



ARIZONA GILBERT MISSION

FROM PRESIDENT AND SISTER WHEELER

TEACH REPENTANCE AND BAPTIZE CONVERTS

World-Wide Missionary Broadcast, January 25, 2017



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January 25, 2017, in the setting of a council meeting, members of the church missionary executive council gave instruction to missionaries throughout the church. **The purpose of the broadcast was to teach and improve missionaries' focus on their doctrinal purpose: "teach repentance and baptize converts to the gospel of Jesus Christ."** It is the charge the Savior gave to his apostles and it is the same responsibility given to our modern-day apostles and to us as missionaries to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The missionary purpose is to teach the doctrine of Christ. "More than anything else, we want our missionaries ... to have the doctrine of Christ engraved in their heart—rooted deeply in the marrow of their bones," Elder Russell M. Nelson instructed mission presidents in 2015.

Keep in mind the sequence stated in the missionary purpose. Faith in Jesus Christ leads to repentance. True repentance is "repentance *unto* baptism." The doctrine of Christ is taught by the Savior in 3 Nephi 11 and 27 and explained by Nephi in 2 Nephi 31. Missionaries should understand this doctrine and be able to teach it in simple, clear terms. It is not complicated, and we must not make it complicated.

The doctrine of Christ is that we must have faith in Jesus Christ, repent, be baptized, receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and endure to the end to be saved in the celestial kingdom of God. Missionaries are called to teach that doctrine. The scriptures instruct servants of the Lord to "say nothing but repentance" (D&C 6:9).

When individuals clearly understand the doctrine of Christ, their desire to change behavior or repent increases. The individual, missionary and investigator, behave differently, and desire to be more obedient to commandments.

Missionaries must practice repentance themselves to effectively teach others. At the end of the day, missionaries should review the activities of the day and ask, "Did I teach faith, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost and endurance to the end?" In all lessons teach repentance. "All things are gathered into one." Each part of the doctrine is essential for the accomplishment of the whole—eternal life.

Do not skip any of the steps. Do not move too quickly to bap-

tism. People must learn why they need to repent and how to repent. Missionaries help individuals to repent by giving invitations to repent and people commit to act on those invitations. Every lesson should include these invitations and commitments. Missionaries follow-up on commitments with praise and excitement. When commitments are not kept, we go back and re-teach the principle, helping individuals understand why keeping commitments is repentance or change and brings us to greater faith in Jesus Christ.

Conversion is not an event that ends at baptism. Converts must be taught to increase their faith through study, prayer, promptings of the Holy Ghost, church attendance, service and paying tithing.

How do missionaries continue to focus investigators on baptism?

- Baptism is not a single event. Baptism should be put in the context of the entire doctrine of Christ.
- Promptings of the Spirit will help missionaries know when to invite individuals to be baptized.
- Missionary should **not** take baptism out of conversations. We should always talk about the importance of baptism. "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."
- We should talk about baptism and we should think about and plan for baptism.

What does a missionary do when people do not accept invitations?

- Be devastated.
- Bear testimony
- Try to understand the concerns of the person you are teaching. Be patient, the timing is personal.

How do missionaries establish the church?

- Grow the ward by teaching and retaining.
- Do what you are asked to do. Evidence of your work in establishing the church is when you teach the whole doctrine of Christ, connect converts to members, connect with less active members by building their faith.
- Missionary's paramount responsibility is to teach repentance and baptize converts

In the Arizona Gilbert Mission We Teach Repentance and Baptize Converts!

Elders and Sisters thank you for being outstanding examples of faithful missionaries. Sister Wheeler and I love you and want the best for each one of you in your lives, both as missionaries and in your future lives. Following the prophetic counsel we recieved this past week will bless your life and bless those you teach in miraculous ways. This letter contains some notes and thoughts from the broadcast. Study and follow these principles and your own personal promptings as well.

We have witnessed miracles in the past several weeks as we have refocused our hearts and thoughts on our true purpose – to invite others to come unto Christ through applying and living Doctrine of Christ. As we live closer to Chirst and His doctrine we become better examples and teachers. Please strive to be worthy to carry His message to the world.

As Elder Bednar taught us, it is important that missionaries are the vessel for the Lord to bring the Holy Ghost *unto* the hearts of the people. That is a very important idea to understand and live. We have the responsibility to be worthy vessels so that we can deliver the message with the power of the Spirit to their hearts, then the investigator has to invite the spirit into his or her heart. The missionary is set apart to lead others toward Christ as a worthy, valiant, and obedient vessel. The Holy Ghost is the true teacher!

TEACHING THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

“The members of the Quorum of the Twelve share a sacred charge with missionaries. The most important thing the Twelve do and the most important thing missionaries do is testify of the Savior and invite all to come unto Him.” (Elder Neil L. Andersen)

Faith in Jesus Christ As a missionary, always keep His name on your lips, and be prepared as the prompting comes to testify of Him. Speak of His doctrine, of faith in Him, of His Atonement, repentance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end. This is your purpose. This is your charge.

