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Preach the Gospel to Every Creature

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In this symposium we are discussing the topic “From Zion to Destruction.” President Ezra Taft Benson has stated that events in the Book of Mormon symbolize the course events will take in the latter days (4). Surely a mighty destruction will occur to bring an end to the world as we know it. The earth will be cleansed from iniquity and then renewed in its paradisiacal glory. But many of the righteous will be spared of this cleansing as they are caught up to meet the Lord Jesus Christ at his second coming. My purpose is to discuss one significant commandment the Latter-day Saints can keep that will immensely help them survive the prophesied destructions that will come.

I have taken my title from Mormon 9, a most significant treatise in which Moroni called upon people everywhere to repent before “that great day when the earth shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (v 2). Moroni emphasized the testimony of the scriptures that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is “a God of miracles” (vv 10–11, 15–20). “And the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men,” Moroni explained, is “that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust” (v 20). Current political and social conditions clearly demonstrate the correctness of Moroni’s prophecy. Moroni then urged his latter-day readers to believe in Christ and not to doubt him. If a person would exercise this faith, “Whatsoever he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ it shall be granted him; and this promise is unto all, even unto the ends of the earth”

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(Mormon 9:21). The implication, as I see it, is that a faithful believer in Christ will recognize and receive mighty miracles from God and will be spared from the terrible destructions that await the wicked (see also v 25). Moroni reiterates this promise twice and extends it “even unto the ends of the earth” (vv 21, 25).

In the midst of his challenge to readers of the Book of Mormon to exercise faith and build trust in Jesus Christ, Moroni cited a statement the Lord made to his disciples when he visited them in the new world. We otherwise do not have this full statement in the Book of Mormon, although the concept of believing and being baptized is in 3 Nephi 11:33–34:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; And he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned; And these signs shall follow them that believe—in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. (Mormon 9:22–24)

My interpretation of this quotation, taken in Moroni’s context, is that the latter-day readers of the Book of Mormon will reap untold blessings by contributing to the preaching of the gospel to all the world. They will thereby strengthen their faith in their Savior Jesus Christ, they will turn from their sins and unto the God of Mercy, they will witness and be blessed by wondrous miracles in the course of their ministry, and they will abide the day of the Second Coming and be found on the right hand of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We may note that Jesus’ statement to his Nephite disciples mirrors almost exactly what he said to his Jerusalem apostles following his resurrection when he met with them in the Upper Room as recorded in Mark 16:15–17. Many biblical scholars, noting that the text of Mark 16:9–20 was not found in the earliest extant manuscripts, have concluded that these verses were added to the text in the second century by an editor named Aristion (or Ariston) and that these passages are therefore not “Markan” (*Interpreter’s Bible* 7:915–16). But the Book of Mormon confirms that the Lord indeed taught these principles. It undoubtedly parallels what the Savior taught in the Old World. We also have a briefer account of these teachings the Lord gave to Moroni as he abridged the Jaredite record (Ether 4:18). Thus the Book of Mormon has two witnesses of Jesus’ teachings recorded

in Mark. This is yet another instance wherein the Book of Mormon text verifies the legitimacy of the biblical text. As an angel testified to Nephi long ago, “These last records [including the Book of Mormon], which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first [the Holy Bible]” (1 Nephi 13:40; see also D&C 20:11).

The Book of Mormon is replete with teachings on the doctrine of the universal gospel and the command to all faithful disciples to take the gospel to all the world, to every nation, and to every creature.

The Universal Gospel

“Behold, the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one,” declared the prophet Nephi (1 Nephi 17:35). This statement confirms the New Testament doctrine revealed to Peter that “God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth [the Lord], and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34–35). Peter exclaimed these words after he understood the vision of the sheets he had just been granted. In it he saw a huge sheet let down three separate times from heaven with all manner of beasts and fowls within it (Acts 10:10–17). These creatures represented all humankind, not just the Jews to whom Peter and the apostles had previously taken the gospel.

Nephi recorded in other writings that the gospel of Jesus Christ was meant for all people. For example, he included this teaching of his brother Jacob: “And [the Lord] cometh into the world that he may *save all men* if they will hearken unto his voice; for behold, he suffereth the pains of *all men*, yea, the pains of *every living creature*, both men, women, and children, who *belong to the family of Adam*” (2 Nephi 9:21; emphasis added). This statement certainly appears to be all-inclusive. Naturally, for any of the family of Adam to be saved, they must individually hearken to the voice of the Lord and repent of their sins.

