



Type: Book Chapter

Missionaries

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Source: *Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith*

Published: Salt Lake City; The Deseret News, 1919

Pages: 444-463

Abstract: How Missionaries Are Called—Requirements of Prospective Missionaries—The Kind of Men Wanted for Missionaries—Necessary Qualifications of Missionaries—Further Qualifications of Missionaries—What Missionaries Should Teach—What and How to Teach—Not All Men Ready to Accept the Gospel—Our People Generous to Missionaries—Advice to Missionaries—Missionaries and the Word of Wisdom—Caution to Missionaries—Health of Missionaries To Be Guarded—Missionaries In Ill Health—Care of Returned Missionaries—Work for Returned Missionaries—Duty of a Person Called on a Mission

CHAPTER XX.

Missionaries.

HOW MISSIONARIES ARE CALLED. No person but the President of the Church has the authority to call missionaries to preach the gospel; others may suggest or recommend, but they do so to him, and he issues the call. We draw attention to this fact as it occasionally happens that some brother is spoken to about going on a mission by one of the general authorities, by the president of the stake or by his bishop, and he at once goes to work and begins to prepare to leave, sometimes going so far as to rent his farm, sell his belongings or lease his property. Then, when no date is appointed for his departure and no field of labor assigned him, he feels disappointed and aggrieved.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 37, February, 1902, p. 82.

REQUIREMENTS OF PROSPECTIVE MISSIONARIES. In accordance with the present regulations of the First Presidency brethren are not now sent on missions who have not themselves a testimony of the truth of the work of the Lord. It is deemed inconsistent to send men out into the world to promise to others through obedience to the gospel that which they have not themselves received. Neither is it considered proper to send men out to reform them. Let them first reform at home if they have not been strictly keeping the commandments of God. This applies to the Word of Wisdom as well as to all other laws of heaven. No objection is offered to men being called who in earlier years may have been rough or wayward, if in later years they have lived a godly life and brought forth the precious fruits of repentance. Neither should men be sent who are not in good health; a sickly elder is able to do but little

good himself and often impedes the work of his companion; and, too frequently, has to be sent home after a short absence entailing suffering on himself and expense to the people or the Church.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 37 February, 1902, p. 82.

THE KIND OF MEN WANTED FOR MISSIONARIES. We do not want boys that have been in saloons, that have been in houses of ill-fame, that have been gamblers, that have been drunkards, that have been infamous in their lives—we do not want such to go into the ministry of this holy gospel to represent the Son of the living God and the power of redemption to the world. We want young men that have been born or adopted in the covenant, that have been reared in purity, that have kept themselves unspotted from the world, and can go into the nations of the earth and say to men, "Follow me, as I follow Christ." Then we would like to have them know how to sing, and to pray. We expect them to be honest, virtuous, and faithful unto death to their covenants, to their brethren, to their wives, to their fathers and mothers, to their brothers and sisters, to themselves and to God. Where you get men like this to preach the gospel to the world, whether they know much to begin with or not, the Lord will put his Spirit into their hearts, and he will crown them with intelligence and power to save the souls of men. For the germ of life is in them. It has not been vitiated or corrupted; it has not been driven away from them.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1899, pp. 72-3.

NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS OF MISSIONARIES. Another thing—one of the indispensable qualifications of the elders who go out into the world to preach is humility, meekness and love unfeigned, for the well-being and the salvation of the human family, and the desire to establish peace and righteousness in the earth among men. We can not preach the gospel of Christ without this spirit of humility, meekness, faith in God and reliance upon his prom-

ises and word to us. You may learn all the wisdom of men, but that will not qualify you to do these things like the humble, guiding influence of the Spirit of God will. "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."

It is necessary for the elders who go out into the world to preach to study the spirit of the gospel, which is the spirit of humility, the spirit of meekness and of true devotion to whatever purpose you set your hand or your mind to do. If it is to preach the gospel, we should devote ourselves to the duties of that ministry, and we ought to strive with the utmost of our ability to qualify ourselves to perform that specific labor, and the way to do it is to live so that the Spirit of God will have communion and be present with us to direct us in every moment and hour of our ministry, night and day.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1915, p. 138.

FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS OF MISSIONARIES. There are many excellent men but very few really good missionaries. The characteristics of a good missionary are: A man who has sociability—whose friendship is permanent and sparkling—who can ingratiate himself into the confidence and favor of men who are in darkness. This cannot be done offhand. You must get acquainted with a man, learn him and gain his confidence and make him feel and know that your only desire is to do him good and bless him; then you can tell him your message, and give him the good things you have for him kindly and lovingly. Therefore, in selecting missionaries, choose such as have sociability, who have friendship and not enmity towards men; and if you have not any such in your ward, train and qualify some young men for this work. Some men can never make good missionaries, and you should not select such. In the very first place, a missionary should have in himself the testimony of the Spirit of God—the witness of the Holy Ghost. If he has not this, he has nothing to give. Men are

not converted by eloquence or oratory; they are convinced when they are satisfied that you have the truth and the Spirit of God.—*Improvement Era*, also *Digest of Instructions*, Y. M. M. I. A., 1904.

WHAT MISSIONARIES SHOULD TEACH. Our elders are instructed here, and they are taught from their childhood up, that they are not to go out and make war upon the religious organizations of the world when they are called to go out to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, but to go and bear with them the message which has been given to us through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph, in this latter dispensation, whereby men may learn the truth, if they will. They are sent out to offer the olive branch of peace to the world, to offer the knowledge that God has spoken from the heavens once more to his children upon the earth; that God has in his mercy restored again to the world the fulness of the gospel of his Only Begotten Son, in the flesh, that God has revealed and restored to mankind the divine power and authority from himself, whereby they are enabled and authorized to perform the ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ necessary for their salvation; and their performance of these ordinances must of necessity be acceptable unto God who has given to them the authority to perform them in his name. Our elders are sent out to preach repentance of sin, to preach righteousness, to preach to the world the gospel of life, of fellowship, and of friendship among mankind, to teach men and women to do that which is right in the sight of God and in the presence of all men, to teach them the fact that God has organized his Church, a Church of which he, himself, is the author and the founder—not Joseph Smith, not President Brigham Young, not the Twelve Apostles, that have been chosen in this dispensation—to them does not belong the honor of establishing the Church. God is its author, God is its founder, and we are sent out, and we send out our elders, to make this proclama-

tion to the world, and leave it to their own judgment and discretion as to whether they will investigate it, learn the truth for themselves, and accept it, or whether they will reject it. We do not make war upon them; if they do not receive it, we do not contend with them; if they fail to benefit themselves by receiving the message that we give to them for their own good, we only pity. Our sympathy goes out to those who will not receive the truth and who will not walk in the light when the light shines before them; not hatred, not enmity, not the spirit of condemnation; it is our duty to leave condemnation in the hands of Almighty God. He is the only real, true, righteous impartial judge, and we leave judgment in his hands. It is not our business to proclaim calamities, judgments, destruction, and the wrath of God upon men, if they will not receive the truth. Let them read the word of God, as recorded in the New and the Old Testaments; and, if they will receive it, let them read the word that has been restored through the gift and power of God to Joseph the prophet, as contained in the Doctrine and Covenants and in the Book of Mormon. Let them read these things, and they will learn there, themselves, the promises that God has made to those who will not hearken when they hear the truth, but will close their ears and their eyes against the light. We need not repeat these things and try to impose upon the feelings and judgments of men by threatening them or by warning them against the dangers and evils that may come upon the ungodly, the disobedient, the unthankful, and those who will not yield to the truth. They will learn it soon enough, if we do not mention it to them at all.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1915, pp. 3-4.

WHAT AND HOW TO TEACH. The question often arises in the minds of young men who find themselves in the mission field, "What shall I say?" And another follows closely upon it, "How shall I say it?" To those who go out in earnestness and who have made a partial study of the

principles of the gospel at home, the first question will soon be solved even if they have failed to make the very best use of their time and opportunities in our schools, associations, and religious meetings. They will soon find attraction in the principles of truth, and as they find time, by close application, become familiar with the teachings set forth in the gospel of Jesus Christ, as revealed to and taught by the Latter-day Saints. But the second question, involving the best method of delivering the message which the missionary has gone out to proclaim, that is not always so readily solved. And yet, the success or failure of a mission largely depends upon the false or accurate solution of this problem.