We testify of Christ as we teach the doctrine of Christ. This doctrine is explained in simplicity in 2 Nephi 31, 3 Nephi 11, 3 Nephi 27 and throughout the scriptures. It is not complicated. We are commanded to keep our teaching simple.

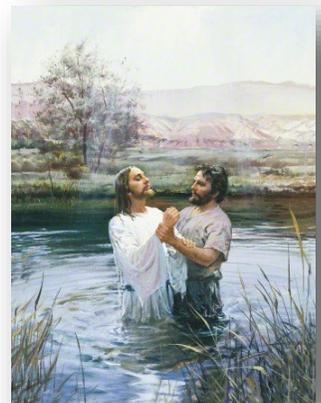
Your first responsibility is to help lift the faith of a man, woman or child from wherever they are to a greater faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement. By increasing your own understanding of the Atonement your missionary effectiveness will increase.

Introduce people gently, but powerfully, to the scriptural teachings of the Book of Mormon. From the beginning chapters of 1 Nephi through Moroni, the beautiful explanations and illustrations of the power of the Savior’s Atonement fill the pages. Learn to love this powerful spiritual nourishment from the Book of Mormon so that you can share it.

Repentance *Preach My Gospel* states: “You are called to represent Jesus Christ in helping people become clean from their sins . . .To come to the Savior [a son or daughter of God] must have faith in Him unto repentance.” Be careful not to move too quickly from your powerful witness of faith to the challenge of baptism without sufficient emphasis on teaching each investigator about the critically important principle of repentance. We teach repentance and baptize converts.

One of the significant challenges of our day is that many people you teach do not understand why it is necessary to repent and do not know how to repent. You must guide them.

Repentance is critical to true conversion. Faith in Jesus Christ brings a desire to turn away from sin. As a man or woman begins to change, the burden of sin is lightened. As they continue, the power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ will eventually eliminate all the guilt and pain and replace these feelings with peace and confidence. Missionaries, your testimony and your teaching becomes the conduit through which a person begins to act in Faith.



Baptism Do not ever be afraid to teach baptism as you speak of faith and repentance. Don't be afraid to challenge yourself and engage your investigators to baptism. Talk about baptism. Set goals that point to baptism. Be open with your mission president and other leaders about who you are teaching and their preparations for baptism. If you are not having success, ask for help from others who are baptizing. If you have few who are progressing, don't feel sorry for yourself. Find others to teach.

Gift of the Holy Ghost The Holy Ghost is vitally important to both the missionary and to the investigator. "If ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do." 2 Nephi 32:5

Endure to the end This process of enduring should be a joyous and Spirit filled experience as we become more fully sanctified and pure. "The first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins;

And the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart; cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and a perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come when all the saints shall dwell with God." Moroni 8: 25-26



QUOTES FROM BROADCAST:

We can baptize everywhere
Don't say it can't happen
Don't lose the flame
Believe you can
Build faith
Teach repentance
Testify of Christ

KEY INDICATORS SIMPLIFIED

To help mission presidents and missionaries focus on teaching repentance and baptizing converts, the list of reported key indicators has been simplified to the following:

- Investigators baptized and confirmed
- Investigators with a baptismal date
- Investigators who attend sacrament meeting
- New investigators

Missionaries are encouraged to continue following principles taught on pages 138-39 of *Preach My Gospel*, including teaching with a member present, helping others make and keep commitments, and contacting referrals. However, only the four key indicators listed above will be reported.

CHANGES TO MISSIONARY SCHEDULE

The following missionary schedule guidelines were announced in the broadcast January 25, 2017 to mission presidents and missionaries. These guidelines will help missionaries **be more productive, set more inspired goals, plan more effectively, be more healthy, and better use their agency to make righteous decisions about how to spend their time.**

DAILY SCHEDULE

Morning Activities—6:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

- Arise (6:30 a.m.)
- Pray
- Exercise (30 minutes)
- Shower, eat breakfast, prepare for the day
- Plan (30 minutes)
- Personal study (60 minutes)

Daytime Activities—10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

- Proselyte
- Companion study and lesson preparation (30-60 minutes)
- First Twelve Weeks training (30 minutes, if applicable)
- Language study (30-60 minutes, if applicable)
- Lunch (30 minutes) and dinner (60 minutes)

Evening Activities—9:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

- Return to living quarters (9:00 p.m.)
- Write in journal
- Prepare for bed, and pray
- Retire to bed

PREPARATION DAY SCHEDULE

Morning Activities—6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.

- Arise (6:30 a.m.)
- Pray
- Shower, eat breakfast, prepare for the day
- Plan (30 minutes)
- Personal study (30 minutes)

Preparation Day Activities—8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

- Laundry
- Grocery shopping
- Clean living quarters and automobile
- Communicate with family and mission president
- Lunch and dinner
- Study
- Recreation and exercise

Evening Activities—6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

- Proselyte
- 9:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
- Return to living quarters (9:00 p.m.)
- Write in journal
- Prepare for bed, and pray
- Retire to bed