Within his commentary on the prophecies of Isaiah, Nephi asked, “Hath [the Lord] commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation?” He answered, “Nay; but he hath given it free for *all men*; and he hath commanded his people that they should persuade *all men* to repentance,” further explaining that “*all men* are privileged the one like unto the other, and *none are forbidden*” (2 Nephi 26:27–28; emphasis added). His conclusion of the matter is that the Lord God

does not command men to do evil, but rather to turn unto him. Indeed, “He inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and *all are alike unto God*” (2 Nephi 26:33; emphasis added).

At the millennial day, Nephi testified, the gospel assuredly will be universal: “And the day cometh that the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will be even unto the end of the earth” (2 Nephi 27:11).

Nephi helps us understand that between the beginning of the Restoration in 1830 and the Millennium we must cast off our provincialism and our narrow-minded cultural biases. “Know ye not that there are more nations than one?” he asked (2 Nephi 29:7). I believe this passage has a far broader application than knowing we have the Book of Mormon as a second witness of the Holy Bible. An application for most of us is that the gospel is important not only in the United States of America, but also in all the world. Nephi added the Lord’s words: “Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea, and that I rule in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth” (v 7).

Jacob, Nephi’s brother and successor as prophet of the Nephites, taught his people that “the one being is as precious in [God’s] sight as the other” and that God “created all flesh” (Jacob 2:21). He later included in his writings the invaluable allegory of Zenos, which taught that the Lord of the vineyard would place some of his best fruit in the “nethermost parts of the vineyard” (Jacob 5:13–14, 19, 38–39, 52). That phrase, “the nethermost parts of the vineyard,” has come to have great meaning for us and the universal Church as we attempt to preach the gospel to every creature, no matter how difficult the linguistic, religious, and cultural chasms we have to cross to do so.

The prophet Abinadi, citing Isaiah, testified before king Noah and his wicked priests: “The time shall come when all shall see the salvation of the Lord, when every nation, kindred, tongue, and people shall see eye to eye and shall confess before God that his judgments are just” (Mosiah 16:1; compare Isa 52:10).

The great missionary foursome, the sons of Mosiah, were anxious to share the gospel with everyone they could find, even their enemies, the Lamanites. We should have the same desire to share the gospel universally, even with those who may have once been our enemies such as the Iraqies, the Iranians, the Russians, the Chinese, the North Koreans, and the North Vietnamese. At various times we were willing to drop bombs on some of these peoples. Now we must learn to call them our brothers and sisters, and we can use the sons of Mosiah as our model: “Now they were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble” (Mosiah 28:3).

Alma testified to the people in Ammonihah that the heavenly gospel message was universal: “Yea, and the voice of the Lord, by the mouth of angels, doth declare it unto all nations; yea, doth declare it, that they may have glad tidings of great joy; yea, and he doth sound these glad tidings among all his people, yea, even to them that are scattered abroad upon the face of the earth” (Alma 13:22). A few years later, when Alma and Amulek were preaching throughout all the Nephite cities, Mormon recorded of their labors: “And as many as would hear their words, unto them they did impart the word of God, *without any respect of persons, continually*” (16:14; emphasis added).

From this same Alma we learn the revelation that “The Lord doth grant *unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue*, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have” (Alma 29:8; emphasis added). In this last gospel dispensation, the dispensation of the fulness of times, the Lord will raise up servants *out of every nation and tongue* to preach the glorious gospel word to their people. That prophecy has already begun to be fulfilled with the hosts of indigenous missionaries of many nations of the earth and with the call of General Authorities out of many different nations.

Toward the end of his life, the prophet Mormon could see that his compilation would play a major role in taking the gospel to the world: “And these things doth the Spirit manifest unto me; therefore I write unto you all. And for this cause I write unto you, that ye may know that ye must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, yea, every soul who belongs to the whole human family of Adam. . . . And I would that I could persuade all ye ends of the earth to repent and

prepare to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ” (Mormon 3:20–22).

In his farewell statement to those who would read the Book of Mormon, Moroni quoted his father Mormon, writing that “there were divers ways that [God] did manifest things unto the children of men, which were good” (Moroni 7:24). This conclusion corresponds with the First Presidency’s 1978 statement:

The great religious leaders of the world such as Mohammed, Confucius, and the Reformers, as well as philosophers including Socrates, Plato, and others, received a portion of God’s light. Moral truths were given to them by God to enlighten whole nations and to bring a higher level of understanding to individuals. . . .