While no specific rule may be given, experience has taught that the simplest way is the best. Having learned the principles of the gospel, through a prayerful spirit and by careful study, these should be presented to men in humility, in the simplest forms of speech, without presumption or arrogance and in the spirit of the mission of Christ. This cannot be done if a young missionary waste his effort in a vain-glorious attempt to become a noisy orator. This is the point I wish to impress upon the elders, and to advise that all oratorical effort be confined to appropriate times and places. The mission field is not the place for such effort. The gospel is not successfully taught by ostentatious display of words and argument, but rather is expressed by modest and rational statements of its simple truths, uttered in a way that will touch the heart and appeal, as well, to reason and sound sense.

It isn't the rounded period, but the thought which it contains that is of value; nor is it the faultless sentence so much as the spirit accompanying the speaker that awakens life and light in the soul. The spirit must first be with the missionary, if he shall succeed in awakening its response in his hearers; and this is true whether the words be spoken in conversation, face to face, or in public gatherings. The

spirit will not manifest itself in the person who devotes his time to deliver what he has to say in pompous words or with display of oratory. He hopes to please artificially, and not effectively through the heart.

It is, therefore, of great importance that the gospel should be preached in the simplest and most intelligible way. This does not mean that the language should not be choice, nor that all the refinement possible should not be employed, but that there should be no affectation, nothing "put on." There is enough in the gospel to occupy our earnest time and language, without devoting our time to artificial effects. By earnestness and simplicity the missionary will not only establish himself in the truth, but his testimony will convince others. He will also learn to stand for himself with God as his helper; he will touch the hearts of the people and will have the pleasure of seeing them come to an understanding of his message. The spirit of the gospel will shine forth from his soul and others will partake of his light and rejoice therein. The other course will be ineffectual, serving no useful purpose, either to the missionary himself or to those who hear him, but rather leading to vanity, emptiness and futility.

In the mission field, as in our daily lives, it is best to be natural, rational—neither given to exaggeration of spiritual gifts nor to destructive affectation in act or language. It is best to develop simplicity of speech, earnestness of manner, humility of spirit, and a feeling of love for our fellows, thereby cultivating that well-balanced common sense in our lives that shall command the respect and admiration of the honest in heart and insure the continual presence and aid of the Spirit of God.

NOT ALL MEN READY TO ACCEPT THE GOSPEL. I was struck by a remark made by one of the brethren with respect to the many people who saw and heard the Prophet Joseph Smith and yet didn't believe that he was a prophet of God, or

a man raised up by the Almighty to lay the foundations of this great latter-day work. It was said that the Lord had not revealed it unto them. Now, I do not dispute that statement, nor call it in question; but it occurred to me that there are thousands of men who have heard the voices of the inspired servants of God, unto whom the Almighty has borne record of the truth, and yet they have not believed it. It is my opinion that the Lord bears record to the testimonies of his servants unto those who hear those testimonies, and it is left with them whether or not they will harden their hearts against the truth and not listen to it, and abide the consequences. I believe the Spirit of the Almighty God is upon most of the elders who go out into the world to proclaim the gospel. I believe their words are accompanied by the testimony of the Spirit of God. But all men are not open to receive the witness and the testimony of the Spirit. And the responsibility will rest with them. Yet it may be possible the Lord withholds his Spirit from some, for a wise purpose in him, that their eyes are not opened to see and their minds not quickened to comprehend the word of truth. As a rule, however, it is my opinion that all men who are seeking after the truth and are willing to receive it, will also receive the witness of the Spirit which accompanies the words and testimonies of the servants of the Lord; while those whose hearts are hardened against the truth and will not receive it when it is borne record of to them, will remain ignorant and without a comprehension of the gospel. I believe there are tens of thousands of people who have heard the truth and have been pricked in their hearts, but they are seeking every refuge they possibly can to hide themselves from their convictions of the truth. It is among this class that you will find the enemies to the cause of Zion. They are opposing the truth in order to hide themselves from their convictions of the truth. There are men, possibly within the sound of my voice—

certainly within the limits of this city—who have read our books, who have listened to the discourses of the elders, and who are familiar with the doctrines of the Church; but they will not acknowledge—openly, at least—the truth of this gospel and the divinity of this work. Well, the responsibility rests with them. God will judge them and deal with them in his own way and time. Many of them, through their efforts to bring reproach upon the cause of Zion, are awakening the attention of people in the world to “Mormonism,” and thus unwittingly advancing the cause of Zion, while they know it not. I thank God my Father that he brings good out of the evil designed against his people by their enemies. And he will continue to do this. The clouds may gather over our heads, and, as in the past, it may seem impossible for us to penetrate them; yet there can be no clouds so dark, so gloomy or so heavy, but God will roll them away in his own time and will bring good out of threatening evil. He has done it in the past, he will do it in the future; for it is his work, not the work of man.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1899, pp. 40-41.

