



By President
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CALLED TO THE WORK

When the Prophet Joseph Smith called Elder Heber C. Kimball (1801–68) to “open the door of salvation” as a missionary to England, Elder Kimball was seized by feelings of inadequacy.

“O, Lord,” he wrote, “I am a man of stammering tongue, and altogether unfit for such a work.”

Elder Kimball accepted the call nevertheless, adding: “These considerations did not deter me from the path of duty; the moment I understood the will of my Heavenly Father, I felt a determination to go at all hazards, believing that He would support me by His almighty power, and endow me with every qualification that I needed.”¹

My young brothers and sisters who are called to full-time missionary service, you are called to the work because you, like Elder Kimball, “have desires to serve God” (D&C 4:3) and because you are ready and worthy.

Senior couples, you are called to the work for the same reasons. You, however, bring not only a desire to serve but also wisdom gained from seasons of sacrifice, love, and experience that your Father in Heaven can use to touch the hearts of His sons and daughters who are looking for the truth. No doubt you have learned that we can never truly love the Lord until we serve Him by serving others.

To your desires to serve as missionaries, you will add faith and fortitude, courage and confidence, resolve and resilience, determination and dedication. Dedicated missionaries can bring about miracles in the mission field.

President John Taylor (1808–87) summed up the essential qualities of missionaries this way: “The kind of men [and women and couples] we want as bearers of this gospel message are men who have faith in God; men who have faith in their religion; men who honor their priesthood; men in whom . . . God has confidence. . . . We want men full of the Holy Ghost and the power of God[,] . . . men of honor, integrity, virtue and purity.”²

The Lord has declared:

“For behold the field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul;

“And faith, hope, charity and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work” (D&C 4:4–5).

Your call has come through inspiration. I testify that whom God calls, God qualifies. You will receive heavenly help as you prayerfully labor in the Lord’s vineyard.

The beautiful promise the Lord gave to the missionaries early in this dispensation, as contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, will be yours: “I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up” (D&C 84:88).

As you serve, you will build rich eternal memories and friendships. I know of no field which produces a more bounteous harvest of happiness than the mission field.



Now, a word for those elders, sisters, and couples who, for whatever reason, may not be able to finish their assigned time in the mission field: The Lord loves you. He appreciates your sacrifice. He is aware of your disappointment. Know

that He still has a work for you to do. Don't let Satan tell you otherwise. Don't get down; don't become discouraged; don't despair.

As I observed in general conference shortly after I was called to lead the

Church: “Fear not. Be of good cheer. The future is as bright as your faith.”³ That promise still holds true for you. So don't lose your faith, because the Lord has not lost faith in you. Keep your covenants and move forward.

The world needs the gospel of Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless all of His Saints—regardless of where we serve—with a missionary heart. ■

NOTES

1. Heber C. Kimball, in Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball*, 3rd ed. (1967), 104.
2. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor* (2001), 73.
3. Thomas S. Monson, “Be of Good Cheer,” *Ensign or Liahona*, May 2009, 92.

TEACHING FROM THIS MESSAGE

Whether or not we serve as full-time missionaries, each of us has the opportunity to share the gospel and serve those around us. Consider pairing this message with a recent general conference talk on this topic, such as “Sharing the Restored Gospel” by Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (*Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2016, 57). You could also discuss the phrase “whom God calls, God qualifies” with those you teach. How have they felt God supporting them in missionary work and in their callings? You could invite those you teach to pray for strength and inspiration to know how to share the gospel with their family, friends, and neighbors.