Consistent with these truths, we believe that God has given and will give to all peoples sufficient knowledge to help them on their way to eternal salvation, either in this life or in the life to come. (Palmer v)

Clearly, from these many Book of Mormon prophetic witnesses, we can see that God is no respecter of persons, that all are alike unto him, that he desires that his message spread forth from angels, prophets, and authorized messengers, even including ourselves, to every nation, to every creature. In many instances preparatory voices such as Mohammed and Buddha will set the stage for many of the children of men to receive the fulness of truth from the Lord’s authorized messengers. “For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men,” reads the Lord’s preface to the Doctrine and Covenants, “and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated” (D&C 1:2).

Punishments to Those Who Fight Against Zion

The Book of Mormon also explicitly states that while “the righteous shall not perish . . . the time surely must come that all they who fight against Zion shall be cut off” (1 Nephi 22:19). “For the time soon cometh that the fulness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men; for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous” (v 16).

The adversary, Satan, has a counterfeit plan to thwart the latter-day work of God. Nephi explained from his vision: “And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and *its numbers*

were few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also *upon all the face of the earth*; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were *small*, because of the wickedness of the great whore whom I saw” (1 Nephi 14:12; emphasis added). In his vision Nephi further beheld that Satan’s minions gathered “multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God” (v 13). Thus we note that unless we join the emerging throng to build the kingdom of God and to take the gospel to all the world, there is a good chance that we will fall prey to the wiles of Satan, who is determined to bring about our destruction. If we righteously participate with the Lord’s kingdom, we will be heirs of mighty miracles and promises. Nephi’s vision so testifies: “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory” (v 14). Those who tie in with the evil one, Nephi explained, will lose their reward and be destroyed:

Wo unto them that turn aside the just for a thing of naught and revile against that which is good, and say that it is of no worth! For the day shall come that the Lord God will speedily visit the inhabitants of the earth; and in that day that they are fully ripe in iniquity they shall perish. But behold, if the inhabitants of the earth shall repent of their wickedness and abominations they shall not be destroyed, saith the Lord of Hosts. But behold, that great and abominable church, the whore of all the earth, must tumble to the earth, and great must be the fall thereof. (2 Nephi 28:16–18)

Alma added a similar witness when he testified to his son Helaman, “Thus saith the Lord God—Cursed shall be the land, yea, this land, unto every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, unto destruction, which do wickedly, when they are fully ripe; and as I have said so shall it be; for this is the cursing and the blessing of God upon the land, for the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance” (Alma 45:16).

Knowledge of a Savior to Spread to Every Nation

We in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints testify that the antidote to Satan's power is the power brought forth by the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, the most significant part of the merciful plan of the great Creator (see 2 Nephi 9:5; Mosiah 5:15; 26:23; Alma 5:15). Our message must be the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ with all its principles and ordinances, particularly the doctrine of the universal atonement and great and last sacrifice of Jesus Christ (see Alma 34:13–14). Therefore, it was only natural that king Benjamin prophesied, "And moreover, I say unto you, that the time shall come when the knowledge of a Savior shall spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue, and people" (Mosiah 3:20). Having our missionaries merely give an uplifting, ethical message will not do.

In his vision, Nephi beheld that the Book of Mormon would "establish the truth" of the Bible and "make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world, and *that all men must come unto him*, or they cannot be saved. . . . For there is one God and one Shepherd *over all the earth*" (1 Nephi 13:40–41; emphasis added).

Nephi also testified that gathered Israel "shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel" (1 Nephi 22:12). In the same chapter he added, "Behold, all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel if it so be that they will repent" (v 28). Yes, the only safety is in the Holy One of Israel. While we believe that many religious leaders outside of Christianity have brought a portion of God's light to hosts of this world's inhabitants (Palmer v), God our Eternal Father requires that all his children come unto his Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ for their salvation. King Benjamin left no room for doubt on this doctrine when he declared, "I say unto you, that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent" (Mosiah 3:17; see also 2 Nephi 25:20; 31:21; Mosiah 5:8).

This same Savior, Nephi testified, "doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world; for he loveth the world, even that he layeth

down his own life that he may draw *all men* unto him” (2 Nephi 26:24; emphasis added). Toward the end of his commentary on Isaiah’s prophecies, Nephi added, “And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among [the Jews]; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which was had among their fathers” (2 Nephi 30:5). Nephi’s greatest emphasis in his concluding testimony was the universal need to believe in Christ. “And now, my beloved brethren, and also Jew, and *all ye ends of the earth*,” he urged, “hearken unto these words and believe in Christ; and if ye believe not in these words believe in Christ. And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ” (33:10; emphasis added).