OUR PEOPLE GENEROUS TO MISSIONARIES. I believe I can confidently say that the Latter-day Saints, as a rule, are among the most hospitable, generous and kind hearted people that can be found upon the earth. Not long ago one of our elders returned from a mission in the South. There had been a question raised in his mind as to whether the Latter-day Saints in Zion would be as open-handed, as hospitable, as kind-hearted and as willing to receive and entertain a stranger as were the people of the South, and he determined to put the matter to the test. The story of his visits to some of our people here is published in the *Improvement Era*, No. 6, Vol. 1, p. 399. I cannot give it to you in detail, but will only attempt a brief outline. Representing himself as a minister of the gospel from the state of Tennessee, traveling without purse or scrip, as the elders of

the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were generally doing, he called upon Brother B. Y. Hampton, of the Hampton House, and asked for entertainment without charge. Bro. Hampton readily consented to take care of him. He next called at the Temple Barber Shop, with a similar representation, and asked for a "shave and shingle," on the same terms, which was readily complied with, and he was asked to "come again." He next called upon Brother Henry Dinwoodey, and presenting himself as before, asked for means to pay his fare on the railroad, going north, whereupon Brother Dinwoodey handed him out the money. Needing a mainspring in his watch, he called upon Brothers John Daynes & Son, and introduced himself as before, and they cheerfully repaired his watch. He then called upon Thomas G. Webber, of Z. C. M. I., and in the same guise asked for a pair of shoes, which Col. Webber generously gave him. Having a tooth which needed filling, he called at the dental parlors of Dr. Fred Clawson, whom he convinced, after some difficulty, that he was not an old friend and school mate, but really a minister of the gospel from Tennessee, having a similar name; the doctor readily consented to filling his tooth without money or price. Thus it was proven that the Latter-day Saints were as generous, as kind hearted, as ready to help the stranger of another religion, as were the good people of the Southern States, and for that matter of any other country. Having put these people to the test, in other words, having weighed them in the balance and found them not wanting in each case, he fully explained his motive and who he was, to their mutual delight. And when the elder returned their gifts or declined to receive the favors granted him without proper remuneration in each case, as I understand, the brethren insisted that what they had done was in good faith on their part, and he was welcome to the same, believing that an elder who had spent two years and upwards on a mission,

laboring without purse or scrip, would be likely to stand almost as much in need of such help as would the strange minister whom he had personated.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1898, pp 46-7.

ADVICE TO MISSIONARIES. The missionary labor accomplished by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a subject of growing comment and marvel among people of the world who come to learn of its extent and results. This feeling of wonder is blended with admiration in the minds of those who study the details of our missionary system, and who are able to appreciate the self-sacrifice, enduring faith, and God-fearing reliance by which the missionaries of the Church are distinguished. The fact that those of our people who go forth on missions do so at their own expense, unsalaried, indeed, without hope of pecuniary reward, spending years away from home—usually years of early manhood—the years that are regarded as most valuable in shaping the individual's course and position in life—this fact, indeed, may well arouse the surprise and admiration of the world.

Many of our devoted missionaries are valiantly striving to do their best, and to make their best better, day by day; great is and greater yet shall be their reward. Others are lacking in energy and effort; their work is done, if at all, in a half-spirited way, and their thoughts are ever running ahead to the time of their release and return.

To those of the first class the days are all too short and the months too few for the exalted labors in which they find such genuine satisfaction and happiness. To the others the days drag and the weeks are burdensome.

The individual elder is left largely to the guidance of the spirit of his calling, with which he should be imbued. If he fail to cultivate that spirit, which is the spirit of energy and application, he will soon become torpid, indolent and unhappy. Every missionary should strive to devote part of

each day to study and prayerful thought on the principles of the gospel and the theology of the Church. He should read and reflect and pray. True, we are opposed to the preparing of set sermons to be delivered with the thought of oratorical effect and rhetorical display; yet when an elder arises to address a congregation at home or abroad, he should be thoroughly prepared for his sermon. His mind should be well stored with thoughts worth uttering, worth hearing, worth remembering; then the spirit of inspiration will bring forth the truths of which his auditors are in need, and give to his words the ring of authority.

