

Testimony

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Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

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Elder Nelson, we are all indebted to you and your associates of the Missionary Executive Council for this wonderful, inspiring seminar.

And to you presidents and wives, it is impossible, literally—it was and it is and it always will be—to say to you how much we love you, how impressed we are by you, and how miraculous you are to put your lives on hold, accept a call in a moment’s notice, and go wherever the Lord sends you. We talk to the men about these calls and usually talk to the women—but we almost never talk to the children—and we are fully aware of their sacrifice, their loyalty, and their love. You tell them that we acknowledge that, and that we pray for them as we pray for you. If you think we do anything in this seminar to add to your faith, I don’t think we can tell you how much you add to ours. We love you and acknowledge you, and are devoted to you forever.

One word of comment and a testimony: In about an hour or so, you are going to be leaving here and you will be taking 130 different roads, you will be trying to find 130 different mission homes, and you will be trying to find your way to 130 different mission offices. You will be trying to find 30,000 or so missionaries, plus priesthood leaders, members and investigators—the

legion who await your arrival—130 different roads and lots of people to find. May I suggest a 131st road for all of you to travel in common, and that is the road to Damascus.

I ask you not to worry as much about finding your missionaries or your mission home or your priesthood leaders and members as much as I ask you to find the Lord Jesus Christ.

Somewhere out there is a moment on this road in which you are to be knocked on your back. This seminar is in some ways an invitation and a preparation for that encounter. For some, it could come dramatically and in an instant. For many and perhaps most, it will be more gradual; it will be over time. In any case, it should have an impact for 36 months and more. It should have an impact forever; it is an essential encounter. In all your finding, we ask you to find the Savior and Redeemer of the world.

Consider this verse culminating what Elder Maxwell once called the second greatest sermon ever put in print: “For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?”¹—King Benjamin’s final question after a wonderful, instructive sermon. It is my final

question to you in this seminar. How can we know a master whom we have not served, who is a stranger to us and far from the thoughts and intents of our hearts?

The answer to those questions will be the measure of your mission. We have a lot of key indicators, but the greatest of all key indicators will be the answer to those questions. It is not reportable. It is not publishable. It cannot be shared or compared. It is as private and personal as that sacred grove of which these young, beautiful missionaries just sang.

Somewhere out there for each of you is that road to Damascus, that road to Palmyra, that road to Gethsemane, and that road to Calvary; ultimately the road to glory. God bless you to find it and ask the two questions Paul (Saul) asked when that moment came to him. He asked only two questions, “Who art thou, Lord?” and “What wilt thou have me to do?”²

¹ Mosiah 5:13.

² Acts 9:5–6.

I testify that this is the Church and kingdom of God on earth. I am more certain of that than that you sit there and I stand here. I am more certain of that than anything I know in time or eternity. God is our Father and Jesus is the Christ. They appeared to a boy prophet and the world has never been the same since, and it must not be and cannot be until the Savior comes again.

I testify that the keys of the priesthood are restored, that in this Church alone—in this Church alone—is the saving power of redeeming covenants and ordinances that God requires of all His children to experience someday, somewhere, somehow if they will. To that end I offer you my love, send you forth with my conviction, and ask only for the opportunity to come and be with your missionaries. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.