

But all of that will come naturally, in time, from the covenants you make and keep as you follow Him. Here is the description of how that will happen, from the eighth chapter of Moroni, the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses:

“And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins;

“And the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God.”

You may not have seen that mighty change in yourself yet. But it will come as you continue to follow Him. You can trust that He will qualify you as His servant, to assist Him in touching lives with

faith to bring to pass the eternal life of man. And you will find satisfaction in that service beyond your fondest dreams.

I testify that God the Father lives and that He loves you. I testify that Jesus is the Christ, that He called you, and that He atoned for your sins and those of all you will ever serve. I testify that President Gordon B. Hinckley holds the keys that allow us to offer to our Father's children the covenants and ordinances that can qualify them for eternal life. And I pray with all my heart that we may touch lives with faith enough to repent and to make and keep those sacred covenants. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Hinckley

Elder Henry B. Eyring of the Quorum of the Twelve has just addressed us.

We shall now hear from Harold G. Hillam of the Presidency of the Seventy, and he will be followed by Bishop H. David Burton, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric.

## Elder Harold G. Hillam

### Sacrifice in missionary service

As I look at you this evening, I can see many young men with their valiant fathers and loyal priesthood leaders seated side by side. These fathers and leaders are ready to pay the price, yes, even sacrifice, for the success of you young men.

In the spirit of sacrifice, I recall a conversation I had some years ago with my stake president in Idaho. We were discussing the forthcoming Aaronic Priesthood-Scout campout. I explained to him that it would be necessary for each person to bring his own sleeping bag, to which the president replied, “I have never slept in a sleeping bag.”

I quickly responded, “President, you can't be serious. You have lived in beautiful Idaho all these years and you have never slept in a sleeping bag?”

“Nope!” he said, “I never have. But I have sure lain in a lot of 'em.” And then he went on to say, “And I'll lie in a whole bunch more of them if it will help to save boys.”

The sacrifice I would like to speak to you about is the sacrifice that accompanies missionary service. Since the beginning of time our Heavenly Father has called worthy servants to go into the world to proclaim the gospel and to testify of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Many of those who have fulfilled their callings have done so with considerable sacrifice.

### Sacrifices of Mosiah's missionary sons

Let me tell you of four who served their missions long ago. They were Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni, sons of Mosiah, the king. They had become so powerfully converted they wanted everyone to hear the gospel message. From the Book of Mormon we read:

"They were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble" (Mosiah 28:3).

They pled with their father that they might go and do missionary work among the Lamanites. Now Mosiah feared for his sons' safety in the land of their enemy.

"And king Mosiah went and inquired of the Lord if he should let his sons go up among the Lamanites to preach the word" (v. 6).

The first part of the Lord's answer might not have been exactly what Mosiah wanted to hear:

"The Lord said unto Mosiah: Let them go up" (v. 7). But then follow three marvelous promises: the first, "For many shall believe on their words"; and the second, "I will deliver thy sons out of the hands of the Lamanites"; and then the third, "They shall have eternal life" (v. 7).

Now He did not promise them great wealth, but He did promise the greatest of all the gifts of God, *eternal life!* Can you imagine a more marvelous promise for faithful missionaries?

The four missionary sons of Mosiah did not choose the easy course. Their choice was neither convenient nor popular: They gave up the kingship. "Mosiah had no one to confer the kingdom upon" (v. 10)—they were all on missions. Serving a mission wasn't necessarily accepted. They were ridiculed even by other members of the Church. Ammon recalls the experience: "Now do ye remember, my

brethren, that we said unto our brethren in the land of Zarahemla, we go up to the land of Nephi, to preach unto our brethren, the Lamanites, and they *laughed us to scorn?*" (Alma 26:23; italics added). Their choice to serve a mission was not one of convenience. Ammon spoke of the challenges they encountered: "We have been cast out, and mocked, and spit upon, and smote upon our cheeks; . . . and taken and bound with strong cords, and cast into prison." However, Ammon continues, "through the power and wisdom of God we have been delivered again" (v. 29).

They were not easy missions, but thousands were converted.

### Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball

Now let's look to another set of missionaries closer to our time, the time of the Restoration. There was considerable persecution from enemies in and outside the Church. At a time when it appeared that the Prophet needed them at home, two of the Apostles, Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, were called on foreign missions. The following is Elder Heber C. Kimball's historic account of the pathetic setting at his departure:

"I went to the bed and shook hands with my wife, who was shaking with the ague, having two children lying sick by her side; I embraced her and my children, and bid them farewell; the only child well was little Heber Parley, and it was with difficulty he could carry a two-quart pail full of water from a spring at the bottom of a small hill to assist in quenching their thirst. It was with difficulty we got into the wagon and started down the hill about ten rods; it appeared to me as though my very inmost parts would melt within me; leaving my family in such a condition, as it were, almost in the arms of death; it seemed to me as though I could not endure it. I said to the teamster, 'Hold up.' Said I to Brother Brigham, 'This is pretty tough, ain't it?

