

# Every Member A Missionary

## (Outline)

OPENING SONG: "Go on a Mission"

OPENING PRAYER:

POEM OR SCRIPTURE  
READING:

"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!" D&C 18:15

LESSON:

"Let Your Light Shine" OR  
"Sowing Missionary Seeds" OR  
"A True story From Mexico" OR  
"Member-Missionary Journal" OR  
"Be a Missionary"

**Teenagers**

"Everyday Missionary Members" OR  
"Members Are the Key"

ACTIVITY:

"I Can Be a Missionary Now!" Game OR  
"The Good Shepherd" Game

CLOSING SONG

"Want To Be A Missionary Now"

CLOSING PRAYER:

REFRESHMENTS:

"Crunchy Orange Cookies"

# GO ON A MISSION

With energy ♩ = 88-100

Words and Music by Pat Kelsey Graham

*Introduction*

Get read - y, — get set,

Go on a mis - sion. — Friend - ship — and fel - low - ship. —  
Stud - y — the scrip - tures and pre -

Go on a mis - sion. — Friend - ship — and fel - low - ship. —  
Stud - y — the scrip - tures and pre -

you can do it too. — Get read - y, — get set,  
pare in ev' - ry way. —

you can do it too. — Get read - y, — get set,  
pare in ev' - ry way. —

Go on a mis - sion. — Tell ev' - ry - one you know the  
Help teach the gos - pel in the

Go on a mis - sion. — Tell ev' - ry - one you know the  
Help teach the gos - pel in the

1. gos - pel is true. — Get day. — (Piano)  
lat - ter

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## LESSONS

### Let Your Light Shine

By Sydney S. Reynolds

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven ([Matt. 5:16](#)).

Sydney S. Reynolds, "Sharing Time: Let Your Light Shine," *Friend*, Oct. 1999, 37

Have you ever been just a little bit afraid of the dark? Have you ever been in a place that was so dark that you couldn't see your hand in front of your face, even with your eyes wide open? If you've ever been afraid of the dark, or been in a deep, dark cave, then you know how welcome a ray of light can be. Even a small light makes a big difference in a dark place.

Jesus Christ taught those who followed Him that they were "the light of the world." He said that you don't light candles and put them under baskets. When you light a candle, you put it on a candlestick so that it gives light to everyone in the room. He told us, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (See [Matt. 5:14-16](#).)

What does that mean?

It means that if you are a good example, if you "let your light shine," then when other people see your good example, they will know that you love Heavenly Father and they, too, will want to honor Him.

How can you let your light shine?

One way is by keeping the commandments and choosing the right. When we are honest, when we keep the Sabbath holy, when we are kind, we are letting our lights shine. When we obey the Word of Wisdom, when we dress modestly, when we use the names of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ reverently, we are letting our lights shine. Each small light makes a big difference!

There is another way we can let our lights shine. Elder Henry B. Eyring's friends call him "Hal." He told a story in general conference about a friend he once worked with. His friend was a good person who loved his family. Elder Eyring never told his friend about the gospel and how families can be together forever.

One day, he heard that his friend had died. Elder Eyring said that he sometimes wonders if he will meet his friend in heaven and his friend will say, "Hal, you knew—why didn't you tell me?"

Now Elder Eyring shares his testimony with people all over the world. When we share what we know about the gospel with others, we are letting our lights shine.

We can be good examples. We can share our testimonies with others. We can be missionaries now and invite our friends to Primary and to Primary activities. Blessings will come to others and our faith in Jesus Christ will grow when we let our lights shine.

#### Instructions:

To make a double-puzzle print family home evening game on card stock. Fold in half on the vertical straight line, and glue the backs together. When the glue is dry, cut out the puzzle pieces on the heavy lines and put them into a small container. Have a family member take a puzzle piece from the container and pantomime (act out without using words or noises) what is shown on the small-picture side of it that we can do to share the gospel. Let others guess what it is, then show the picture and post the puzzle piece, candle-side up. Repeat till the puzzle is finished. Remember, each good thing we do helps our light shine.

#### Sharing Time Ideas

(Note: *CS* = *Children's Songbook*)

1. Work with the music leader to prepare this "Sing-a-Story" (see *Sharing Time Resource Manual*, pp. 26-27).

Briefly discuss missionary work with the children (e.g., do any have siblings serving missions?, were any taught by missionaries?, are any preparing now to go on a full-time mission someday?), and make the point that we all can be missionaries now.

Sing "We'll Bring the World His Truth" (*CS*, pp. 172-173).

Retell "We Believe" (*Friend*, Nov. 1995, pp. 44-46).

Ask, "What will we teach the world?"

Have the children choose and sing one or two of the Articles of Faith songs (*CS*, pp. 122-133). Ask, "How will we testify to people and help them understand?"

Invite some children to stand in pairs like missionary companions and sing "I Know My Father Lives" (CS, p. 5).

Share a story of the importance of not only being a good example but also "opening our mouths" and telling our friends what we know about the gospel.

The next song tells something very important—an investigator must hear the whisperings of the Spirit to know that the gospel is true.

Sing "The Holy Ghost" (CS, p. 105).

When the investigator feels the witness of the Holy Ghost, he or she will want to be baptized. Sing "When Jesus Christ Was Baptized" (CS, p. 102, both verses).

Ask if any of the children have been to a baptism, a very happy time. Missionaries have big smiles on their faces when they are wearing their white baptismal clothes.

Sing "The Church of Jesus Christ" (CS, p. 77).

We can all proclaim His truth. Share the story "Sandy's Missionary Chart" (Friend, Oct. 1998, pp. 36-37).

Explain that sometimes people move away from those they teach, and missionaries return home.

How will new converts remain faithful? How will we remain faithful?

One very good way is expressed in "The Iron Rod" (Hymns, no. 274).

Have the children sing it, then bear your witness that the Lord will bless us as we share the gospel and hold on to the iron rod.

2. Recently Church members have been counseled to not have children pretend to receive callings as full-time missionaries or wear pretend missionary nametags. However, preparing for full-time missions and being "member missionaries" is encouraged.

Have a large world map or a globe available. Have a few children come up and choose a place where they might someday serve a mission.

Ask what they might need to learn about their mission locales? What preparations might they need to make to serve a mission anywhere? (Learn another language, to cook, to work hard, to talk to people, to be kind, to sew a button and mend a rip, to wash clothes, to lead music, to conduct a meeting, to offer prayers, to tell the Joseph

Smith story, to know what we believe [the Articles of Faith], to know the Book of Mormon, to bear testimony).

Let each class choose a few things they think will be important and present one to the rest of Primary by pantomime, reciting, singing a song, role-playing, etc. (1 minute each).

A "Right Here, Right Now" class should be last and should include the things we should all be doing every day to be good examples and to share our testimonies and invite friends to Church meetings and activities.

Conclude by singing "The Things I Do" (CS, pp. 170-171) and sharing your feelings about the missionary work we do by example and by calling.

3. Jesus called His Apostles to be "fishers of men," or, in other words, missionaries. Many stories in the scriptures are about fish. These stories teach us about more than fish. They teach us about the gospel and about the power of God.

Make a simple fishpond (a piece of blue paper cut like a pond to put on the floor). Put cutout fish of different sizes and shapes and colors, each with a paper clip on its nose, "in" the pond. On the back of each fish, write the title of a scripture story about fish or fishers and its reference and, in advance, assign a teacher to tell the story.

Jonah and the Great Fish / [Jonah 1-2](#)

Feeding the Five Thousand / [Mark 6:33-44](#)

The Tribute Coin / [Matt. 17:24-27](#)

Calling the Apostles / [Matt. 4:18-22](#)

"I Go a Fishing" / [John 21:3-6](#)

Broiled Fish and Honeycomb / [Luke 24:36-43](#)).

Make a fishing pole from a stick, a string, and a magnet. When a child pulls a fish from the pond, have the assigned teacher tell that story.

Ask the child what we can learn about the gospel or the power of the Lord from the story, and then have him/her post the fish after it is caught. Help the children recognize the good things they are learning about the gospel from these scripture stories.

Point to the various colors and sizes of fish and explain that we are now "casting wide the gospel net" and that the gospel is for "every nation, kindred, tongue, and people," for young and old, rich and poor, people of all colors and in all places in the world. Just as fishermen love to fish, we find joy when we are "fishers of men" and share the gospel.



Sing "I Want to Be a Missionary Now" (CS, p. 168).

