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STILL IN FORCE TODAY





At the end of His ministry in ancient America, just before He returned to His Father, the Savior told His disciples, *“For the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do”* (3 Nephi 27:21).

These words echo down the corridors of time to us as His latter-day disciples. This ancient commandment is still in force, and we should ponder how to fulfill it. How can we do “the works which ye have seen me do”?

Two examples will suffice for us to ponder how to better fulfill the challenge. These examples come from the Savior’s own efforts in teaching the “good news”¹—they are what we would call missionary efforts. He showed us (1) how to talk to people about the gospel and (2) how to invite them to take action.

Talking about the Gospel

The Savior excelled at finding people to teach. While it is true that many sought Him out, we can learn a lot by considering the instances when He was the one who went looking. Sometimes, in fact, He went out of His way to find specific people to teach. Here’s an example:

The Savior came to a town in Samaria called Sychar. “Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well,” when a woman of Samaria came to draw water. (See John 4:5–7.) The Savior was tired and could have simply nodded in acknowledgment to the woman or said something about the weather. Instead, He started a meaningful conversation.

This, on its own, would have surprised the woman. She was a Samaritan and He was a Jew, and “the Jews [had] no dealings with the Samaritans” (John 4:9). But this did not keep Jesus from opening His mouth. He started with a simple request: “Give me to drink” (John 4:7). The woman was puzzled by this encounter with a Jewish man, and even more so when He said, “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14). This promise, which she



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The Savior offered the rich young man an opportunity, but he chose not to act and “went away sorrowful.”



clearly did not fully understand at first, was enough to persuade her to learn more. She said: “Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw” (John 4:15).

What do we “see” the Savior do in Sychar? First of all, He seeks to get the woman interested in His message. He sets aside His fatigue. He doesn’t worry that the woman is a Samaritan. He wants her to never thirst spiritually, and moved by that genuine interest in her, He invites her to learn more.

How can we do what the Savior did? There are many ways to draw out people’s interest in the well of everlasting life, but one tool in particular stands above the rest. “Combined with the Spirit of the Lord,” President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) said, “the Book of Mormon is the greatest tool which God has given us to convert the world.”²

Do you have neighbors or relatives who could be blessed by knowing how a prophet of God dealt with his own obedient and wayward children? Would your family or friends be blessed by spiritual counsel about how to deal with economic stress, death, or other major concerns? Life makes us ask hard questions, and many of these are answered in the Book of Mormon. When such questions

come up, we can invite people to see how people in the Book of Mormon dealt with challenging situations by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. We can also create interest by inviting people to learn about the visit of our Savior to the ancient American continent.

If we do as Christ did, we will have the boldness to speak. When we open our mouths to create interest in the restored gospel, the scriptures promise that we will “become even as Nephi of old” (D&C 33:8). We can do what the Savior did by engaging in conversations about gospel topics that may awaken in another person a desire to know more.

Inviting People to Act

The Savior didn’t just discuss the gospel. He did more than that, as shown by His interaction with the woman at the well. When she expressed interest in receiving what the Savior had to offer, He challenged her to bring another to hear the message (see John 4:15–16). The woman “left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

“Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?” (John 4:28–29).

There are, in fact, many examples of the Lord inviting



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people to take specific action. For example, after He anointed a blind man's eyes with clay, Christ said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (John 9:7). The man washed as instructed and came back seeing.

When ten lepers asked for Christ's help, He asked them to perform a specific task: "Go shew yourselves unto the priests" (Luke 17:14). As an evidence of their faith, they accepted the assignment, and "as they went, they were cleansed" (Luke 17:14). One returned to express gratitude to the Savior. The Lord's response is meaningful: "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole" (Luke 17:19).

Through the scriptures we can "see" how the Savior uses this principle of inviting people to take action. We can also observe that when people fulfill a divine assignment, their faith in the Father and in the Savior is increased. This pattern of inviting people to take action is consistent with revealed doctrine. When people begin to exercise faith, that faith is then tested and grows. Those who wish to never thirst again, those who wish to be made whole, must develop faith by being "doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). As we exercise faith, our faith is strengthened and we are in a position to do more, and thus eventually we become more and more like Christ.

We know that full-time missionaries are always inviting people to take action. Inviting people to do something is in essence a way to help individuals grow in faith. Church leaders apply this same principle when they ask members to fulfill an assignment. So do parents when they ask their children to be obedient.

While serving as a mission president, I interviewed a missionary who was overcome with the blues. I felt impressed to invite him to go out and open his mouth. I promised that if he did so with the intent of helping others, he would be filled with the Spirit. A few days later I learned that he was again full of enthusiasm. In his case, a simple invitation to act made the difference.

When we ask others to take action, we help them in their own conversion process. When the Savior asked the woman at the well to act, she did, and she was blessed for it. What's more, others grew in their faith as she invited them to come and meet the Christ. This was a blessing both for them and for her. (See John 4:29–30, 39–42.)

Rejecting or Accepting the Invitation

In some cases, those we invite to act upon the word will reject our invitation. Even the Savior experienced such rejection. In a well-known example, a wealthy man approached Jesus. He was obeying all of the commandments and wondered what he was missing. The Lord extended a specific invitation to him: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Matthew 19:21). The young man "went away sorrowful" (Matthew 19:22). He chose not to act and he missed a chance to grow in faith.

Those who choose to act, however, will be blessed. An example of this is found in the story of the blind man who was healed. The most important part of this story for the blind man was not what happened to his physical eyes but rather to his spiritual eyes.

Questioned by the Pharisees and religious leaders of the Jews, he said, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." For what he said, they "reviled him" and "cast him out."

But then Jesus came to him and invited him to act on his faith by asking, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" The man asked who the Son of God was, that he might believe on Him. When Jesus identified himself as the Son of God, the man said, "Lord, I believe," and worshipped Him. Because of the blind man's willingness to act on his faith, he was, despite the world's rejection, blessed with a testimony of Jesus Christ. (See John 9:25–38.) We will also strengthen our testimony of Christ when we act according to our covenants.

Fulfilling the Commandment

Sharing the gospel and inviting others to act are simply two ways of fulfilling the commandment, still in force today, to do the things we see Him do. I know that as we do what we have seen Him do, we will continue in the process of becoming even as He is. I testify that He lives and wants the best for all of us. ■

NOTES

1. "The word *gospel* means 'good news'" (Bible Dictionary, "Gospels").
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* (2014), 282.