

D&C Lesson # 41
Every Member a Missionary
(D&C 1:4-5, 30; 65; 109:72-74; 123:12)
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(Here is inspirational background and evidences supporting the Restoration)

I. The Lord Himself made it clear that **each of us has the responsibility** to share the beautiful truths we have received.

A. Prior to His Crucifixion, He met with His disciples on the Mount of Olives. He answered their questions about the Last Days. And in doing so He told them (and us) how to be prepared to meet God at the Last Day.

B. He gave three parables to show what was needful. Two definitely had significance to the sharing the Gospel.

C. After relating the Parable of the Ten Virgins (a parable stressing the need to have the Spirit for our Guide as oil in our lamps), the Lord told the Parable of the Talents. They are related!

The Parable of the Talents relates to our willingness to share the Gospel. The word talent then does not mean the same as “talent” of our days.

The Lord spoke of a man who had given **gifts** to certain persons. **Then he went away. When he returned, he expected an accounting of what the individuals had done with his gifts.**

Some had multiplied those gifts to make a greater return for their Master.

But one, out of fear, had buried his gifts, and the Master was angry.

Is not the **Gift of the Fullness of the Gospel one of the greatest gifts the Lord has given us?**

The Savior was referring to Himself who would soon go away. But He too will return, and He will ask for an accounting of what **we** have done with this most precious gift. **He is asking us to share that gift so that at His return we can present to Him other individuals who have also been blessed by the Gospel’s blessings.**

If we out of fear, bury that gift, and refuse to share it with others, can the Lord be pleased with us upon His return?

On the other hand, He has told us elsewhere that if we have shared, or diligently tried to share, this gift, and brought others to receive His great blessings, “How great will be our joy in the Kingdom of God.”

D. We know this parable is important because the Lord followed it with the Parable of the Sheep and Goats. It too is related.

In it He said that those who feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit those in prison will be found on His Right Hand at the Last Day. For what we have done for others will be as what we have done to Him.

But this parable, while having meaning for physically caring for others, surely has more meaning for our spiritual works. In it He is telling us we should **seek to feed the spiritually hungry and the spiritually deaf with His truths; clothe the naked with His atoning works; and not only visit those in prison, but free them through our temple works.** Then we will truly be worthy to stand on His Right Hand.

II. While it has always been important for God’s people to share the Lord’s truths, it is even more important today.

A. The Golden Plates were given at the beginning of the Seventh Month, the time of the final harvest. And that act truly began **the Lord’s Final Harvest.**

1. That day was an Israelite Feast day which signified the beginning of the Final Harvest.

2. And truly the Book of Mormon was given as the instrument to help gather in that harvest. So the Lord has given us a great tool to carry out His harvest. All we have to do is to invite others to read it.

III. The News of the Restoration has spread throughout the earth precisely because the members of Christ’s Church are generally committed enough to seek to share it.

A. I have learned that one whole branch on my Family Tree came into the Church because Lucy Mack Smith was a “member missionary.” She was visiting in the area where my great-great-grandmother lived, and “opened her mouth.” As a result, that family member not only joined, but brought her husband into the church and her children.

As a result, a great posterity are receiving all the blessings of the Gospel.

IV. While there are over 70,000 missionaries actively seeking out those who are ready to receive the Gospel, the harvest is too great to leave them all the burden. Each individual must do all that we can. And we can!

A. One of my granddaughters who is currently serving a mission recounted this story.

“We met one of the members [on an exchange] who is a mother of four small children and also the leader of the women's organization in her ward. She has always had the desire to have the missionaries teach someone the gospel in her home, but she was just too busy to go out and find someone who was prepared for this message. So, she prayed and asked God to put someone who was prepared for the gospel in her path and then she would open her mouth and invite them to meet with the missionaries. She noticed that every day she would pass the same woman during her morning walk, so she decided that this was someone who was literally placed in her path and she talked to her, became friends with her, and invited her to meet with the missionaries! I was able to teach this woman for the first time while on exchanges and it was amazing to see how prepared she was to hear the gospel! This member had enough love for God's children all around her that she wanted to share the gospel with them, and God loves His children enough that He directed two of their paths to collide with one another, so that the gospel could be shared!”

B. This shows that when the missionaries ask us to what this busy young mother did, it works.

V. We truly are a part of a marvelous work, and the Lord continually stressed the need to become fully engaged in it. The blessings which will come to us and to the Church as a whole as a result are reflected in the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple.

A. If we are fully engaged in this work “[Christ’s] kingdom may become a great mountain and fill the whole earth.

...The church... may shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners; And be adorned as a bride for that day when [Christ] shall unveil the heavens, ... that His glory may fill the earth; [And] we shall be caught up in the cloud to meet [Christ], that we may ever be with the Lord; That our garments may be pure, that we may be clothed upon with robes of righteousness, ...and reap eternal joy for all our sufferings” (D&C 109:72-76).

B. So obviously anyone who earnestly engages in the work of sharing the Lord’s precious truths will know joys in doing that work here, and great blessings in His final Kingdom.

VI. The need for the voice of dedicated members right now is ever more urgent.

A. For just as the Lord is giving us special blessings in the Last Days, so the powers which fight against Him are strengthening their efforts. The numbers of those who seek to deceive are growing, and they have many tools in their hands.

B. For sadly, “There are many who are blinded by their subtle craftiness.” For “they lay in wait to deceive” and many are “kept from the truth because they know not where to find it.”

C. Even more, through new technologies, the deceivers have access today to the most vulnerable, our children. And their undeveloped brains are more vulnerable to false ideas and to crippling addictions.

C. Here again, we are called upon to raise our voice in every way we can: In fact, we “should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness,” (D&C 123:13). And we should “cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; ... then we may stand still, with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and... his arm to be revealed” (v. 17).

VII. The Lord has been trying to tell us how significant the work we are doing is.

A. We are not just growing a church membership,

B. **We have been given the responsibility to Prepare for the Return of Christ:**

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

“The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man... and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth.

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom....

“Make known his wonderful works among the people!” (D&C 65: 1-4).

C. We all see with what joy groups are banded together to make up a sports team. We can see how they practice hours and hours together to prepare for each contest. And we see what great effort they expend to win.

Yet the really great battle in life is far beyond any such insignificant and temporary “wins”.

Should not we all want to be engaged in the really great battle of all time --- to prepare for the final coming of Christ!

It does not require hours and hours of strength training or practice. But it does require searching the scriptures to strengthen our testimonies. And it requires getting down on our knees to humbly ask for help.

But what a marvelous knowledge it is to know we are called to be one of Christ’s valiant servants! And that He has trusted us with this great responsibility. How then can we fail Him?