4. Help the children understand [1 Tim. 4:12](#). Explain that even children can be good examples.

Recall together scripture stories in which young people were good examples:

Samuel listened to the Lord,  
Jesus taught and listened in the temple,  
Daniel and his friends did not drink the king's wine.

Tell the story "My 'Buddy,' My Friend" (*Friend*, Oct. 1998, pp. 40-41), about a girl who agreed to befriend a learning-disabled girl and came to love her. (Or choose another story from the Trying to Be Like Jesus Christ section of the *Friend*.)

We need to always live to be worthy to go to the temple and to serve a mission. Post a My Gospel Standards chart, or each individual standard (*Friend*, Feb. 1997, p. 9).

Assemble pictures or objects that illustrate each Gospel Standard. Have the children draw a picture or an object from a bag/box, and match it to the appropriate standard.

Ask questions to help them explain something about their own experience with that standard. Read the whole Gospel Standard as each match is made.

Possible objects:

a picture of a baptism  
a broken plate or cookie jar (honesty)  
a valentine or bandage (kindness)  
a modest article of clothing  
a good book or video tape  
a CD or tape of good music  
the words *bad words* in a barred circle  
a picture of a cigarette in a barred circle  
a picture of a church or a set of scriptures or a journal  
the CTR symbol  
a picture of a temple, a missionary, and/or a bride and groom.

You might have more than one object per standard, depending on time. Sing "I'm Trying to Be like Jesus" (CS, pp. 78-79), "I Will Follow God's Plan" (CS, pp. 164-165), or "I Love to See the Temple" (CS, p. 95).

You might work with the music leader for this Sharing Time and sing a Primary song for many of the standards as the matches are made. Possible songs, all from the CS: "When Jesus Christ Was Baptized" (p. 102, v. 2), "Stand for the Right" (p. 159), "Kindness Begins with Me" (p. 145), "Hum Your Favorite Hymn" (p. 152), "I Want to Be Reverent" (p. 28), "For Health and Strength" (p. 21), "When I Go to Church" (p. 157), "Choose the Right Way" (pp. 160-161).

5. For younger children, tell of good examples you have seen in your ward/branch among the children. Or use the story of George and how he was a good example, even at age five:

The happy, sunshine child of the neighborhood, George wanted more than anything to be a missionary. He took flowers to shut-ins, ran errands, visited the lonely, raked leaves, and always said hello to everyone on his street as he passed their homes.

One day his parents learned what a powerful missionary he was. A neighbor came to see them and said that he and his family wanted to know more about the things that made George such a happy, helpful boy.

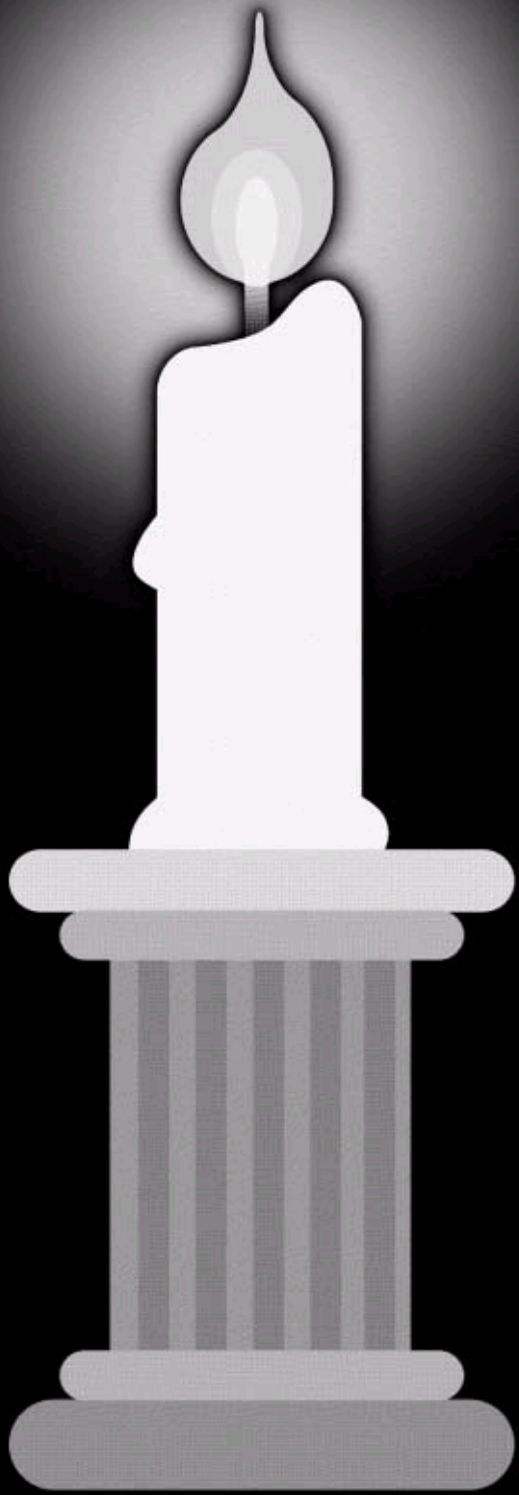
Talk to the children about ways they can be good examples and share the gospel with others. As you sing "Shine On" (CS, p. 144), pass a cut-out paper sun. When the music stops, the child holding the sun tells how he/she can be a good example (by going to church, being kind, helping Mother, telling the truth, inviting friends to Primary, etc.) or tells something he/she knows about the gospel (I love my family, my family love me, I like to hear President Hinckley, I love the stories in the Book of Mormon, etc.).

You might make a large picture-frame sun that you could put around a child's face as he tells what he could do or what he knows. If a child has trouble thinking of something, you can say, "I especially appreciate (child's name)'s example when he (smiles, sings in Primary, helps put away chairs, is reverent, etc.)."

Tell the children that missionaries let their light shine by being good examples and by sharing the light of the gospel. Sing "Seek the Lord Early" (CS, p. 108) or "I Hope They Call Me on a Mission" (CS, p. 169).

6. Other *Friend* resources on missionary work and being an example: Sharing Time (Oct. 1998, pp. 14-15, 43; July 1999, pp. 12-14; and Sep. 1999, p. 35—Ideas 3, 4); Trying to Be Like Jesus Christ (see the table of contents in each issue, starting Sep. 1996); "They Spoke to Us" (June 1998, p. 11); Friend to Friend (May 1998, pp. 6-7); and "Missionary Roll Call" (Apr. 1998, p. 23).





# Let Your Light Shine

Keep the Sabbath holy



Share my testimony



Invite friends to  
Primary activities



Be kind to others



Be honest



Let my light shine by . . .

(Draw a picture of another way  
you can share the gospel.)

## Sowing Missionary Seeds

"Her father was not a member of the Church, and she wanted to help him gain a testimony."

By Gayelynn Watson

The seed is the word of God ([Luke 8:11](#)).

Gayelynn Watson, "Sowing Missionary Seeds," *Friend*, Nov. 1994, 11

Marianne pulled her sweater around her as she walked home from church. She loved autumn. The air was cool and crisp, the trees had turned a beautiful orange and yellow, and the layer of snow on the top of the mountains reflected the sunlight.

Her older brother walked ahead; her mom was still in the meetinghouse library. Marianne knew that when she got home, her dad would be sitting in the family room, reading the newspaper, as he had every Sunday for as long as she could remember.

She sighed and looked down at the paper cup in her hand. Jesus often taught the gospel by talking about seeds. Today her CTR teacher had helped her and her classmates plant seeds and told them about Alma's teachings about faith. Marianne knew that every time she looked at her little plant, she would remember that Jesus wanted her to plant His words in her heart and to always choose the right.

Right now, though, she was thinking about some different seeds—missionary seeds she had learned about a couple of weeks ago at the Primary activity. The Primary president had talked about the ones we plant when we talk to people who are not members of the Church.

Her father was not a member of the Church, and she wanted to help him gain a testimony. She thought about the things she did and said when she was with him. Sometimes she forgot to obey quickly, and sometimes she and her big brother fought. But she was trying her best to be a good example, and she prayed for her father all the time. Today she wondered if maybe there was something more she could be doing. She decided to ask her mom about it.

Right after school the next day, Marianne put on her warmest sweatshirt and went out in the front yard to help her mom plant tulip bulbs. The sun warmed her back, but her face and hands felt the bite of fall. Her mom hummed as she dug the holes, and Marianne put in the bulbs and covered them with the dark, cool dirt.

"I'm glad you came out to help me," Mom said, smiling. "When these come up in the spring, they will be twice as beautiful because we planted them together."

