

# THE FIVE M'S OF MISSIONARY WORK



*The message is divine, and the missionaries who preach it are called of God by prophecy.*

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*Understanding these aspects of missionary life will contribute to a missionary's success.*

I'd like to speak about "Five M's of Missionary Work."

## **1. The Message**

The message is divine. I think our keynote was sounded by our Lord and our Savior, who stands at the head of the great army of missionaries worldwide. After His Resurrection, He appeared to His 11 disciples. He could have given them any counsel, any expression, any warning that He chose to give. But what did He say? It's recorded in Matthew 28:18–20. He said as follows:

"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

What a promise! If we respond affirmatively to that sacred call, that binding authority, "I will be with you always, even unto the end of the world." I can't think of a greater promise.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said simply this: "After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the Gospel" (*History of the Church*, 2:478).

What is the gospel? It is the message we take, a message that declares that an angel flew in the midst of heaven and that the gospel of Jesus Christ was restored. If we'll remember that and the other elements of the message missionaries bear, we'll be effective. In that message is the Book of Mormon, which is part and parcel of every missionary's library—internal, what he knows, and external, what he teaches.

The Book of Mormon, the true nature of the Godhead—the world hungers for this message. It's part of that which missionaries will take to the people.

Another element that I have found very important is that the Church is based on a foundation of Apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone (see Ephesians 2:20). And we emphasize a "living" prophet today. I testify that President Hinckley is such a living prophet—the prophet, seer, and revelator of the Church.



If I could put my finger on that portion of the gospel which seems to penetrate a broader range of people and penetrate more deeply their hearts and their souls and move them to action, it's the plan of salvation, or our Heavenly Father's plan—where we came from, why we're here, where we go when we leave mortality.

It's been my observation that the stumbling block for investigators is not the Word of Wisdom. It isn't Sabbath day observance. It's a testimony that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God. It's very important that we declare that message. The message is divine. Remember that.

## 2. The Missionary

The second M: the missionary, the desire of a lifetime.

One of the Brethren went to a conference

and brought back to me a very simple note from a missionary.

"Dear President Monson, You shook hands with me when I was 17. You told me to go on a mission. I'm here in Seattle on my mission. Thank you." Think of it—the influence of a handshake.

Missionaries are marvelous. They're called of God by prophecy. Only those who are sustained as prophets, seers, and revelators make the suggested call to a missionary, and they're called by the prophet of God. They represent the fruits of all that is good within the Latter-day Saint family.



**M**embers help convince investigators and strengthen new members (right).

*Missions can have an esprit de corps. In Canada we made sure our missionaries knew that they were in the place where Parley P. Pratt had converted John Taylor (far right).*

*Mission presidents show missionaries how to achieve success (bottom right).*



### **3. The Member**

Let's talk just a little bit about the member.

When I was a mission president in Toronto, Canada, we knew that investigators worry about the changes that are going to come into their lives. We had a practice of supplying teams of members to help the missionaries. For example, the missionaries were working with a Catholic family (and that was the majority faith in our area). About midway through the set of discussions they could call on Brother and Sister Anthony Belglio. They had been Catholics. They'd joined the Church and were a great help to the missionaries. When the missionaries had borne their testimony, Brother and Sister Belglio would say, "We know what

you're going through. We were in the same position, but when we heard the truth and realized that a prophet was on the earth at this time, there was no question what we must do, and we never looked back and we've never been sorry." It buttressed the testimony of the missionaries.

Brother Stoneman from up in the north area had been a member of the United Church of Canada. He'd been employed by the United Church of Canada. He was their printer. He lost his job. He found another, better one. He and his wife would go to the investigator who has been a member of the United Church of Canada and bear their testimony. He said, "I lost my job. I lost many of my friends, but I found a wealth of new

friends, and I found the truth. You will not regret it.”

We had others who had been members of the Anglican Church. In fact, we had three teams in every area where missionaries were laboring. And what did it do for those new members? It strengthened them. What did it do for the investigator? It helped convince him. It was a proselyting method; it was a fellowshipping method. It worked both ways.

#### 4. The Mission

Now, a word about the mission itself. Build an esprit de corps in your mission. It doesn't matter which one it is or where it is. We were in Canada. I didn't know anything about Canada, but I did a little reading. I found out that Canada was the only place the Prophet Joseph Smith ever went outside of his own country. That's also where the early elders of the Church went to prepare for their mission to Great Britain. I let our missionaries know that. Sister Monson pointed out that Brigham Young went to Kingston, Ontario, and labored 30 days, walking through snow hip deep, and converted and baptized 40 people. I made sure our missionaries knew that. Parley P. Pratt, in answer to a referral, finding a man from England named John Taylor no more than 20 miles from Toronto, brought him into the Church, and he became the third President of the Church. All of those things we would weave into the history, the goals and the objectives of our missionaries.



ILLUSTRATION BY PAUL MANN

#### 5. The Mission President

Now, a word about mission presidents. Their philosophy is that of a teacher who says, “No one fails in my class.” They're responsible for the missionaries' success. Every missionary wants success, and the mission president shows him how to achieve success.

He helps each missionary to work, but more significant yet, he helps each one to work effectively so that the kingdom of God will grow under his inspired direction.

Remember: “I am with you always,” said the Lord (Matthew 28:20). In addition, the great promise found in the 84th section of the Doctrine and Covenants is 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” (v. 88).

See *True to the Faith*, pp. 104–6, or online at the Gospel Library on [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org).

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