Brethren—you to whom these words of admonition apply, for your own sakes, if not for the sake of those whose welfare is your charge—beware of indolence and neglect. The adversary is only too eager to take advantage of your apathy, and you may lose the very testimony of which you have been sent to bear record before the world.

We would recommend to conference presidents and other presiding officers in the various branches of the Church, that where possible, they have the elders in their charge follow regularly and systematically a study of the standard works and other approved publications of the Church, thus more fully equipping themselves as teachers to the world.

There is little excuse for the idle man in any walk of life; work is abundant for every one who will labor; but least of all is there excuse or palliation in the case of a listless or idle missionary pretending to be busy in the service of his Lord.

It is to be earnestly recommended that elders abroad on missions, as indeed Latter-day Saints in general, avoid contentious argument and debate regarding doctrinal subjects. The truth of the gospel does not depend for its demonstration on heated discussion; the message of truth is most ef-

fectively delivered when expressed in words of simplicity and sympathy.

The history of our missionary work already written proves the futility of public debate and argument between our elders and their opponents; and this in spite of the fact that in the great majority of such undertakings the forensic victory has been won by our representatives. A testimony of the truth is more than a mere assent of the mind, it is a conviction of the heart, a knowledge that fills the whole soul of its recipient.

Missionaries are sent forth to preach and teach the first principles of the gospel, Christ and him crucified, and practically nothing more in the way of theological doctrine. They are not commissioned to expound their own views on intricate questions of theology, nor to mystify their hearers with a show of profound learning. Teachers they are and must be, if they meet in any degree the responsibilities of their high calling; but they should teach as nearly as they can after the manner of the Master—seeking to lead by love for their fellows, by simple explanation and persuasion; not trying to convince by force.

Brethren, leave these themes of profitless discussion alone; keep closely to the teachings of the revealed word, as made plain in the standard works of the Church and through the utterances of the living prophets; and let not a difference of views on abstruse matters of doctrine absorb your attention lest thereby you become estranged from one another and separated from the Spirit of the Lord.

The standard works of the Church and other approved writings should be carefully studied and commented on by the brethren; every Latter-day Saint and particularly every elder in the field should seek to become learned in the gospel; but let it not be forgotten that to understand the inspired writings aright the reader must himself have the

spirit of inspiration; and this spirit will never impel one to hostile discussion or wordy contests.

Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all else that is desirable, including the knowledge for which you yearn, shall be given unto you.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 38, October 15, 1903, p. 624.

MISSIONARIES AND THE WORD OF WISDOM. Young men cannot hope to be successful missionaries who violate the Word of Wisdom. Its observance is necessary to that spiritual fervor and assurance which carry conviction to the hearts of those who receive the words of the elders. The absolute necessity of the observance of the Word of Wisdom in the missionary field makes it desirable that all who violate this important law to the people, reform before they can hope to accomplish anything helpful to others, either by precept or example.

There is no thoughtful Latter-day Saint who does not look forward with some pleasure to the time when his son will be called on a mission. No greater honor can come to a home than a call to represent the work of the Lord among the nations; yet parents are too frequently indifferent about the preparation that their sons receive prior to the call to fill a mission. Fundamental in that preparation is the observance of the Word of Wisdom. So important do I esteem this subject that at a recent conference in the Beaver stake I was led to speak upon it at considerable length. The extracts that follow from that discourse should be of interest and deep concern to every reader of the *Juvenile Instructor*:

“Now, I do wish with all my heart—not because I say it, but because it is written in the word of the Lord—that you would give heed to this Word of Wisdom. It was given unto us ‘not by commandment’; but by the word of President Brigham Young, it was made a commandment unto the Saints. It is written here for our guidance, for our happiness and advancement in every principle that pertains to

the kingdom of God, in time and throughout eternity, and I pray you to observe it. It will do you good; it will ennoble your souls; it will free your thoughts and your hearts from the spirit of destruction; it will make you feel like God, who sustains even the sparrow, that it does not fall to the ground without his notice; it will bring you nearer to the similitude of the Son of God, the Savior of the world, who healed the sick, who made the lame to leap for joy, who restored hearing to the deaf and sight to the blind, who distributed peace, joy, and comfort to all with whom he came in contact, and who cursed and destroyed nothing, save it was the barren fig tree, and that was to show forth his power more than anything else:

“‘And all saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel, and marrow to their bones.