Marianne smiled back, then cleared her throat. "Mom, remember our Primary activity a few weeks ago?"

"The missionary activity?"

"Yes. We talked about setting a good example for our nonmember friends and about sharing our testimonies."

"Those are good things to do."

"Well, I wondered if there is something else I should be doing ... you know, with Dad, so he can be a member too."

Mom thought for a minute. "I think we're doing all we can."

"Well, then, when is he going to get baptized?"

"We just have to be patient, Marianne. Sometimes it takes a little time."

Marianne felt confused. She had a strong testimony that the Church was true. If she could tell him and show him, why didn't her dad see how right it was? She wrinkled her nose and looked at her mother for an explanation.

Mom smiled at her. "Marianne, go in my room and get my scriptures. We'll see if we can find an answer there."

It only took a minute to get the scriptures. Marianne sat on the porch step and handed the worn brown books to her mother.

Brushing the dirt off her hands, Mom carefully turned the pages. She handed the book to Marianne and said, "Read aloud from Matthew 13:3-8 [[Matt. 13:3-8](#)]."

" 'And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

" 'And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

" 'Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

" 'And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

" 'And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:  
" 'But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit. ...' "

"What do you think this parable is saying?" Mom asked.

"Well, it says that not all the seeds that were planted grew. Some didn't have good soil, weeds choked some, and some were eaten by birds." She paused a second, then, with a troubled look, asked, "Do you mean that you don't think our seeds will grow? You don't think that Dad will ever join the Church?" Tears started to gather in her eyes.

"No, Marianne. I do believe that your dad will join the Church. I just don't know when. You see, the seeds we plant are very important, but so is the soil. The heart has to be ready to receive. Your dad has to do that for himself; no one can do it for him or force him."

"But Dad is the best!"

"Yes, he is. He's a great man." Mom thought a minute as she returned to the flower bed, dug in the ground, and placed a tulip bulb in the hole. "Look at these bulbs we're planting. They aren't going to grow now. No matter how we care for them, these tulip bulbs have to lie in the soil all winter long if they are to be ready to grow in the spring. Do you understand?"

Marianne was silent for a moment. "I guess so. We have to set a good example, share our testimonies, and love Dad. Then we have to wait until the seeds are ready to grow, right?"

"Yes, that is right. And while we're waiting, we continue to support him as the head of our home."

"And we can still pray."

"Yes, sweetheart, we always pray. Does that help you?"

"Yes. I feel much better."

"Good. It looks like we're just about done here. Let's finish up and go fix a nice dinner to welcome Dad home from work."

As Marianne was putting the last things on the table, Dad drove in the driveway. She ran to give him a hug. "Hi, Dad!"

"Hi, sweet pea. What have my two best girls been doing?"

The "two best girls" shared a look of understanding before Marianne took Dad's hand, gave him a kiss on the cheek, and said, "Oh, just planting some seeds."

## A True Story from Mexico

by Mary Pratt Parrish

Mary Pratt Parrish, "A True Story from Mexico," *Friend*, Aug. 1972, 14

At first it was very hard for the missionaries to preach the gospel in Mexico for the people were controlled by the dominant church. And when the priests told them not to listen to the Mormon missionaries, most of the Mexican people did not dare to disobey.

About the time the Mexico Mission was established, the poor people of Mexico rose up against their rulers to demand their rights as Mexican citizens. A revolutionary war that lasted for many years made it unsafe for missionaries to be in Mexico.

On three different occasions, the missionaries were withdrawn from that mission. Each time they returned to Mexico they found that the members were more faithful than before and that more of the people were prepared to receive the gospel.

Once when the missionaries were withdrawn from Mexico, a man named Rafael Monroy called on the mission president, Rey L. Pratt,\* to say goodbye.

"President Pratt," Brother Monroy asked, "what will we do in San Marcos? All of the branches have leaders except San Marcos. No one there has the Melchizedek Priesthood."


"Brother Rafael," the president answered, "we will ordain you an elder and set you apart as president of the San Marcos Branch. There you will be responsible to teach the gospel to every member of your little branch."

President Monroy not only taught the members of his branch, but he also taught his nonmember neighbors and friends. During the time the missionaries were not allowed in Mexico, the San Marcos Branch doubled in number of members. Rafael Monroy eventually was shot and killed because he would not deny the gospel.

When the mission was reopened, thirty members of the small branch at Cuantla were waiting at the train station to greet the missionaries when they returned. Twelve children and some young adults began singing songs of welcome. Afterward they shouted, "¡Qué viven los misioneros!" (long live the missionaries), as they showered the elders with confetti.

The missionaries were then taken to a home that had been decorated with beautiful flowers and cedar boughs in honor of this special occasion. Following a delicious dinner, a meeting was held.





President Pratt in his report to the brethren in Salt Lake told of the joy of the people in welcoming the missionaries. Even the children had planned for a program during the evening. President Pratt said, "It was wonderful to note the progress of the children of the branch along lines of study upon which they had been started by the missionaries. Little tots that were babies in arms when the missionaries left got up and recited one or more of the Articles of Faith."

Nor was this the only group that had been active. The Church members in the little branch of San Pedro were proud to show the missionaries a meetinghouse they had built. President Pratt described it as "a humble house where the Spirit of the Lord can dwell." He said, "Only those who have experienced it can know the joy of meeting these dear people after so long an absence. Their faithfulness through seven long years, during which time they have passed through untold suffering, is wonderful."

At the time Mexico was dedicated for the preaching of the gospel, it was prophesied that the time would come when there would be thousands of missionaries there. This prophecy has literally been fulfilled.

On August 25, 26, and 27 a three-day area conference will be held by the General Authorities of the Church in the National Auditorium at Chapultepec Park in Mexico City. This conference in Mexico will include many of the more than 100,000 Spanish-speaking members of the Church in Mexico and Central America.



## Member-Missionary Journal

By Laurie H. Fifield

And if it so be that you ... bring ... one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy ([D&C 18:15](#)).

### Sunday, September 4

Laurie H. Fifield, "Member-Missionary Journal," *Friend*, Nov. 1994, 35

My sister Nancy is on a mission, and she says I, Erin Christensen, should start writing a journal, so here it is.

Today President Schultz spoke in church. He's our stake president. Mom and Dad got really excited about his talk. It was about the rewards of being member missionaries. Mom says we'll talk about it in family home evening tomorrow.

### Monday, September 5

Wow—we've decided to work as a family to have someone ready to hear the missionary discussions. The meetings will be right here at our house. Dad says that we don't even have to know who that person is right now. We just need to pray, have faith, and do everything we can to help as many people as we can to know about the Church. If we do, Heavenly Father will help us.

### Tuesday, September 6

When I said my prayers this morning, I said a special prayer for our missionary work. I hope I can get one of my friends to join the Church. We need more girls in my Primary class!

### Wednesday, September 7

Dad invited the Browns to look at the slides from our camping trip to Maine last summer and have popcorn with us on Friday. They live next door, and Barbí Brown is my best friend. It would be great if they got baptized!

### Thursday, September 8

Dad and I raked leaves for Mrs. Thompson across the street. She's old and can't do it for herself. Dad says that doing things for other people is part of missionary work. I think it made her happy. Her husband died last summer, so she needs help with some things, I guess she's lonely too.

### Friday, September 9

Tonight was great! Mom and Dad showed them the slides, and we ate lots of popcorn. I think the Browns had a good time. After they left, we had a family prayer. I felt really good about our missionary work. I think we're going to have someone ready to listen to the missionaries. Maybe it'll be the Browns!

### Saturday, September 10

I wrote a letter to Nancy today. She'll be happy about our missionary work. I wonder how she gets people to teach on her mission.

### Sunday, September 11

I invited Barbí to go to Primary with me today. She couldn't go because she was going to visit her grandma. Maybe next week. We're having a Primary activity day on Saturday. I'm going to invite Barbí.

### Monday, September 12

We checked out a video from the ward library and watched it at family home evening. It's called "Our Heavenly Father's Plan." I'm pretty sure that my sister shows it to her new investigators. (Those are people who want to know more about the Church.) I'm learning a lot about being a missionary!

### Wednesday, September 14

We pray about our missionary work lots of times every day. I know that we need Heavenly Father's help if we are going to be good missionaries. Barbí and I built a clubhouse in the backyard after school. She said she'd like to come to the activity day on Saturday, but she needs to ask her parents.

### Thursday, September 15

Barbí is going to go with me to the activity day!

### Friday, September 16

Mom and Dad took Mr. and Mrs. Brown to the ward dinner party tonight. It was just for adults, so Barbí and I stayed home and made posters for our clubhouse.