Let's rise up and give them a cheer.' We arose and swinging our hats three times over our heads, we cried 'Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah for Israel!' Vilate [Kimball] hearing the noise arose from her bed and came to the door; she had a smile on her face and she and Mary Ann Young cried out to us, 'Good bye, God bless you.' We returned the compliment and then told the driver to go ahead. After this I felt a spirit of joy and gratitude at having the satisfaction of seeing my wife standing upon her feet, instead of leaving her in bed, knowing as I did that I should not see them again for two or more years" (quoted in Helen Mar Whitney, "Life Incidents," *Woman's Exponent*, 15 July 1880, p. 25). This was one of four missions that these two Apostle missionaries served.

### Elder Bugs's sacrifice

Now to the present for an interview I had with a handsome zone leader in the Brazil São Paulo Interlagos Mission. I said to the missionary, "Tell me about your family." He then relayed the following. He was born into a wealthy family. His father had a responsible position in a multinational corporation. They moved from Brazil to Venezuela. He was one of seven children, all members of the Church.

When the missionary was fifteen years old, his father was shot and killed by a fleeing thief. In a family council it was decided to return to Brazil and invest their savings in the purchase of a small home. A year and a half later, the mother informed the children that she had been diagnosed with cancer. The family used valuable savings to help pay the medical expenses—but to no avail. Six months later the mother passed away, leaving the young family alone.

Our young missionary, Elder Bugs (pronounced Boogs), then sixteen years old, went to work, first selling clothing, then later computer supplies. He used

his hard-earned money to support the young family. He said, "We were always blessed to have enough to eat. I would work during the day, then help the children with their studies at night. I especially miss my little sister. I taught her to read."

Elder Bugs continued, "Then the bishop invited me to come in for an interview. He called me on a mission. I told him I would need to speak with my family first. In our family council they reminded me that Dad had always taught us that we should be prepared to serve the Lord as full-time missionaries. I accepted the call. When I received my letter from the prophet, I withdrew all my savings. I bought a new suit, a pair of pants, white shirts and ties, and a new pair of shoes. I gave the rest of the money to the bishop (enough for about four months of support for the family). I hugged my little family and left for my mission."

I looked at that brave young man and I said, "But, Elder, with you away, who is taking care of your family?"

"Oh," he said, "my brother is sixteen. He is the same age I was when our mother died. He is taking care of the family now."

I had an opportunity recently to talk by telephone with Elder Bugs. He has been home from his mission for six months now. When I asked him how he was doing, he said, "I have a good job again and I am caring for the family, but oh, how I miss my mission. It was the greatest thing I have ever done. I am now helping my younger brother prepare for his mission."

### No sacrifice is too great for the Master

Why have these great missionaries and others like them been willing to sacrifice the comforts of home, family, loved ones, and sweethearts to answer the call to serve? It's because they have a testimony of Jesus Christ. And when they know Him there is no bed too short

or too hard, no climate too hot or too cold, no food too different or language so strange that they are unwilling to serve Him. No sacrifice is too great to serve the Master, who sacrificed His all to provide the way for His brothers and sisters to return home to their Heavenly Father. And because they are faithful to their callings, thousands will revere their names throughout the eternities.

I testify there is no more majestic call than to be in the full-time service of our Redeemer, to help to bring our Heavenly Father's children to the knowledge of Him who has made eternal life possible. I pray that every able young man—and every able couple—will join those who have paid the price to serve a full-time mission. And this I pray in the name of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

## Bishop H. David Burton

Brethren, I am honored and humbled to share this historic podium with others of the General Authorities, particularly the fifteen prophets, seers, and revelators seated behind me, whom I love and revere. I bear witness that these mighty men of God, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, have been prepared, refined, tested, and called to preside over and to give direction to this expansive priesthood labor.

### An “I will” attitude

There is a sign prominently displayed in a shopping mall in Manila, the Philippines, that reads, “Your ‘I will’ is more important than your ‘IQ.’” As I ponder the meaning of that short phrase, there comes to mind the chorus of the great Primary song based on 1 Nephi 3:7: “I will go; I will do the thing the Lord commands. I know the Lord provides a way; he wants me to obey” (“Nephi’s Courage,” *Children’s Songbook*, pp. 120–21). I also find myself humming and whistling the refrain from the celebrated hymn of the Restoration: “I’ll go where you want me to go, dear Lord . . . ; I’ll say what you want me to say . . . ; I’ll be what you want me to be” (“I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go,” *Hymns*, no. 270).

Far too many who have been blessed with great ability and exceptional intellect fail to have an “I will” attitude when

it comes to going, doing, saying, and being what the Lord commands.

*I will go, I will do, I will say, and I will be* all convey determined obedience. Our third article of faith states, “We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.” Certainly the most magnificent act of obedience was accomplished in Gethsemane. You may recall the heartfelt plea of the Savior: “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42).

### “I wills” for priesthood holders

For us who bear the priesthood of God, there are many important “I wills”: *I will* be loyal to the oath and covenant of the priesthood; *I will* be responsive to my quorum president; *I will* exhibit perfect fidelity to the covenants made in holy places; and, *I will* serve with excellence in my Aaronic Priesthood ministry, preparing myself for further priesthood service. Possibly the most significant “I will” we all could commit to this night is *I will* follow the living prophets.

### Commit to follow the living prophet

Brigham Young said, “You cannot destroy the appointment of a prophet of