Mormon felt the same compulsion as Nephi to leave his ringing testimony of Christ to all the world:

And also that ye may believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, which ye shall have among you; and also that the Jews, the covenant people of the Lord, shall have other witness besides him whom they saw and heard, that Jesus, whom they slew, was the very Christ and the very God. And I would that I could *persuade all ye ends of the earth* to repent and prepare to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. (Mormon 3:21–22; emphasis added)

Latter-day Restoration of the Gospel

Nephi’s soul delighted “in proving unto [his] people the truth of the coming of Christ” and “in proving . . . that save Christ should come all men must perish” (2 Nephi 11:4, 6). These were two reasons why he included numerous chapters of Isaiah’s prophecies. Among these prophecies were references to the latter-day Restoration that would extend to all the world. “And it shall come to pass in the last days,” Isaiah wrote, “when the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and *all nations shall flow unto it*” (12:2; emphasis added; compare Isa 2:2). Later Isaiah added, “And he will lift up an *ensign to the nations from far*, and will hiss unto them from the *end of the earth*; and behold, they shall come with speed swiftly” (2 Nephi 15:26; emphasis added; compare Isa 5:26).

Later, in commenting on Isaiah’s prophecies, Nephi stated that when the Lord performed “a marvelous work” he would remember his covenant to set his hand “the second time to recover my people.”

This same prophecy included, “The words of your seed should proceed forth out of my mouth unto your seed; and my words shall hiss forth unto the ends of the earth, for a standard unto my people, which are of the house of Israel” (2 Nephi 29:1–2; see also, 6:14; 21:11; 25:17; Jacob 6:2; and D&C 137:6).

Labor with Love and Diligence

The Book of Mormon enjoins us to labor with our might to bring about this great latter-day work. As he beheld his vision of the latter days, Nephi exclaimed, “And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost” (1 Nephi 13:37). This is yet another prophecy that those who take the gospel to all the world will be blessed above measure and will avoid the destructions designed for the wicked.

Zenos’ allegory of the olive tree, recorded in Jacob 5, speaks of the latter-day labors of the righteous to the nethermost parts of the vineyard:

And the Lord of the vineyard said unto them: Go to, and labor in the vineyard, with your might. For behold, this is the *last time that I shall nourish my vineyard*; for the end is nigh at hand, and the season speedily cometh; and if ye labor with your might with me ye shall have joy in the fruit which I shall lay up unto myself against the time which will soon come.

And it came to pass that the servants did go and *labor with their might*; and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them; and they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things. (Jacob 5:71–72; emphasis added)

The Doctrine and Covenants confirms that with the restoration of the gospel in 1830 the Lord was directing his servants to labor in the vineyard for the last time (D&C 33:3; 39:17; 43:28).

Examples of missionary valiance in the book of Alma help us see that laboring with love and diligence is necessary in taking the gospel to every creature. An exulting Ammon delighted that the Lord had made him and his brothers, known collectively as the sons of Mosiah, “instruments in the hands of God to bring about this great work.” He added, “Behold, the field was ripe, and blessed are ye, for ye did thrust in the sickle, and did reap with your might, yea, *all the day long did ye labor*; and behold the number of your sheaves!” (Alma 26:3, 5; emphasis added). Later in his discourse, Ammon explained

why he and his brothers had undertaken such a dangerous mission to their erstwhile enemies, the Lamanites: “My beloved brethren, we came into the wilderness *not with the intent to destroy our brethren, but with the intent that perhaps we might save some few of their souls*” (Alma 26:26; emphasis added). And, as he declared, the missionaries were willing to suffer “all manner of afflictions” so that they “might be the means of saving some soul” (v 30).

Alma the Younger, a close friend of the sons of Mosiah, echoed the same feelings regarding his own missionary labors: “I know that which the Lord hath commanded me, and I glory in it. I do not glory of myself, but I glory in that which the Lord hath commanded me; yea, and *this is my glory, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy*” (Alma 29:9; emphasis added).

When he and the sons of Mosiah conjointly went among the Zoramites to bring them to the fold of Christ, Alma pleaded in prayer, “Behold, O Lord, *their souls are precious*, and many of them are our brethren; therefore, give unto us, O Lord, power and wisdom that we may bring these, our brethren, again unto thee” (Alma 31:35; emphasis added). In our modern day, President Spencer W. Kimball has declared:

May we emphasize again that numbers are incidental and secondary to our main purpose, which is the same as that of our Heavenly Father—to bring to every soul the gospel which can open the doors to eternal life for man. Our objective is not for power or domain, but totally spiritual. And to every nation and people which opens its borders to the gospel will come unbelievable blessings. (“When the World Will be Converted” 12)

The Scattering and Gathering of Israel

In reality, what we Latter-day Saints are doing with our missionary endeavors is seeking out scattered Israel. A high majority of converts to the Church were members of the House of Israel before they were born (see Deut 32:7–8). When missionaries bring them the restored gospel, they hearken to the same voice and spirit that they obeyed in our premortal existence. When they submit to baptism, they confirm the covenant they made in a previous sphere.

