



A Call for Missionaries

President Thomas S. Monson’s attention to missionary work is an extension of the Church’s emphasis on sharing the gospel, starting with the Prophet Joseph Smith. Following are the words of previous prophets on missionary work.

May I mention a matter close to my heart and which deserves our serious attention?” said President Thomas S. Monson in his opening remarks of the October 2010 general conference. “I speak of missionary work.” He then extended a call for more full-time missionaries:

“To young men of the Aaronic Priesthood and to you young men who are becoming elders: I repeat what prophets have long taught—that every worthy, able young man should prepare to serve a mission. Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much. Young men, I admonish you to prepare for service as a missionary. . . .

“A word to you young sisters: while you do not have the same priesthood responsibility as do the young men to serve as full-time missionaries, you also make a valuable contribution as missionaries, and we welcome your service.

“And now to you mature brothers and sisters: we need many, many more senior couples. . . . I urge you to prepare now for the day when you and your spouse might [serve a mission]. As your circumstances allow, as you are eligible for retirement, and as your health permits, make yourselves available to leave home and give full-time missionary service” (Thomas S. Monson, “As We Meet Together Again,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 5–6).



Joseph Smith
(1805–1844)
First President
of the Church

“After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the Gospel” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 330).



Brigham Young
(1801–1877)
Second President
of the Church

“Our Father in Heaven, Jesus, our Elder Brother and the Savior of the world, and the whole heavens, are calling upon this people to prepare to save the nations of the earth, also the millions who have slept without the Gospel” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young [1997], 243).



John Taylor
(1808–1887)
Third President
of the Church

“There are lots of able-bodied men who, if they could only have a little more faith in God, and could realize . . . the responsibilities of that priesthood that God has conferred upon them, they would be ready to break all barriers and say, Here I am, send me; I wish to benefit the human family” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor [2001], 73–74).



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ELDERS



Wilford Woodruff
(1807–1898)
Fourth President
of the Church

“There never was a set of men since God made the world under a stronger responsibility to warn this generation, to lift up our voices long and loud, day and night as far as we have the opportunity and declare the words of God unto this generation. We are required to do this. This is our calling. It is our duty. It is our business” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff [2004], 93).



Thomas S. Monson
President
of the Church

Sister “make a valuable contribution as missionaries and we welcome your service.”

SISTERS



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Joseph F. Smith
(1838–1918)
Sixth President
of the Church

“We want young men . . . who 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.’” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph F. Smith [2002], 78).



Heber J. Grant
(1856–1945)
Seventh President
of the Church

“I want to emphasize that we as a people have one supreme thing to do, and that is to call upon the world to repent of sin, to come to God. And it is our duty above all others

to go forth and proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the restoration again to the earth of the plan of life and salvation” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant [2002], 84).



Harold B. Lee
(1899–1973)
Eleventh President
of the Church

“We witness in our missionary work the magnificent spectacle of young men and young women [going]. . . to all the ends of the earth, that by their unselfish services they stand as witnesses at all times and in all places of the divine responsibility upon the Church to teach the gospel” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Harold B. Lee [2000], 159).



Spencer W. Kimball
(1895–1985)
Twelfth President
of the Church

“The question is frequently asked: Should every young man fill a mission? And the answer has been given by the Lord. It is ‘Yes.’ . . .

“We realize that while all men definitely should, all men are not prepared to teach the gospel abroad. . . . Yes, we would say, every able worthy man should shoulder the cross. What an army we should have teaching Christ and him crucified! Yes, they should be prepared, usually with saved funds for their missions, and always with a happy heart to serve” (Spencer W. Kimball, “When the World Will be Converted,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1974, 8).



Ezra Taft Benson
(1899–1994)
Thirteenth President
of the Church

“We urge you to seriously consider serving a full-time mission. . . .

“Many couples can attest that their missionary service was among their happiest times together because they were completely dedicated to one purpose—missionary work” (Ezra Taft Benson, “Our Responsibility to Share the Gospel,” *Ensign*, May 1985, 8).



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COUPLES



Gordon B. Hinckley
(1910–2008)
Fifteenth President
of the Church

“There is a constant need for more couple missionaries. They perform wonderful service throughout the world. You [leaders] need not wait for the couples to volunteer. The sacrifices associated with serving the Lord full time will abundantly bless the couples, their families, and the people they serve” (“To the Bishops of the Church,” Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting, June 19, 2004, 27).