

“ . . . I think we should . . . give, instead of the amount we saved by our two meals of fasting, perhaps much, much more—ten times more where we are in a position to do it” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1974, p. 184).

Every member can give a generous fast offering.

Brothers and sisters, the Church needs your contributions to the general missionary fund. This fund makes possible the service of thousands of missionaries. Those who can should feel free to contribute generously. The Lord provides an equal opportunity for every member everywhere in the world to receive the blessings that come from paying tithes and offerings.

Where much is given, much is required

Every member can give his time and talents freely to the building up of the kingdom of God upon the earth. No member of the Church should miss this opportunity to exercise his faith and feel the spirit that comes from humble sacrifice. Seeing the great good that the Saints in South America do with their meager means helps me realize how much more many of us in other parts of the world could do. We should never forget the Savior’s teaching: “Unto whomsoever much is given, of

him shall be much required” (Luke 12:48). He has blessed us abundantly. I think of the teaching words of one of our hymns:

*Because I have been given much,
I too must give;
Because of thy great bounty, Lord,
each day I live
I shall divide my gifts from thee
With ev’ry brother that I see
Who has the need of help from me.*
 (“Because I Have Been Given Much,” *Hymns* [1985], no. 219)

I pray that as we leave this conference, each one of us will take from the messages of the Brethren those principles that will help us to become more self-sufficient as Saints.

I testify that we have been taught the truth during this conference, that God lives, that Jesus Christ is his Son, and that the gospel has been restored in these latter days. All of which I do in his sacred name, even the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder M. Russell Ballard has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to hear an expression from Elder Franklin D. Richards of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Franklin D. Richards

Sacrifice and service

My dear brothers and sisters, as I have listened to the words of the Brethren this afternoon, much has been said about sacrifice. I couldn’t help but think of the words of that great hymn, “Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven” (“Praise to the Man,” *Hymns* [1985], no. 25).

I have always felt, however, that, really, it is impossible for us to sacrifice in building the kingdom of God. I

would much rather consider it, instead of a sacrifice, a great opportunity to serve God.

Sister Richards and I lived in Washington, D.C., for fifteen years. When we returned to Salt Lake City, we moved into the Mount Olympus area. Within a year or so, the East Millcreek Stake was divided, as I remember, and President Gordon B. Hinckley was called to be the president of the stake. I was called to be the stake mission president, and for three and a half

years I had the opportunity of serving under President Hinckley.

Service as a General Authority

I was later called to be a full-time mission president, and then, twenty-seven years ago this conference, President N. Eldon Tanner, Elder Theodore M. Burton, and I were called to be General Authorities.

My first assignment was supervising the nine missions on the East Coast from Canada to Florida for five years. That was a great experience. My next assignment was with President Spencer W. Kimball, who was then a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, supervising South America.

We organized the first stake in South America in São Paulo, Brazil, in May of 1966. As Elder Lynn A. Sorensen mentioned, the growth there has been tremendous. I remember that President Kimball said, "We're not going to call any North Americans to the major leadership positions." And there were many Latter-day Saints living in São Paulo at that time working in businesses associated with the United States. He said, "We're going to call the local people." And so our policy was to call local men and women to those positions and to be missionaries. At that time, in 1966, there were no stakes in South America, whereas now there are nearly two hundred stakes.

I then had the opportunity to spend three years with Elder Delbert L. Stapley supervising the missions in Central America and Mexico. As I recall, there were two stakes in Mexico then, one in the Colonies and one in Mexico City. Now there are nearly a hundred stakes.

The Church has grown and developed with their local leadership and local missionaries. If I had time, I could relate some tremendous experiences that I have had with young men and women and older men and women involved in missionary service there. I would just like to stress again what Elder M. Russell Ballard said about

how important it is to make contributions to the general missionary fund of the Church.

Every member a missionary

You know, every member is a missionary. I think President David O. McKay first emphasized that duty. I was up in Montana some time ago visiting a stake conference. After the morning session, I was wandering around outside. I saw this young boy standing there all dressed up in his Sunday clothes. I went over to him and said, "Son, you're a fine-looking boy. What's your name?"

He said, "Joseph Smith Curdy."

I said, "Joseph Smith Curdy! That's a fine name. You're going to be a great missionary."

He said, "I'm already a great missionary. Down the street a couple of blocks from where we live there's a family with a couple of boys about my age, and over a period of three or four months, I have been bringing them to church with me. A month or so ago, I said to them, 'How would you like to have the missionaries give you the discussions?'"

"They said, 'Oh, we'd have to talk to our parents.'"

"So we talked to the parents, and the parents said, 'Well, if you will let us listen in, why we'll be glad to have the missionaries teach them.'"

There wasn't any problem with that, so the missionaries gave the family the discussions. Joseph Smith Curdy told me, "That whole family is going to be baptized next Saturday. I'm already a great missionary."

I couldn't help but agree with him.

Brothers and sisters, it is wonderful to have the opportunities we have in this Church, not only in the missionary program but also in the areas of temple work and genealogy.

Testimony

I'm grateful that I was reserved to be born at this particular time in the

history of the world when the gospel has been restored in its fulness. I'm convinced that the Spirit of the Lord is being poured out upon the face of the earth more today than ever before in the history of the world through the restoration of the gospel in its fulness. Because of the Restoration, you and I can bear witness that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, and that Joseph Smith was a great prophet of God. We're told that Joseph Smith has done more for the salvation of mankind than any other man who has ever lived on the earth, save Jesus Christ himself. I bear that witness to you. The Church has been reestablished, the power to act in the name of God has been restored, and we have a great prophet standing at the head of this church today.

May the Lord bless him. And may the choice blessings of our Father in Heaven go with you as you leave this conference, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Thank you, Brother Richards, for your stirring testimony.

Before hearing President Benson's concluding remarks, we take a moment

to express our sincere appreciation to all who have provided of their services and talents and time in presenting this great conference. We thank the musicians—the Mormon Youth Chorus, the Sandy Primary children's choir, and this great Tabernacle Choir, their conductors and organists.

To our city officials we express appreciation, as we do to the Relief Society and Church Health Unit nurses who have been on hand to render services, and to the ushers and interpreters, who have done so magnificent a work.

We thank the press representatives for the coverage given the conference and the owners and managers of the many radio and television stations and cable systems, who have given their facilities to provide coverage of this great gathering.

It will now be our pleasure and opportunity and privilege to listen to President Ezra Taft Benson, our beloved prophet, after which the Tabernacle Choir will sing "I Believe in Christ."

The benediction will then be offered by Elder Royden G. Derrick of the First Quorum of the Seventy, and this conference will then stand adjourned for six months.

President Ezra Taft Benson

Book of Mormon testifies of Christ

My beloved brethren and sisters, this has been another glorious conference, for which I thank the Lord and commend my brethren for their inspired counsel and the choirs for their uplifting music.

The major mission of the Book of Mormon, as recorded on its title page, is "to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations."

The honest seeker after truth can gain the testimony that Jesus is the

Christ as he prayerfully ponders the inspired words of the Book of Mormon.

Over one-half of all the verses in the Book of Mormon refer to our Lord. Some form of Christ's name is mentioned more frequently per verse in the Book of Mormon than even in the New Testament.

He is given over one hundred different names in the Book of Mormon. Those names have a particular significance in describing His divine nature.

Let us consider some of the attributes of our Lord, as found in the Book of Mormon, that show that Jesus is the Christ. Then let us confirm each