Nephi, interpreting Isaiah chapters 48–49, declared that “the house of Israel, sooner or later, will be *scattered upon all the face of*

the earth, and also among all nations” (1 Nephi 22:3; emphasis added). Then, once the scattering among all nations had occurred, and after their previous knowledge of the gospel had been confounded, Nephi explained, “The Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the Gentiles, yea, even upon the face of this [American] land” (v 7). Then “a marvelous work among the Gentiles” will arise and be “of great worth” unto “all the house of Israel, unto the making known of the covenants of the Father of heaven unto Abraham” (1 Nephi 27:8–9). The Lord will “make bare his arm *in the eyes of all the nations*” and take “his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel” (v 11; emphasis added). All Israel will be “brought out of obscurity and out of darkness” to “know that the Lord is their Savior and Redeemer” (v 12).

Later in his teachings, Nephi made a similar summary of these House of Israel teachings:

And it shall come to pass that my people, which are of the house of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions; and *my word also shall be gathered in one*. And I will show unto them that fight against my word and against my people, who are of the house of Israel, that I am God, and that I covenanted with Abraham that *I would remember his seed forever*. (2 Nephi 29:14; emphasis added)

Conclusion

Early in his development as a prophet, Nephi was tutored by an angel and granted many visions of the latter days. “And it came to pass that the angel spake unto me, saying: Look! And I looked and beheld many nations and kingdoms” (1 Nephi 13:1). Yes, we have in our day more than 200 nations and kingdoms in the world, which now has a population exceeding 5.3 billion. Each one of these human beings is a child of the same God. Earlier in this chapter, we noted that Nephi reminded us that “the Lord esteemeth all flesh in one” (17:35). In 1978, the First Presidency declared: “Based upon ancient and modern revelation, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints gladly teaches and declares the Christian doctrine that all men and women are brothers and sisters, not only by blood relationship from common mortal progenitors, but also as literal spirit children of an Eternal Father” (Palmer v). As he arrived at the 1993 Parliament

of the World's Religions, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles said the following to the *Church News*:

We are all together on Planet Earth, and we need to talk to one another, promote understanding, mutual respect and tolerance for each other's viewpoints that are held sacred. We are all sons and daughters of one Eternal Father. We're literally brothers and sisters, so we have much in common. . . . I feel the things that unite us are greater than the things that separate us.¹ (Avant 3)

With these principles in mind, let us take seriously the Lord's charge which is the basis for this presentation: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mormon 9:22). By so doing we will increase our faith, we will witness mighty miracles, and we will avoid the damning nature of the destructions that will come upon the earth. The Book of Mormon, the keystone of our religion, obviously is a strong tool in witnessing to us of the importance of this work and in the actual accomplishing of the Lord's command.

In October 1974 President Spencer W. Kimball declared:

Our goal is nothing less than the penetration of the entire world. Our new office building is a world building with four giant maps, each showing a particular part of the globe. We are not promised that the whole world will believe. Evangelization of the world does not mean that all men will respond, but all men must be given the opportunity to respond as they are confronted with the Christ. (*Teachings* 545)

How can we participate in this enterprise of taking the gospel to every creature? First, we can live righteously under the constant guidance of the Holy Spirit so that, by virtue of our Christlike lifestyles, others will be motivated to turn to the Lord. Second, as President Kimball often urged us, we can pray continually that the Lord will open more doors of nations to the preaching of the gospel. Third, we can prepare our children and grandchildren who are "branches" or extensions of ourselves to go on missions and to be qualified in every necessary way to be superb missionaries. This includes encouraging them to develop their talents, to learn other languages, and to make the most of their educational opportunities. Fourth, we can share the gospel with friends, co-workers, and neigh-

¹ The full text of Elder Nelson's formal talk is printed in Russell M. Nelson, "Combatting Spiritual Drift—Our Global Pandemic." *Ensign* (Nov 1993) 23:102-08.

bors as the Spirit guides us to approach them. Fifth, as our individual finances allow, we can contribute to the ward missionary fund, the general missionary fund, the general Book of Mormon fund, or the Church's humanitarian fund, each of which helps take the gospel to all the world. And, sixth, we can prepare now to go on missions as couples, when our family and financial circumstances are in order.

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