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# The Eleventh Hour

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D&C 33:1–4

By the 1830s the world had become corrupt “every whit” with false teachings about the nature of God (D&C 33:4). The Lord revealed in Doctrine and Covenants 33 that the prophesied corruption was complete. The Lord expressed an urgent need for elders to carry the message of the Restoration at this last hour—even the eleventh hour.

The Restoration message that the missionaries were to carry was descriptively illustrated as “sharper than a two-edged sword” (D&C 33:1), meaning the power of God penetrates the thoughts and intents of the heart (D&C 6:2; Hebrews 4:12; Isaiah 49:2). Because of its sharpness, the word of the Lord can reach the rebellious and pierce them for embracing false ideas and carnal thoughts (D&C 85:6; D&C 136:33; Hebrews 12:4).

The missionaries were told to speak as with the voice of a trump, symbolizing heralding or announcing something highly significant, such as sounding an alarm or signaling a battle. Although the Lord knew that the missionaries would face a “crooked and perverse generation,” He also knew the field was “white already to harvest” (D&C 33:2, 3). As the people hearkened to the Restoration message as presented by the missionaries, they were to gather from the “four quarters of the earth, even as many as will believe in me” (v. 6).

For proclaiming the word of God with a voice of a trump to the four corners of the earth and gathering their converts, missionaries in the eleventh hour received two great promises. The Prophet Joseph Smith declared,

No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime,

swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done.<sup>1</sup>

The second promise was that the same reward or blessing given to faithful laborers of former dispensations, that of joy in the eternal realms, would be theirs.

For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. (Matthew 20:1–16)

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<sup>1</sup> "Church History," 1 March 1842. Joseph Smith Papers.