

Testimony

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Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

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My dear brothers and sisters, it is a humbling circumstance and responsibility to face a group of servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, which you are. I express my love, appreciation, and admiration for each one of you. Many I know personally, others I have come to know in the course of the wonderful teaching we have been receiving, and I express my love and admiration to each of you.

I also join in expressing appreciation for the excellence of the teaching that we have received. From all of the messages—some delivered from this pulpit, others in the rooms in which we have met that I have been privileged to drop in on—I think I have visited with each of the groups that have been taught, and I have been amazed and appreciative of the excellence of the teaching, which I feel qualified to judge as a former educator.

Some time ago, I pondered and wrote about a principle that I feel impressed to share with you at the conclusion of this marvelous teaching that we have received. The principle is that our strengths can become our weaknesses. The strength of the four days that we have been taught is just incalculable. I have been humbled as I thought about all that our mission leaders have been taught that they

can and should do. The list is very long and it threatens to become all-consuming. If it does, that is a weakness that can arise out of the strength that we have. Already you have been cautioned, appropriately, not to neglect your families.

Second, I would suggest that in the necessary busyness that will inevitably be your lot for the next three years, that you be careful, as you are caught up in doing wonderful, good, and better things, that you not let your time be so co-opted that you do not have time to ponder. In pondering, we open ourselves to the revelation we must have. Some revelation simply does not come in busyness. It comes in the quiet hours of the morning. Make sure you leave time to ponder, lest the strength of the wonderful teaching you have received here displaces the opportunity to do what in the long run is best and most essential: to have the time and the susceptibility for the quiet promptings of the Spirit.

There is one more, less important, thing that you might want to teach the missionaries. In the midst of the wonderful advances we have had in technology, in *Preach My Gospel* and in the various materials that have been placed at your disposal to teach them, there is a very real possibility that we will assume that the people we teach have had a similar advance in

their susceptibility to the things of the Spirit. In fact, the opposite is true. The amount of knowledge of spiritual things, the number of people who are in touch with spiritual things (the number of people who pray, the number of people who are acquainted with the Bible)—indeed, the number of people who believe in and love God in our population—is declining. There is a very real possibility that we, or the missionaries we teach, will assume too much when we are teaching, that we will start at this level [gesturing high] to teach things that are wonderful and true, but neglect to lay the foundation [gesturing low] that needs to be laid with the people that we teach. If we do that, our strength can become our weakness.

We must remember all that the scriptures teach about the foundation which must be laid. The way we lay that foundation is probably very different than it was a generation or two ago because the world has been changing.

I close with my testimony. We learn from modern revelation that to some it is given to know that Jesus is the Christ, and to others it is given to believe on their words. I am one who knows, and I will tell you briefly what I know. I have come to know this gradually

over the course of my life and also in the course of my calling.

In the Doctrine and Covenants we read that an Apostle is called to be a witness of the *name* of Christ in all the world—not a witness of Christ in all the world, for that is the function of any person who has received the gift of the Holy Ghost, whose mission is to testify of the Father and the Son. I am a witness of Christ, but I have in addition to that a calling to be a witness of the *name* of Christ. And the name of Christ, as learned from studying the scriptures, is the authority of Christ, the authority of His priesthood. It is the mission or the work of the Savior, His Atonement and His resurrection. And it is His essence, what He has become, which we are destined to become if we proceed on the path prescribed by the plan of our Father in Heaven.

And so I testify of the name of Christ, and I thank my Heavenly Father for that calling, and for the sacred responsibility that I share with you of being a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ on the basis of the testimony of the Holy Ghost planted in my heart and in your hearts. I am grateful for that, and I testify to you of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose work this is and whose servants you are. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.