

### Be models of kindness

My brothers and sisters, the gospel of Jesus Christ transcends mortality. Our work here is but a shadow of greater and unimaginable things to come.

The heavens opened to the Prophet Joseph Smith. He saw the living God and His Son, Jesus the Christ.

In our day a prophet, President Gordon B. Hinckley, walks the earth and provides direction for our time.

As our Heavenly Father loves us, we also should love His children.

May we be models of kindness. May we ever live up to the words of the Savior:

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”<sup>7</sup>

Of these truths I bear witness in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### NOTES

1. Margarette McIntire Burgess, in *Juvenile Instructor*, Jan. 15, 1892, 66–67.
2. See Mark 12:30–31.
3. See John R. Talmage, *The Talmage Story: Life of James E. Talmage—Educator, Scientist, Apostle* (1972), 112–14.
4. Luke 6:37.
5. Matthew 7:2.
6. Jude 1:22.
7. John 13:35.

## Elder Richard G. Scott

### The power of *Preach My Gospel*

I am very grateful to be able to discuss with you an exciting development that will make it easier for each of us to share with loved ones and friends the glorious message of the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ. It has ignited the minds and hearts of our missionaries, for it equips them to teach their message with power and to bear testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His prophet Joseph Smith without the constraint of a prescribed dialogue. Developed primarily for full-time missionary use, this material has also proven to be most beneficial for parents who want to help children prepare for a mission. Young men and women as well as some couples are using the resource to get a head start before entering the missionary training centers. Some priesthood leaders have confirmed its worth in preparing Aaronic Priesthood brethren for missions. This tool is invaluable in assisting priesthood and auxiliary efforts to help new members become stronger in testimony and obedience. I speak of this new guide, *Preach My Gospel*, and its attendant plan-

ning tools, such as this *Missionary Daily Planner*.

May I share with you why I am so enthusiastic about *Preach My Gospel*? It has focused our missionary effort as never before. For years I have asked groups of missionaries, “What is the purpose of your mission?” Their individual responses differed greatly. Most did not have any concrete purpose to organize their efforts. Page 1 of this guide powerfully focuses missionaries on their true purpose: “Invite others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.” The contents then suggest how to do that as led by the Spirit.

### A new focus for a changed world

The former missionary materials were effective for their time, but the world has changed dramatically. The values which form the bedrock foundation of society are being assaulted by Satan and his allies. There has been an urgent need for an im-

proved way to share the fulness of the truth that God has placed on earth again. This includes an understanding of God's plan of happiness and of how it has been returned to earth through His singular prophet, Joseph Smith; also that the Church of Jesus Christ with the priesthood authority to act in His name is once again on earth in its fulness.

Well did President Hinckley teach:

"For many years now we have had a standard set of missionary lessons. Great good has come of this. . . . But unfortunately this method, in all too many cases, has resulted in a memorized presentation, lacking in Spirit and in personal conviction. . . .

"[Missionaries] should master the concepts of the lessons. But they should . . . teach the concepts in their own words under the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

That principle is a foundation pillar of *Preach My Gospel*. Missionaries throughout the world now get into their minds and hearts the message of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the plan of salvation, essential commandments, and the laws and ordinances of the gospel. These lessons are then given in their own words as guided by the Spirit. This focus has dramatically improved the effectiveness of missionaries who use it.

### Overview of *Preach My Gospel*

*Preach My Gospel* contains chapters that give extremely valuable information on how to recognize and understand the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

There are scriptures on how to effectively study and how to refine personal teaching skills.

One chapter explains why the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion, how it can answer profound questions of the soul, how it can build faith and help others draw closer to God. Additional instruction shows how the Book of Mormon

is a tangible resource that an individual can use to confirm the truthfulness of our message.

A missionary is taught how to seek Christlike attributes such as hope, charity, and love, for love is the foundation of all meaningful missionary service.

Excellent suggestions are given for learning a mission language.

Clear, effective planning tools are provided to help a missionary use time more wisely.

Proven methods are shared to identify and prepare individuals to teach.

Practical guidance is given to help individuals make and keep commitments that lead to baptism, confirmation, and retention.

This guide contains tools to integrate the efforts of full-time missionaries, stake and ward leaders, and members. With that help, more new members can make a more secure transition into the family of the Church. There is greater assurance that those who, through baptism and confirmation, take upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ and commit to obey His commandments will receive His promised blessings throughout life.

### Improvements in missionaries' teaching

Using the inspired content of *Preach My Gospel*, many missionaries have made dramatic improvements in their capacity to teach with conviction and to invite the confirming witness of the Holy Ghost. Recently I asked two assistants to a mission president to share the vision of Joseph Smith while I acted as the investigator. I planned to vigorously challenge them to see how they would respond. Yet the sincerity of their message, the purity of their intent, the skill with which it was delivered, even in a practice session, was so compelling that I could not do it.

You can observe this improvement yourself. Invite missionaries to present the first lesson to your family in your home.