### Saturday, September 17

Activity day was called "Peace Among All Nations Day," and Barbí got to carry the Italian flag to represent Europe. I think she had fun. I sure did!

**Sunday, September 18**

Mom and Dad and I fasted today, even though it wasn't fast Sunday. Dad says that if we fast, we'll be able to get closer to Heavenly Father and He'll help us in our missionary work. I hope so—Barbi still couldn't come to Primary.

**Monday, September 19**

The Browns came over for family home evening again tonight. Mom gave a great lesson about loving our neighbors. I made the treats—graham crackers with chocolate frosting!

**Thursday, September 22**

Dad invited the Browns to hear the missionary discussions next week. They said no. I was sure that they'd come—they'd be great Latter-day Saints! Now what do we do?

**Friday, September 23**

I felt sad all day because the Browns don't want to listen to the missionaries. Then this afternoon the most amazing thing happened! I went to Mrs. Thompson's house to rake leaves again. While I was raking, she came out with some milk and cookies for me, and we sat down on the porch. We started talking about families. She thinks our family is pretty special. I told her that Mom and Dad were married in the Washington Temple and that that means we'll be together forever. She got tears in her eyes and asked me if there was a way she could learn more about being married forever. I said, "Sure—just come over to our house next Tuesday, and the missionaries will teach you." And she's going to come!

**Tuesday, September 27**

We had a busy weekend. Dad talked with Mrs. Thompson Saturday morning, and she said she couldn't wait till Tuesday. So the missionaries came that night and the next night, and tonight too. And she asked to be baptized! Heavenly Father answered our prayers, even though it wasn't the way I expected. The Browns are still our friends, and maybe someday they'll want to learn about the Church and get baptized too. I hope so. Meanwhile, I've already written to tell Nancy the good news about Mrs. Thompson. I guess I know a little about how she feels being a missionary. It feels GREAT!

## Be a Missionary

(Adapted from an April 1975 general conference address. See *Ensign*, May 1975, pages 8-10.)

There are 8 steps to be a good missionary. You can even sing different songs to go with the various steps.

*Missionary Work Begins at Home:  
A Conversation with Elder S. Dilworth Young  
President of the First Council of the Seventy*

*Ensign: Most Church members have probably observed the recent emphasis on missionary work, but for those who haven't, and for those who would like to know more about it, what is the nature of the increased missionary thrust?*

*Elder Young: A little over a year ago, in April 1974, President Spencer W. Kimball gave his magnificent address on missionary work at a seminar for the Regional Representatives of the Council of the Twelve. The address was made into a film for all members of the Church to see, and you printed the address in the October *Ensign* with excerpts of it on the cover. That was very appropriate, because that talk is really a revelation to us right now. To me, this is living revelation to the Church today. It is the word from the mouthpiece of the Lord to us.*

*President Kimball has spoken both at the seminar and at general conferences on this same subject. He has called for us to "lengthen our stride." He told us that the Lord has called for more missionaries, for more converts; and all this is based on the responsibility the Lord has always given to the Church and to all its individual members. He has repeatedly said the field is white, ready to harvest; go reap it. The Lord has made it clear that we must get busy and find the honest in heart who are around us. So, in 1974, the Lord reminded us through His prophet that we need to give more attention to the assignment to warn our neighbors, to find the honest in heart.*

*Ensign: It seems clear that the Brethren are laboring hard to call the attention of the members to their personal missionary responsibilities. Is this perception accurate?*

*Elder Young: Definitely! There is a tendency among many of us to think that as long as we have fulltime missionaries in the field we are taking care of our missionary responsibilities. But this alone does not fill out the picture. The Lord has told us that we all have missionary obligations. As an institution, the Church must have missionaries; as members, each of us has a personal calling to be a missionary.*

If a person has a sincere testimony, he will want to share it with his friends and neighbors. He will want to broadcast it everywhere; he will be enthusiastic about it. He won't want to hide his light under a bushel.

The fact is that the Lord has told every person to warn his neighbor—and that means many of us need to get busy. Simply because the Church has fulltime missionaries in the field does not relieve any individual member—not you, and not me—from the Lord's commandment to personally tell others about the gospel.

*Ensign: Let's say that I've now received the message that I'm to share the gospel with others. Is there a ward or branch calling to help me in fulfilling my responsibility?*

Elder Young: Yes. As a member, you should know you can share the gospel with anyone at any time; but you can do it in an organized way or in a disorganized way. Both ways can be productive, but there is greater likelihood of not integrating your converts into the Church if you share the gospel in a disorganized manner.

The organized manner of sharing the gospel consists of knowing how to use the Church's structure. In every ward and branch there is a ward mission leader who helps in missionary efforts. This leader, in company with his fellow seventies, teaches the high priest group leaders and elders quorum presidencies the missionary methods of the Church; upon invitation, the mission leader may train all quorum members.

*Ensign: What is family-to-family friendshipping?*

Elder Young: Family-to-family friendshipping is being good neighbors. Being good neighbors is part of the second great commandment: "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

If we as Latter-day Saints are living the gospel, we shall be concerned about a neighbor who is ill and minister unto him or render to the family whatever assistance seems appropriate. We shall be the first to welcome new families, to assist them in moving in, to help them become oriented to a new community, to help them feel welcome. Our children will help to integrate their children.

Family-to-family friendshipping is applying the Golden Rule. It is the gospel in action.

*Ensign: Are there any special programs that the Church provides to members who are attempting to fulfill missionary obligations?*

Elder Young: Yes. From time to time your ward mission leader should inform you that the ward or stake is having an open house for nonmembers. These may be held several times a year, and in case you have not yet introduced your nonmember

friends, let's call them the Smiths, to the Church, this might be a consideration for you. These open houses are something like mini visitors centers. They have displays and information and possibly even a film about the Church.

But you don't have to wait for these occasional open houses to show the Smiths what the Church is like. Nearly all of the Church's functions, activities, and meetings—from Primary to Relief Society, from Aaronic Priesthood and Young Women's activities to ward banquets—are appropriate places to bring nonmembers. We hope that much of what we do in the Church is organized in such a way that it is a missionary opportunity, that you can bring nonmember friends and, by seeing these activities, they will also become interested in participating.

*Ensign: What if, at some stage in my efforts with the Smiths, I think I need a missionary pamphlet on a gospel subject. How do I obtain one?*

*Elder Young: Your ward mission leader is your helper. He can supply you with the literature that you feel you need as you begin to interest the Smiths in the gospel.*

*Ensign: How do we let a family like the Smiths know about the Church's family home evening program?*

*Elder Young: Introducing the family home evening program is a very good idea for many reasons. One reason is that the father isn't the head of the house in many of the world's families. The gospel teaches that the father is the head of the house, and family home evening installs him and magnifies his presiding concern for his family's welfare.*

It would open a new world to the Smiths if you were to invite them to a special home evening with your family, using it as an example of how the Church teaches us to grow closer together, talk together, play games together, pray together, sing together, and enjoy each other's company. But you should remember that you should not hold such a home evening on a Monday night. Monday is the time for your own sacred family home evening, and you must not put that night aside for the sake of another family. You must not neglect the souls in your own house; you need to talk with them, discuss gospel application in their own lives. They are your first responsibility. After you have had the Smiths over for a special family home evening, they may express the desire to begin such a program in their own family. At that point either you or the ward mission leader could hold another family night with the Smiths, showing the father how he could preside as family head.

*Ensign: What happens when the Smiths want to know more about the Church? Do I automatically call the ward mission leader, or is he only my line of defense when I feel I need more help than I can give?*



Elder Young: Your question indicates that you are beginning to understand your responsibility. Since the Lord has recognized that all of us won't have the time to be masters of all things, he has provided the Church with specialists to assist you in your responsibilities. These include ward missionaries when and if you need them. You will know when to call the missionaries if you seek inspiration. When you feel the time is right for this move, call your ward mission leader and inform him that the Smiths want to know more about the gospel and have agreed to meet with the missionaries.

Perhaps the first meeting could be held in your home, where you and your family can bear testimony. This step is called the referral.

*Ensign: We used to hear a great deal about referrals. Is there a desire to put increased emphasis on the referral?*

Elder Young: Yes, but not in the way it has been traditionally thought of. Just giving the name of a nonmember to the ward mission leader is not a referral. A referral involves your kindling interest in a friend until he wants to know more. I heard a humorous story about that.

