

Why Should I Serve?

Missionary Service

Most senior couples report that serving a mission together was the most spiritually rewarding adventure they ever experienced.

While attending the World Affairs Council in Los Angeles, California, in June 2002, President Hinckley said, “We now have altogether some [thousands of] retired men and women serving in a meaningful missionary capacity for this Church throughout the world. The number is growing. They go where they are called. They serve where they are needed. Friendships are established; skills are shared; opportunities are opened for those who will never forget the men and women who have come among them in a spirit of entire unselfishness to teach and do good. They receive no money. They go at their own expense. The measure of their devotion is unlimited. The fruits of their efforts are beyond calculation. . . . The great genius of this Church is work. Everybody works. You do not grow unless you work. Faith, testimony of the truth, is just like the muscle of my arm. If you use it, it grows strong. If you put it in a sling, it grows weak and flabby. We put people to work. We expect great things of them, and the marvelous and wonderful thing is they come through. They produce” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “Inspirational Thoughts,” *Ensign*, Mar 2006, 2-6).

The Lord has declared that missionary work is the responsibility of all who follow Him. “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” (Matthew 28:19–20).

Senior members of the Church enjoy a lifetime of Church service and experience that has prepared them to help move the Church significantly forward in all parts of the world. When senior members are willing to *walk by faith*, their great reservoir of experience helps strengthen leaders and members across the earth who are responsible for implementing Church programs in their local area.

The following scriptures highlight how we walk by faith while performing missionary work. “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5–6).

“Neither take ye thought beforehand what ye shall say; but treasure up in your minds continually the words of life, and it shall be given you in the very hour that portion that shall be meted unto every man” (D&C 84:85) .

“And whoso receiveth you, there I will be also, for 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” (D&C 84:88).

Senior members of the Church can, by the goodness of their lives and the strength of their testimonies, exemplify Christlike attributes and help find and prepare people the full-time missionaries can teach. “Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great. Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind” (D&C 64:33–34).

We receive great blessings from living the gospel, and the Lord provides us with opportunities to share these great blessings with others. The Lord spoke of the joy that comes into our lives when we share His gospel:

“And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father! And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy if you should bring many souls unto me!” (D&C 18:15–16).

The following revelation highlights our opportunity to be part of this great work and the blessings that come to those who answer the call to share the gospel:

“Now behold, a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men. Therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day. Therefore, if ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work; For behold the field is white already to harvest; and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perisheth not, but bringeth salvation to his soul; And faith, hope, charity and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualify him for the work. Remember faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence. Ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Amen” (D&C 4).

Statements from the Brethren about Senior Missionary Service

Elder David B. Haight, “Couple Missionaries—‘A Wonderful Resource,’” *Ensign*, February 1996.

Elder Robert D. Hales, “Couple Missionaries: A Time to Serve,” *Ensign*, May 2001.

Elder Robert D. Hales, “Couple Missionaries: Blessings from Sacrifice and Service,” *Liahona*, May 2005.

Elder Russell M. Nelson, “Senior Missionaries and the Gospel,” *Ensign*, November 2004.