Better yet, invite neighbors to come to your home to be taught by missionaries. Guided by the Spirit, in their own words they will explain how Father in Heaven has used prophets throughout the ages to communicate His plan of happiness to His children. Feel their testimony as they bear witness of the sublime vision in which God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph Smith. The missionaries will skillfully unfold the subsequent events that restored the fulness of the gospel, with the authority to act in the name of God, on earth again. You can also accompany missionaries as they teach others these inspiring truths. Your presence will greatly strengthen those who hear these precious truths for the first time.

### Process of preparing *Preach My Gospel*

Intensive effort on the part of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, other General Authorities, and most capable teams of devoted, experienced staff members produced *Preach My Gospel* and its planning tools. Those who participated in its development are witnesses of the inspired direction of the Lord through the Holy Ghost in the conception, framing, and finalization of the materials in *Preach My Gospel*.

After extensive testing in 14 missions, *Preach My Gospel* was adjusted. That result was reviewed, modified, and approved by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve. On October 15, 2004, a worldwide satellite broadcast introduced mission presidents and missionary leaders to *Preach My Gospel*. Every missionary throughout the world was given an English copy. While many did not speak English, they felt part of the renewal of our missionary effort. Interestingly, some foreign-language-speaking missionaries were motivated to learn English. Early this year, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese versions of *Preach My Gospel* were distributed. By the end of the year, we anticipate that the guide will

be available in most of the languages spoken by missionaries.

### All can benefit from *Preach My Gospel*

Missionaries are not alone in benefiting from *Preach My Gospel*:

- One mission president's wife studied and pondered every word in *Preach My Gospel*, including every scriptural reference. She then did something she had lacked the courage to do—she invited a close relative to study and ponder the Book of Mormon. That individual accepted her invitation and has been greatly benefited.

- Another family uses *Preach My Gospel* to help prepare their children for missions. They reported, "Our 17-year-old was the first to get an assignment. As expected, he looked for the shortest segment in the book. His lesson, however, was a 20-minute heartfelt expression of the principles, complete with scriptures and testimony."

- From a father preparing a son for missionary service: "*Preach My Gospel* has . . . given me perspective and clearer understanding of the purpose of life, my duties and responsibilities as a member of the Church, as a father, and as a husband. . . . It has also given me concrete tools to better pursue that journey." His son was called to be a missionary yesterday.

Much good has been accomplished in the brief seven months since *Preach My Gospel* was introduced, but the best is yet to come as we all become more proficient in the use of this extraordinary missionary tool.

### Rise to a new sense of commitment

I encourage you to use these materials in your presidencies, priesthood executive committee meetings, and ward councils to ensure that those who take upon themselves the covenants of baptism receive throughout their lives the full fruits of Church membership. Through the use of the new Progress Record for individuals

preparing for baptism, missionary and member efforts can be powerfully coordinated. I am confident that more new converts will find it easier to fulfill their desire to remain active, as members and missionaries work together using the principles in *Preach My Gospel*.

The First Presidency message in *Preach My Gospel* provides great motivation to missionaries. Perhaps it will encourage you in your own missionary efforts. It states:

“There is no more compelling work than this. . . . *Preach My Gospel* is intended to help you be a better-prepared, more spiritually mature missionary and a more persuasive teacher. . . . We challenge you to rise to a new sense of commitment to assist our Father in Heaven in His glorious work. . . . The Lord will reward and richly bless you as you humbly and prayerfully serve Him.”<sup>2</sup>

Can you catch the vision? You’ll be as excited as I am when in your personal life you begin to understand and use this missionary tool. Unlike prior full-time missionary resources, *Preach My Gospel* is available to any leader or member through Church distribution.

Probably the greatest benefit of *Preach My Gospel* will be seen in the lives of returned missionaries, who will be stronger parents, more able Church leaders, and better professionals because of the growth that comes from understanding and applying its inspired content.

On behalf of our missionaries worldwide, we express profound gratitude to all

who have participated in the preparation, printing, and distribution of *Preach My Gospel*. We are grateful for each mission president and missionary who is mastering its effective use. Ultimately we are grateful to the Lord for His inspiration. I encourage you to find out how this extraordinary resource can help in your missionary efforts, either as a parent preparing a child for a mission, a Church leader helping new converts, a member sharing the gospel, or an individual getting ready to serve. May the Savior bless and inspire you as you do so, for He lives. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

#### NOTES

1. “Missionary Service,” *First Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting*, Jan. 11, 2003, 19.
2. *Preach My Gospel* (2004), v.

#### President Monson

Thank you, Elders Wirthlin and Scott. The choir and congregation will now sing “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.”

At the conclusion of the singing, Elders Harold G. Hillam and Lynn G. Robbins of the Seventy will address us. They will be followed by Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

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The choir and congregation sang “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet.”

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## Elder Harold G. Hillam

### Influence of one man who left the Church

One of the talks that has had an everlasting impression on me is one given in a Saturday evening session of a stake conference years ago. The talk was given by a young mother. Here’s what she said:

“I have been doing the genealogy of my great-grandfather. He and his large family of sons and daughters were members of the Church.

“My great-grandfather,” she said, “left church one Sunday with his family, and they never returned—no indication why.”