Recently a father and his small daughter got on a plane and couldn't sit together. The little girl sat on the aisle, and a big heavy man sat by the window next to her. She asked him, "What do you know about the Mormons?" He didn't think much harm could come from talking to a little girl, so he said, "Not very much. Why?" She asked, "Would you like to know more?" In the interest of pursuing a conversation with this little girl, he said, "Yes." She said, "Wait a minute, and I will get my dad."

*Ensign: Does the Church have a program to teach all members their responsibilities in missionary work?*

Elder Young: We have our conferences and our meetings where the missionary message is continually preached. We publish the *Ensign*, where members can read and examine and ponder the details. And to assist the members in changing their old habits and putting on the new habits of the gospel, the Church has produced some new films and filmstrips to train members.

First, in an effort to learn about missionary responsibilities, the message of President Kimball, "Go Ye into All the World," is presented as a motion picture.

Next, we have produced three filmstrips to help train members and leaders: first, "I Need a Friend," a filmstrip suggesting how all members may participate in the "new move-in" activity; second, "Sharing the Gospel," a two-part filmstrip for members and leaders—part A is for members and part B is for leaders; and third, "Preparing

Missionaries," a filmstrip for priesthood leaders, suggesting ideas for better preparing potential missionaries.

You can ask your ward missionary leader or ward librarian for these filmstrips; they suggest a number of good ideas and open up valuable areas for family discussion.

*Ensign:* You mentioned raising missionary-minded children. What are some of the things you would say to parents about raising sons to go on a mission?

Elder Young: There certainly isn't much point in us doing all of this missionary work if we don't teach our children and families to follow through for the next generation. President Kimball said the Lord needs more qualified, worthy missionaries, missionaries burning with a desire to share the gospel.

If I were a parent, I would start at a very early age to tell my children stories about missionaries. I would help my sons save money for a mission. I would let my sons realize that it is not a case of deciding whether or not they want to go on a mission versus going on to school or work, but a question of how they will respond to the call from the Lord. Is your son going to debate about it with himself, with the bishop, or with his parents, or is he going to accept the Lord's call?

In my opinion, the greatest excitement for a boy is to hear stories of hardship concerning missionary work. There is nothing in this world as exciting as hardship. Get a group of boys together and take them hiking in a rugged area. Tell them the mountain you are going to hike is rough, and if they hike it they will succeed in this goal, that they will become men; tell them that it is going to make them sweat, and that they'll hurt all over. But tell them that if they complete the hike, they will remember it forever, and the boys will line up for the hike.

It's the same with missionary work. Tell your sons about the early missionaries—how they traveled without purse or scrip, how some were mobbed, how the Lord intervened to preserve their lives, and how the honest in heart responded when they heard the gospel message. If you relate these stories, you will have any boy want to be a missionary, want to work with the Lord in the battle of carrying truth to the ends of the earth. A boy wants something challenging, something of value, something that benefits others. He wants to know God our Father and be a full partner with him in his work. With family prayers and parental inspiration concerning their sons, parents can help build missionary fervor in their sons until the sons have no doubt about serving the Lord. Of course, it is easy to see that a family that is constantly friendshiping neighbors and friends is showing the finest example of missionary work and demonstrating their regard for it. In this manner, a child is able at an early age to see the joy the gospel brings to those who accept it.

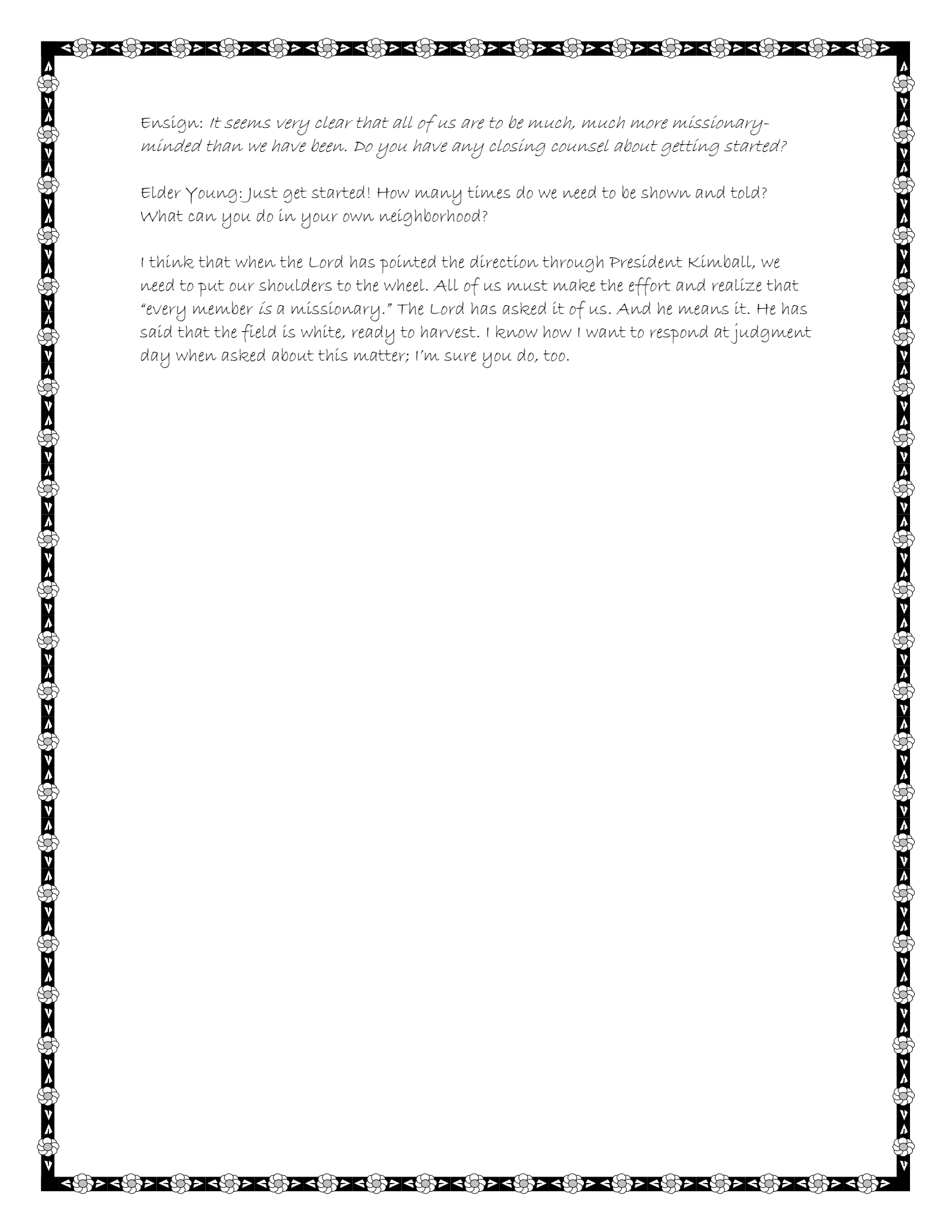
*Ensign: What about learning languages and other skills prior to a mission call?*

Elder Young: First, every child has the right to be taught social amenities. Every boy ought to learn how to be polite, how to handle himself when visiting others, proper table manners, the etiquette of standing when women or older men come into a room, and the manners of his country and those peculiar to his culture. This is fundamental. Tragically, some of our missionaries don't have this knowledge. Some years ago we had 13 missionaries who had just arrived at the mission home. They were at the dinner table and halfway through the meal when one of the elders suddenly stood up, yawned, stretched his arms high over his head, sat back down, and continued eating. Social courtesies must be taught early and consistently in the home.

It is also good to study and learn a language, but it does not mean that the missionary will be sent to a land where that language is spoken. The most important thing is that he has learned a language. That means that he can learn another language. We give potential missionaries a test to see if they are able to learn a language. The young man with four years of successful study of Spanish can probably learn Japanese quicker than a boy who has had no language at all. Our concern is not whether a potential missionary knows a language, but whether or not he can learn one.

*Ensign: Are there any other aspects of the ward missionary program that you would like to comment on?*

Elder Young: It is extremely important that the Saints throughout the Church know about the financial needs of the missionary program. In financial terms we have two divisions of missionaries: first, there are missionaries who have saved enough for their mission or who, with the help of their parents or quorums, can handle their mission call; second, there are missionaries in other countries where neither the missionary nor his parents nor even his quorums are able to supply all of the necessary finances. In these cases, after the missionary, his parents, and his quorum have done all that they can for his support, the Seventies quorums and others of the Church try to fill in the remaining needed amount. Thus, there is a great need for financial assistance to the Church missionary program. We hope that every family will want to be contributing to someone's mission. If a family lives in the mission field, such support could mean inviting the missionaries to dinner on occasion, thus cutting down the missionaries' food costs. Many families might consider adding a regular amount to the missionary fund when they pay their tithes and offerings. Other persons, some who are retired, could not only consider fulfilling a mission themselves, but should consider financially supporting someone else. After their basic financial needs have been met, they might ask themselves: Is not all that I have from the Lord? How can I help him? Does he need some of it now?



