build the kingdom of God. They also recall the promise of the Savior— ". . . There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

"Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting." (Luke 18:29-30.)

Recently it was reported that the living membership of the Church now totals two million souls, the 374th stake has been organized, and there are now seventy-one missions and approximately 12,000 missionaries. As instruments in the hands of the Lord in 1962, the missionaries taught and baptized 115,834 souls. In the hearts of millions more the seeds were sown which will bring forth a great harvest in the years ahead.

To you who are not members but would like to know more about the Church, we invite you to attend one of our church services or ask a member to have the missionaries discuss the doctrine of the Church with you or communicate with the missionaries or the Church directly.

The Savior's injunction to "feed my sheep" has been and is being carried out.

Sister Richards and I have recently

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Third Day

returned from the missions on the east coast, and we bring greetings from the missionaries to their families and friends. There are now twenty stakes on the east coast with over 2,000 missionaries in the eight missions. The field is white and is being harvested there. Convert baptisms continue to increase.

Remember the Lord has said, ". . . the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, . . .

"And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, . . ." (D&C 1:4-5.)

Our missionaries are going forth and none shall stay them. Our proselyting program is based upon, "every member sharing the gospel with his neighbor." Our Prophet David O. McKay has counseled, "Every member a missionary." As a result today, many thousands of members are responding by living exemplary lives; by asking the golden questions; by holding group meetings in their homes; and by taking their friends and neighbors with them to attend church services and activities. This type of sharing is "Every Member a Missionary" in action.

At this conference several stake presidents and bishops have told me of the group meetings they are holding in their homes and the convert baptisms that are resulting therefrom. As we leaders set the pattern, every member will be a missionary. And each member should be mindful of his responsibilities and opportunities to spread the gospel.

### ELDER BERNARD P. BROCKBANK

*Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

Brothers and sisters, it is a humbling and frightening experience to be in this position and one of great responsibility. We have so many interesting things happen to us these days that we little realize some of the great circumstances we find ourselves in.

As I was reflecting just a moment ago, I think two of the greatest missionaries that the world has ever known are right here today—our Prophet David O. McKay and our Tabernacle Choir. It is good to be in the presence of good

I love and support our great prophet. He is indeed one of the great missionaries of all time.

Yes, the purposes of the Lord are being accomplished today, and prophecy is being fulfilled. The Spirit of the Lord is being poured out on our Father's children, and the gospel is rolling forth in order to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

May the kingdom of God continue to go forth that the kingdom of heaven may come, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, has just addressed us.

The Choir and congregation will now sing "Come, O Thou King Of Kings," conducted by Elder Jay E. Welch.

After the singing Elder Bernard P. Brockbank will come forward.

The congregation joined with the Tabernacle Choir in singing the hymn, "Come, O Thou King Of Kings," with Jay E. Welch conducting.

**President David O. McKay:**

Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us.

He will be followed by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve.

people. I am going to take just a moment and reflect on one or two of the simple important teachings of Jesus Christ.

In preaching to the missionaries many times I have said that these commandments are the test of a missionary. I believe also they are the test of a Saint. The Savior had the ability to put many volumes and many sermons into few words, and we find ourselves taking inventory when we read into the depth of his great counsel. These command-