“‘And shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures;

“‘And shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint.

“‘And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them.’ Doc. and Cov. 89.

“Are these glorious promises not sufficient to induce us to observe this Word of Wisdom? Is there not something here that is worthy our attention? Are not ‘great treasures’ of knowledge, even ‘hidden treasures,’ something to be desired? But when I see men and women addicting themselves to the use of tea and coffee, or strong drinks, or tobacco in any form, I say to myself, here are men and women who do not appreciate the promise God has made unto them. They trample it under their feet, and treat it as a thing of naught. They despise the word of God, and go contrary to it in their actions. Then when affliction overtakes them, they are almost ready to curse God, because he

will not hear their prayers and they are left to endure sickness and pain.

“And among the least things that we should do is to keep the Word of Wisdom. Brethren and sisters, do not be so weak! I recollect a circumstance that occurred three years ago in a party that I was traveling with. There were one or two who persisted in having their tea and coffee at every place they stopped. I preached the Word of Wisdom right along; but they said, ‘What does it matter? Here is So-and-so, who drinks tea and coffee.’ Thus the act of one woman or one man nullified not only all that I or my brethren said in relation to it, but also the word of God itself. I said at one time, ‘Oh, yes, you say it is a good thing to drink a little tea or coffee, but the Lord says it is not. Which shall I follow?’ The Lord says that if we will observe the Word of Wisdom we shall have access to great treasures of knowledge, and hidden treasures; we shall run and not be weary, we shall walk and not faint; and the destroying angel shall pass us by, as he did the children of Israel, and not slay us. But the class of men of whom I speak say, in effect, ‘We don’t care what the Lord says or promises, we will drink tea and coffee anyhow.’ Such people will set a bad example, no matter what others say or what God has said. They will take the bits in their own mouths, and do as they please, regardless of the effect upon the Saints. I say, out upon such practices! If I could not travel with the people of God and observe the laws of God, I would quit traveling. But if the Lord will give me strength to keep his word, so that I can teach it conscientiously, from the heart as well as from the lips, I will visit you, and labor with you, and plead with you. I will pray for you and earnestly beseech you, my brethren and sisters, especially the young men of Zion, to cease practicing these forbidden things, and observe the laws of God, so that you can run and not be weary, walk and not faint,

and have access to great treasures of knowledge, hidden treasures, and every blessing that the Lord has promised through obedience."—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 37, December, 1902, p. 721.

CAUTION TO MISSIONARIES. I am sorry to say it, but if these two boys, recently drowned, had kept away from those rivers, where they had no special duty, or calling, they would not have been drowned as they were. I would like it to be understood by the presidents of missions, and by the elders, that are out in the world, that it is not a good thing, neither is it at all wise for our elders to go out on excursions, on dangerous lakes, or streams, or bodies of water, just for fun. They would better keep away. The Lord will protect them in the discharge of their duty; and if they are more careful of their health, there will not be so many of them become a prey to disease. We know of some incidents that were the cause of the death of some of our brethren who have passed away in the mission field. They lacked caution. They did not exercise the best wisdom and judgment. They went too far for their strength and were not as careful of themselves as they ought to have been. I do not speak this to blame these brethren. I have not the least doubt but they have done according to the best wisdom they possessed; but there is such a thing as overdoing. A man may fast and pray till he kills himself, and there isn't any necessity for it; nor wisdom in it. I say to my brethren, when they are fasting, and praying for the sick, and for those who need faith and prayer, do not go beyond what is wise and prudent in fasting and prayer. The Lord can hear a simple prayer, offered in faith, in half a dozen words, and he will recognize fasting that may not continue more than twenty-four hours, just as readily and as effectually as he will answer a prayer of a thousand words and fasting for a month. Now, remember it. I have in mind elders now on missions, anxious to excel their

associates. Each wants to get the most "red marks" of credit, and so he will exert himself beyond his strength; and it is unwise to do it. The Lord will accept that which is enough, with a good deal more pleasure and satisfaction than that which is too much and unnecessary. It is good to be earnest, good to be diligent, to persevere, and to be faithful all the time, but we may go to extremes in these things, when we do not need to. The Word of Wisdom dictates that when we become weary we should stop and rest. When we are threatened with exhaustion through over exertion, wisdom would caution us to wait, to stop; not to take a stimulant to urge us on to greater extremes, go where we can retire and rest and recuperate according to the laws of nature. That is the best way to do.