*Ensign: It seems very clear that all of us are to be much, much more missionary-minded than we have been. Do you have any closing counsel about getting started?*

Elder Young: Just get started! How many times do we need to be shown and told? What can you do in your own neighborhood?

I think that when the Lord has pointed the direction through President Kimball, we need to put our shoulders to the wheel. All of us must make the effort and realize that "every member is a missionary." The Lord has asked it of us. And he means it. He has said that the field is white, ready to harvest. I know how I want to respond at judgment day when asked about this matter; I'm sure you do, too.

## Teenagers

### Everyday Missionary Members

By Kellene Ricks Adams  
Assistant Editor

Members show how using President Ezra Taft Benson's four keys to sharing the gospel can become a way of life.

Kellene Ricks Adams, "Everyday Missionary Members," *Ensign*, July 1993, 13

President Ezra Taft Benson has counseled all members of the Church to become more involved in building the kingdom of God: "We are to testify of the greatest event that has transpired in this world since the resurrection of the Master—the coming of God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ to the boy prophet. We are to testify of a new volume of scripture—a new witness for Christ." (*Ensign*, Sept. 1990, p. 7.)

President Benson outlined "four proven keys" in member-missionary work: striving to obtain the Spirit, acquiring humility, loving people, and working diligently.

As Church members all over the world follow the prophet's counsel, they experience the joy of missionary work as they not only see loved ones grow in the gospel but also see a strengthening and refining of their own testimonies.

### The Spirit

#### Las Vegas, Nevada

It was their son, Jon, who impressed upon Annette and Darrell Andersen the importance of the Spirit in missionary work. The Andersens had just recently moved to Nevada when their son left on his mission. A few months later, the couple were called to be stake missionaries in the Las Vegas Nevada Green Valley Stake. Frightened by the prospect of approaching strangers, Annette shared her feelings in a letter to her son.

She later recalled: "I was worried about offending others, about not having all the scriptures memorized, about not knowing all the answers, about not doing things right. But then Jon wrote us, thrilled with our new calling and with a little word of advice: 'Mom, the most important thing for you to remember is that you're being led by the Spirit. The Holy Ghost will touch the people—you just have to be willing to follow his guidance.'

"You know," Annette continues, "that's so true. We're certainly not perfect, but as we strive to follow the Spirit, doors are opened, lives are changed, testimonies are gained

and strengthened. We are finding people who want to meet with the full-time missionaries and hear the discussions.”

The Andersens have found that most of their missionary work is done by living as good examples and by always letting others know that they are members of the Church. They have been able to make several appointments for the full-time missionaries to teach the gospel.

Even before they were called as stake missionaries, they had seen lives changed by the gospel message. “One of my first experiences was with my hairdresser, a woman in her thirties who didn’t seem the type to be interested in religion at all,” observes Annette.

Before long, however, she confided to Annette that she was frustrated with her lifestyle and wanted to make some changes. She started to take the missionary discussions, and baptism soon followed. In January, she was married in the temple.

“We just start out by letting people know we are Latter-day Saints. The rest usually follows,” Sister Andersen continues. “They’ll often have a question about the Church, and that opens up the door of conversation. You take it from there, listening to the Spirit and taking advantage of opportunities to share the gospel. There is always a fireside, a broadcast, an activity, a family home evening, or a Church meeting that you can invite your friends to attend. You don’t have to say a lot. Just rely on the Lord and the Spirit.”

### **Humility** **Dumbarton, Scotland**

“As a very young boy, I can remember wanting to be a missionary like Dr. Livingstone and some of those other great missionaries in the past,” recalls Alan McGlashan. “I dreamed of doing missionary work in the African countries, or something of that nature.” However, Brother McGlashan’s first missionary experiences would come much later in life and in his native Scotland.

Alan has learned the importance of the second key: acquiring humility. Owner of an engineering consulting business and a member of the Dumbarton Ward in the Glasgow Scotland Stake, he was introduced to the Church some years ago by missionaries tracting in his neighborhood. His interest in missionary work was reawakened as he saw the missionaries humbly doing the Lord’s work, but after joining the Church he discovered he was too old to serve as a full-time missionary. He resolved to play his part in whatever other ways might be open to him, and he prayed for guidance and missionary opportunities. Just months later he was called to serve as the ward mission leader.



As he has sought humility, Alan has been blessed with many opportunities to schedule appointments for friends and acquaintances to listen to the full-time missionaries teach the discussions. One of his experiences includes sharing the gospel with his friend who lives in Greece.

"I hadn't seen him since I joined the Church about five years previously," he remembers. "I had planned a holiday with him and his family, and prior to leaving I fasted and prayed about how best to approach the task. So confident was I that the Lord would open the way that I even packed white clothing for the baptism and took the mission home address with me.

"When I arrived, things didn't go quite as planned and the hope of achieving my goal began to recede."

However, Alan had an opportunity to meet with the mission president, who explained the challenges that potential converts to the Church sometimes face as a result of leaving their established churches.

"I didn't know if I wanted to put my friend through that, or whether our friendship would weather it," he recalls.

However, when the missionaries came to visit, Alan introduced his friend to them. "He started asking questions, and the teaching began. It was the best missionary discussion that I have ever witnessed. My friend is not yet baptized, but a firm foundation has been laid. And I received a witness that this was what the Lord wanted of me."

Brother McClashan works closely with the full-time missionaries, often calling them to ask for copies for the Book of Mormon or giving referrals as he travels and meets people who are interested in finding out more about the Lord and his church.

### **Loving People Baltimore, Maryland**

For John and Beth Powell, sharing the gospel is a family affair. They frequently have missionaries over for meals, and the whole family loves fellowshiping investigators. Recently, their six-year-old son gave out eight copies of the Book of Mormon by himself. But the Powells believe that the greatest missionary work they do is within the walls of their own home.

"Really, the most important responsibility we have here on earth is to help our children understand Heavenly Father's plan," notes John. "Sharing Heavenly Father's plan of salvation with others is just a natural extension of that."

The Powells have learned the importance of President Benson's third step: loving the people. And along with that love has come patience.

"Our responsibility as member missionaries, as I see it, is to let people know we care about them," observes John, "and that we believe this is the true path back, and that this is the direction they ought to consider. But if they don't take it, we love them anyway."

"Several of the people we have worked with have taken years to accept the gospel," he continues. "Some still haven't. But there is an old Chinese proverb about a tree that is planted. You water it and nurture it for five years, and nothing happens. But in the sixth year it grows one hundred feet. A testimony can be like that. Sometimes we water and nurture for years before seeing any growth. But the watering and nurturing is what being a member missionary is all about."

"You know," Beth observes, "President Benson has a few recurring themes as he counsels and leads us. For instance, reading the Book of Mormon. I think one of those recurring ideas has also been sharing the gospel. I take that very seriously, our lives center on that. And our children know and have seen that people have happier lives when they know who the Lord really is and that there is a meaning to this life."

Like the Andersens, the Powells have found that an effective way to do missionary work is to live the gospel and to bring up the topic of religion naturally. "The first time we ever became involved in missionary work was when a colleague and I were driving past the temple and he started asking questions. You can't really set a time or a place for missionary work because it crops up at all different times. We just have to be ready for it, ready to answer the questions as openly and straightforwardly as we can."

"Missionary work is a part of living," concludes Brother Powell. "I can't imagine being a member of the Church and not being a member missionary."

### **Working Diligently** **Kingston, Idaho**

Working diligently at planting and nurturing gospel seeds is something Zack and Lynn Galaviz are familiar with. Thirteen years ago, they joined the Church because Church members faithfully fellowshiped and loved them. Since then, they have shared that same fellowship and love with others.

"I won't say it's easy," says Zack, who believes that his straightforward approach to life is also an asset in missionary work. "The hardest thing about missionary work is the time it involves. There's nothing hard about doing the work, but it takes time."

