

# HOW ARE MISSIONARIES CALLED?



*An Apostle  
looks into each  
missionary's eyes  
and receives  
revelation  
about where to  
assign him or her.*

## YOUR PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH AN APOSTLE

**Elder M. Russell Ballard**

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

In the early days of the Church, missionaries were interviewed by a General Authority before they went on their missions. These days you are interviewed to serve as missionaries by your bishops and stake presidents, and most of you will go through your entire lives without being interviewed by a General Authority. That is simply a reflection of the reality in a worldwide church of more than 15 million members. I know I speak for my brethren when I tell you that we wish it were possible for us to know all of you personally and to be able to tell you that we love you and that we support you.

Fortunately the Lord has provided ways for us to reach out to you. For example, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve assigns every missionary to his or her mission. Although this is done without a

traditional face-to-face interview, technology and revelation combine to provide an experience that is remarkably intimate and personal. Let me tell you how this happens.

Your photograph comes up on a computer screen, together with key information provided by your bishop and stake president. When your picture appears, we look into your eyes and review your answers to the missionary recommendation questions. For that brief moment, it seems as if you are present and responding to us directly.

As we look at your photograph, we trust that you have cleared in every way the “raised bar” required today to be a faithful, successful missionary. Then, by the power of the Spirit of the Lord and under the direction of President Thomas S. Monson, we assign you to one of the Church’s 406 worldwide missions.

No, it isn’t the same as a personal, face-to-face interview. But it’s close.

*From an April 2015 general conference address.*



## YOUR INSPIRED ASSIGNMENT

### Elder Ronald A. Rasband

Of the Presidency of the Seventy

I would like to relate to you an experience which I had with President Henry B. Eyring several years ago when he was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve. Elder Eyring was assigning missionaries to their fields of labor, and I was invited to observe.

First, we knelt together in prayer. I remember Elder Eyring using very sincere words, asking the Lord to bless him to know “perfectly” where the missionaries should be assigned. The word “perfectly” said much about the faith that Elder Eyring exhibited that day.

Then as each missionary’s picture appeared on a computer screen, to me it was as if the missionary were in the room with us. Elder Eyring would then greet the missionary with his kind and endearing voice: “Good morning, Elder Reier or Sister Yang. How are you today?”

After assigning a few missionaries, Elder Eyring turned to me as he pondered one particular missionary and said, “So, Brother Rasband, where do you think this missionary should go?” I was startled! I quietly suggested to Elder Eyring that I did not know and that I did not know

I could know! He looked at me directly and simply said, “Brother Rasband, pay closer attention and you too can know!” With that, I pulled my chair a little closer to Elder Eyring and the computer screen, and I did pay much closer attention!

A couple of other times as the process moved along, Elder Eyring would turn to me and say, “Well, Brother Rasband, where do you feel this missionary should go?” I would name a particular mission, and Elder Eyring would look at me thoughtfully and say, “No, that’s not it!” He would then continue to assign the missionaries where he had felt prompted.

As we were nearing the completion of that assignment meeting, a picture of a certain missionary appeared on the screen. I had the strongest prompting that the missionary we had before us was to be assigned to Japan. I did not know that Elder Eyring was going to ask me on this one, but amazingly he did. I rather tentatively and humbly said to him, “Japan?” Elder Eyring responded immediately, “Yes, let’s go there.” And up on the computer screen the missions of Japan appeared. I instantly knew that the missionary was to go to the Japan Sapporo Mission.

Elder Eyring did not ask me the exact name of the mission, but he did assign that missionary to the Japan Sapporo Mission.

At the end of the meeting Elder Eyring bore his witness to me of the love of the Savior, which He has for each missionary assigned to go out into the world and preach the restored gospel. He said that it is by the great love of the Savior that His servants know where these wonderful young men and women, senior missionaries, and senior couple missionaries are to serve. I had a further witness that morning that every missionary called in this Church, and assigned or reassigned to a particular mission, is called by revelation from the Lord God Almighty through one of these, His servants. **NE**

*From an April 2010 general conference address.*