Now, I do not blame my dear brethren who have met with death abroad; yet, I wish that they could and would have escaped it.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1912, pp. 134-135.

HEALTH OF MISSIONARIES TO BE GUARDED. Presidents of all the Missions are under strict instructions from the Presidency of the Church to guard carefully the health of the elders that are laboring under their direction. These presidents of Missions are also under instructions to send home any and all elders whose health or whose other circumstances may make it necessary for them to return.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1904, p. 41.

MISSIONARIES IN ILL HEALTH. I would like to exhort the elders who are upon missions, and those who shall go upon missions in the future, not to allow the thoughts to enter their hearts that they will be criticised or be made to suffer in their character or their standing in the Church because their health will not permit them to fulfil a two or three years' mission abroad. We would like them rather to feel in themselves a wholesome aversion to coming home without having filled an honorable mission, when their health and other conditions will permit them to do so; and

if they have any reluctance about coming home at all, before completing their missions, it should be based upon this principle.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1904, p. 42.

CARE OF RETURNED MISSIONARIES. It is also a good thing for the bishops in all the wards to look after their returned missionaries. It is a pity that after so many of our boys who go abroad and fill good missions return home, they should be apparently dropped or ignored by the presiding authorities of the Church and be permitted to drift away again into carelessness and indifference, and eventually, perhaps, to wander entirely away from their Church duties. They should be kept in the harness, they should be made active in the work of the ministry, in some way that they may better keep the spirit of the gospel in their minds and in their hearts and be useful at home as well as abroad.

There is no question as to the fact that missionary service is required and is as necessary in Zion, or here at home, as it is abroad. Many people seem to be careless with reference to the proper training of their children. We see too many boys that are falling into very careless, if not into pernicious, ways and habits. Every missionary boy who returns from his mission full of faith and good desire should take it upon himself to become a savior as far as possible of his young and less experienced associates at home. When a returned missionary sees a boy falling into bad ways and is becoming accustomed to bad habits, he should feel that it is his duty to take hold of him, in connection with the presiding authorities of the stake or of the ward in which he lives, and exercise all the power and influence he can for the salvation of that erring young man who has not the experience that our elders abroad have had, and thus become a means of saving many and of establishing them more firmly in the truth.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1914, pp. 4-5.

WORK FOR RETURNED MISSIONARIES. Returned missionaries ought to be in demand where brave hearts, strong minds and willing hands are wanted. The genius of the gospel is not that of negative goodness—mere absence of what is bad; it stands for aggressive energy well directed, for positive goodness—in short, for work.

We hear much of men who are specially gifted, of geniuses in the world's affairs; and many of us force ourselves to think that we are capable of little and therefore may as well take life easy since we do not belong to that favored class. True, not all are endowed with the same gifts, nor is every one imbued with the strength of a giant; yet every son and every daughter of God has received some talent, and each will be held to strict account for the use or misuse to which it is put. The spirit of genius is the spirit of hard work, plodding toil, whole-souled devotion to the labor of the day.

Let no one think that any honorable labor is beneath him; harbor no dislike for the work of the hands, but let the mind direct them in skill and energy. The example set by our late beloved President Wilford Woodruff has often been cited abroad, and held up for the admiration and emulation of those who are not of us; it is that of most of the leading men of our Church. Even in his old age he did his share of physical toil, and rejoiced in his ability to "hoe his row" and hold his own with his grand-children on the farm.

"My son, be up and doing, and the Lord be with thee.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 38, p. 689.

DUTY OF A PERSON CALLED ON A MISSION. When a man is called to go on a mission, and a field of labor is assigned to him, he should, I think, say in his heart, "Not my will be done, but thine, O Lord."—*Deseret Weekly News*, Vol. 33, 1884, p. 226.