"It takes time to invite people over to dinner. It takes time to notice new people at church and welcome them. It takes time to take people to Church activities, firesides, programs, and meetings. It takes time to schedule appointments with the full-time missionaries and have the discussions taught in your home. It takes time to call people on the phone, asking them about their day. It takes time to talk to them when they call you. But love and caring is what this is all about.

"But the time is worth it because I've seen the changes in people. I've seen the changes in my own family. The time is definitely worth it."

Lynn agrees. "It does take time and effort on your part," she observes. "Friendships take time. The easy part is asking someone if they'd be interested in learning more and if they are willing to meet with the full-time missionaries. The hard part is getting to that point.

"A member missionary is more a friend, not necessarily someone who teaches lessons—that's the calling of the full-time missionaries. Becoming a member missionary really means for us to become more aware of the simple things. Things like greeting people and talking to them, really talking to them about what is going on in their life.

"Missionary work increases my faith," Sister Galaviz continues. "As you live the gospel and get excited about missionary work, it's like being reconverted. And when somebody you know gets interested in the gospel, it's like you're going through the conversion process again. We can get lukewarm sometimes. Getting involved in missionary work converts us again, strengthens our own testimonies, and gives us courage to share those testimonies."

"I bear witness that God lives," President Benson has said. "He hears and answers prayers. ... I bear witness that this is the Lord's church. ... He presides over it and is close to His servants. He is not an absentee Master. Of that you can be assured. ...

"May God bless us to testify effectively, to bear a strong testimony to the truthfulness of this glorious message." (*Ensign*, Sept. 1990, p. 7.)

## Members Are the Key

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By Elder M. Russell Ballard  
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

From a satellite broadcast on conversion and retention given at the Provo (Utah) Missionary Training Center, 29 August 1999.

You and I must do everything we can to see that every member of the Church is completely fellowshipped and enjoying all the blessings the gospel has to offer.  
M. Russell Ballard, "Members Are the Key," *Ensign*, Sept. 2000, 8

I desire to give some counsel on how to improve member-missionary work in our stakes and wards. (References to stakes and wards also apply to missions, districts, and branches.) Because all of you have some influence in building and strengthening your local units, I would like you to envision the future of your ward and stake. Look out two or three years from now. What do you want your ward and stake to be like? Would you like to see some of your less-active friends and relatives serving as Sunday School teachers or in the elders quorum or Relief Society presidency? What will today's recent converts be doing? What about your nonmember friends and neighbors? Can you envision any of them worshipping with you at sacrament meeting and the great joy you will feel as you participate with them and the ward members?

What the future will look like in your ward and stake will depend on the effectiveness of your combined efforts in making the Church a spiritually enriching, robust community of Saints. No one wants to envision a future in which the hours you spend planning, coordinating, working, and following through result in many people being baptized but only a few of them living as dedicated, joyful Latter-day Saints. Unfortunately, we are not doing all that the Lord expects of us. You and I must do everything we can to see that every member of the Church is completely fellowshipped and enjoying all the blessings the gospel has to offer.

President Gordon B. Hinckley has reminded you and me of our responsibility to be coworkers with the Lord in bringing about His plans for the Church. In a satellite broadcast President Hinckley said:

"The Lord has laid upon us a mandate to teach the gospel to every creature. This will take the very best efforts of every missionary—full-time and stake. It will take the very best efforts of every bishop, of every bishop's counselor, of every member of the ward council. It will take the very best interests of every stake president and his council, and particularly the Member Missionary Coordinating Councils" ("Find the

Lambs, Feed the Sheep," *Ensign*, 1999, 107). It will take the best efforts of every member.

In nearly every talk, President Hinckley calls upon us to do more in helping new members and the less active. In Maracaibo, Venezuela, he said: "I plead with you ... that you will put your arms around those who come into the Church and be friends to them and make them feel welcome and comfort them and we will see wonderful results. The Lord will bless you to aid in this great process of retention of converts.

"You know what it has been like. Most of you here are converts to the Church. You know something of the loneliness that you felt when you came into this Church. Now will you please accept that challenge to warm up and be friendly to every man, woman and child who is baptized into the Church? It all depends on you" ("President Hinckley Urges More Missionary Effort in Venezuela," *Church News*, 14 Aug. 1999, 7).

Brothers and sisters, President Hinckley cannot say it more clearly! We must listen to what he is teaching us. It is time for us to wake up and do what our prophet is asking us to do!

You cannot establish the Church in your own area unless you produce real growth—that is, not just growth on paper or in the number of membership records in your ward or stake. Real growth entails increasing the number of participating, dedicated Latter-day Saints.

Without a true and effective partnership between leaders, members, and stake and full-time missionaries, growth will be a function of who the missionaries can find by themselves and who by themselves are able to remain active and faithful. Experience shows, brothers and sisters, that when missionaries find and baptize converts without member support and involvement, such converts usually struggle mightily to maintain their tender faith and to become integrated into the community of Saints.

### **Making It Happen**

How can you help bring about real growth and build the Church in your local area? We have volumes of research in the Church that show it doesn't happen very efficiently by missionaries knocking on doors, delivering media products, and teaching those they can find by themselves. Yes, many baptisms can and do result. The missionaries are wonderful at fostering a marvelous awakening in the hearts of many of those who let them teach them. But does that bring about the real growth of the Church? Oftimes not, because those brought in without member support are less likely to progress as faithful Latter-day Saints.

So how can you effectively bring about the growth of the Church? The blueprint is in the 19 June 1998 First Presidency document entitled "Proclaiming the Gospel and Establishing the Church." This document emphasizes a balanced effort. It states, "As leaders, members, and full-time missionaries work together in conversion, retention, and activation, new members will more fully enjoy the blessings of the gospel and the Church will be established more firmly."

What does this mean? It means you will not successfully build up the Church in your ward or stake unless you hold a steady and deliberate course of simultaneously increasing your (1) convert baptisms, (2) convert retention, and (3) activation of less-active members. If you do not focus on accomplishing all three of these enabling goals simultaneously, you will certainly not achieve the end goal of establishing or building up the kingdom of God.

The missionaries are an important resource for accomplishing these goals. But, brothers and sisters, you are the essential and critical key to real growth. When, as members, you participate successfully in conversion, retention, and activation in a balanced effort, you will make an extraordinary contribution to the growth of the Church in your area. I can absolutely promise you that!

### **The Key: Members**

You may be wondering how critical members are to Church growth. What I am going to share with you is the result of extensive research that we have done.

Currently, of all investigators participating in a first discussion in the United States and Canada, only one in 10 is member-referred. In other words, only one in 10 of those beginning investigation is found through member efforts. But among those who progress through the discussions and get baptized, more than half are found through the members. Member referrals are dramatically more likely than other types of investigators to be baptized—about 10 times more likely, according to our latest research!

Why do members have such a powerful effect? Our research has shown that members need to fulfill three critical roles or functions in order to support conversion, retention, and activation. They are (1) modeling, (2) informal teaching, and (3) integrating. Let me elaborate.

1. *Modeling.* Members model what it truly means to be a Latter-day Saint. Members' example of the gospel in action has a powerful effect because it makes the restored gospel become much more relevant, meaningful, convincing, and desirable to those observing them. For example, nonmembers who observe your lifestyle and behavior learn a great deal about your impressive Christian values and are inspired by the

fruits of the gospel exhibited in your life. Therefore, every member should radiate the joy, the confidence, and the warmth of being a part of the true Church of Jesus Christ.

2. *Informal teaching.* Members informally teach the significance and power of the restored gospel by offering their insights, sharing their personal experiences, and answering questions. Some of the most memorable and powerful teaching moments occur when members share what the gospel has meant to them and their families. Also, when nonmembers or less-active members have questions or concerns, they often feel most comfortable sharing them with trusted member friends.
3. *Integrating.* Members help others develop close relationships with ward members. They do this, for example, by taking them to Church meetings and activities and helping them feel a part of the ward family. I don't think members raised in the Church can fully appreciate the overwhelming challenges new members face when they try, without the help of member friends, to fit in and become fully active in the Church. It takes attentive friends to make new members feel comfortable and welcomed at church—to make them feel like “fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” ([Eph. 2:19](#))—to make them feel like they belong to the body of the Saints.

Have you ever moved to another ward? In many cases it can take a long time before you develop close relationships with other members of your ward, before you feel like a fully fellowshipped member. How much more difficult it must be for new converts! Brothers and sisters, we must follow President Hinckley's counsel and put our arms around all who come to the ward.

You can see how member involvement is vital to convert retention and in bringing less-active members back into full activity. President Hinckley has said that every new member needs “a friend, a responsibility, and nurturing with ‘the good word of God’ ” (“Converts and Young Men,” *Ensign*, May 1997, 47). Full-time missionaries are invaluable in this, but the friendship of other members, including stake missionaries, is also needed.

Here's where the ward council comes in. The ward council is critical to making sure converts and recently activated members are properly nurtured. It is in the ward council that the various organizations in the ward become involved in this process.

However, assigned friendships, if they do not develop into real friendships, rarely can be powerful influences for good. Therefore, the work of the ward council in caring for these converts and recently activated members must be more than just making sure proper assignments are made. The assignments are a means to an end—that of

effectively watching over one another. The ward council must also focus on that end and do all they can to make sure that the assignments have their desired effects in the lives of these precious souls. Capture the vision that the Relief Society, Young Women, Primary, Young Men, elders quorums, and high priests groups can become the most powerful friendship resource we have in the Church. Reach out early to those being taught and reactivated, and love them into the Church through your organization.

Brothers and sisters, I hope you are getting this point: Member-missionary work is powerful and essential to establishing and building up the Church. But our current level of member-missionary work is inadequate. We can and must do better. In the United States, only about 35 percent of active members consistently do member-missionary work.

Moreover, over the past decade, member participation in missionary work has declined. President Hinckley has described a cross section of the U.S. and Canadian investigator pool in 1987 as being 42 percent member-referred. Ten years later that figure declined to 20 percent. This also represents a decrease in the actual number of member referrals. President Hinckley has said that this downward trend must be reversed (see *Ensign*, May 1999, 107).

### **The Importance of Councils**

May I share a few suggestions with you who belong to a ward or stake council. Are you using the ward and stake councils effectively as they were intended? Don't let them become meaningless exercises in organizational bureaucracy. The way some leaders conduct council meetings, you would think they really believe in a fourteenth article of faith:

"We believe in meetings—all that have been held, all that are now scheduled—and we believe there will yet be held many great and important meetings. We have endured many meetings and hope to be able to endure all meetings. If there is a meeting, we seek after it."

We hope you do not have a fourteenth article of faith operating in your wards.

Putting all humor aside, brothers and sisters, please don't waste your time. Your council meetings need to be more than an opportunity for calendaring and coordinating, for giving and receiving reports. They should be a setting for discussing how you can bring the blessings of the gospel into the lives of others. You should use them for sharing your challenges and brainstorming solutions. That takes more than passive attendance on the part of council members. Each of you must actively work together in creative and inspired ways.



There is no greater friendship tool in the Church than a caring Relief Society president watching over those who have been recently baptized or reactivated. That is also true of all of the elders quorum and auxiliary leaders. All members of the ward council have a vital role in member-missionary work.

### **A Great Joy**

My beloved brothers and sisters, may God bless you that you may be filled with the great enthusiasm that is demonstrated by our prophet. My humble prayer is that you will find it a great joy to follow him and do what he is asking us to do. I bear witness that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and that this is His Church we are responsible for. I promise you that with His love and direction we can accomplish all we need to do to enhance and improve the conversion, the retention, and the activation of His precious children.

### **To Stake Presidencies**

Lead by example. It is hard to inspire those you lead to nurture nonmembers, recent converts, and less-active members if you are not doing it yourself. In your council meetings with your bishoprics, ask for their ideas for member participation in missionary work. What has worked well in one ward might be helpful in another. Be prepared to share these ideas and successful experiences with other stake presidents and your area leaders at the Member-Missionary Coordinating Council. Work with your bishops individually to clarify their real-growth goals for their wards and their plans for accomplishing them.

Discuss with the full-time mission president how his missionaries can best be of use in your stake.

Provide inspired leadership to the stake mission presidency and the stake missionaries.

### **To Bishoprics**

Envision the future you want for your ward and how you will accomplish it. What are your real-growth goals? Decide what balance of efforts will best generate real growth in your particular ward. How can you most effectively mobilize the full-time missionaries, the stake missionaries, and your members to accomplish these goals? Use your ward council to discuss and develop these goals and strategies. When you plan and implement activities, always think about whether these activities optimize opportunities for members to model the gospel, to informally teach, and to socially integrate investigators, new members, and less-active members. Ward activities can be wonderful settings for members to perform these valuable functions in a natural, comfortable way.

use your Convert Baptism Checklist wisely. Too many bishops use it merely to check off whether an event has occurred or an assignment has been made. While that is important, it is even more important to use it to discuss each convert's quality of experience as a new member of the Church. Do they have friends at church? Are they having positive experiences in a calling? Are they truly being nourished by the good word of God? If not, what can your council members do to support their development as active Latter-day Saints? Invite other auxiliary members to attend as necessary so that they too can participate in fulfilling the needs of those still growing into full activity. This should be possible in every ward. In fact, less than 3 percent of wards in the United States and Canada receive on average more than a couple of converts each month. That means 97 percent of these wards can do much, much more in conversion, retention, and activation.


### **To Stake Mission Presidencies and Stake Missionaries**

Do you know what stake mission leaders and stake missionaries spend more time doing than anything else? Our research shows it is attending meetings, planning, and coordinating. These are good things to do, but sometimes we spend too much time reporting what we have done or planning what we will do. In contrast, stake mission leaders and stake missionaries invest considerably less time in what makes the most difference: personally interacting with their nonmember and less-active member friends and recent converts. This is the best way you can model the joys of the gospel.

Stake missionaries, some of the most important work you will do among your own nonmember and less-active acquaintances will be to reach out and to love them. Let them feel your love of the gospel and the Church. Let them experience the joy you feel from living the life of a disciple. Invite them to be a part of your wonderful experiences in the Church.

As you work with the full-time missionaries, make your contribution a personal, meaningful one. Do more than be present at their lessons with investigators or converts. Take an active role in finding out how you can best participate. What topics will be discussed? What experiences and insights do you have that might contribute to the spiritual growth of this person?

As you work with new converts, develop a real relationship with them and gain their trust. Let them know that you are available as a resource to them to answer their questions, to support them in their challenges to live an LDS lifestyle, and to help them in any other way. Facilitate their integration into the ward by inviting them to activities and introducing them to others.



Work with ward members to determine how they can best involve their nonmember and less-active friends and relatives. Help them feel the joy of going beyond feeding the missionaries, driving the missionaries to appointments, or merely sitting in on a missionary discussion. Help them participate in the change that comes over people when they embrace Jesus Christ and open their hearts to His love. Help members lighten up when interacting with nonmembers and less-active members. Research shows that often members are far more uptight and uncomfortable than nonmembers in gospel-related interactions. Show them how to relax and enjoy those wonderful experiences and how to emanate the joy they have and the love they feel for their Heavenly Father. When guided by the Spirit, they can create many opportunities for modeling, informally teaching, and integrating in natural, comfortable, and even spontaneous ways.

Work closely and coordinate with the full-time missionaries toward accomplishing a truly balanced effort. Be with them in correlation meetings so that this effort is one work—that of bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of God's children (see [Moses 1:39](#)).

## Activities

### I Can Be a Missionary Now!

By Corliss Clayton

#### Instructions

Corliss Clayton, "I Can Be a Missionary Now!" *The Friend (Liahona)*, Oct. 2001, 9

As you play this game, you will learn some things you can do to be a missionary now and to prepare for a mission later on.

- 1 Open the magazine and place it where all the players can see the game board.
- 2 Have each player put a button or another small object on **START**. Then have the first player roll a die and move his or her playing piece that many spaces, following the hand directions.
- 3 If a player lands on a mission-preparation space, have him or her read about how to prepare for a mission and then take another turn. If a player lands on a space with a picture of missionaries, the player must think of and tell about another activity that will help him or her prepare for a mission—and then take another turn.
- 4 Remember, on a mission you should never go anywhere without your companion. So whoever finishes the game first keeps taking his or her turn and helps another player reach **FINISH**. Continue the game until all players have finished.

#### START

Pray for the missionaries.

Study the scriptures.

Save money.

Invite a friend to Primary.

Learn to cook.

#### Family Rules

1. Make beds















2. Brush teeth

Obey family rules.

#### FINISH

# I CAN BE A MISSIONARY NOW!

By Corliss Clayton

 <p>START</p>		 <p>Pray for the missionaries.</p>			 <p>Study the scriptures.</p>
					
 <p>Save money.</p>					
			 <p>Invite a friend to Primary.</p>		
	 <p>Learn to cook.</p>		 <p>Family Rules 1. Make beds 2. Brush teeth</p> <p>Obey family rules.</p>		 <p>FINISH</p>

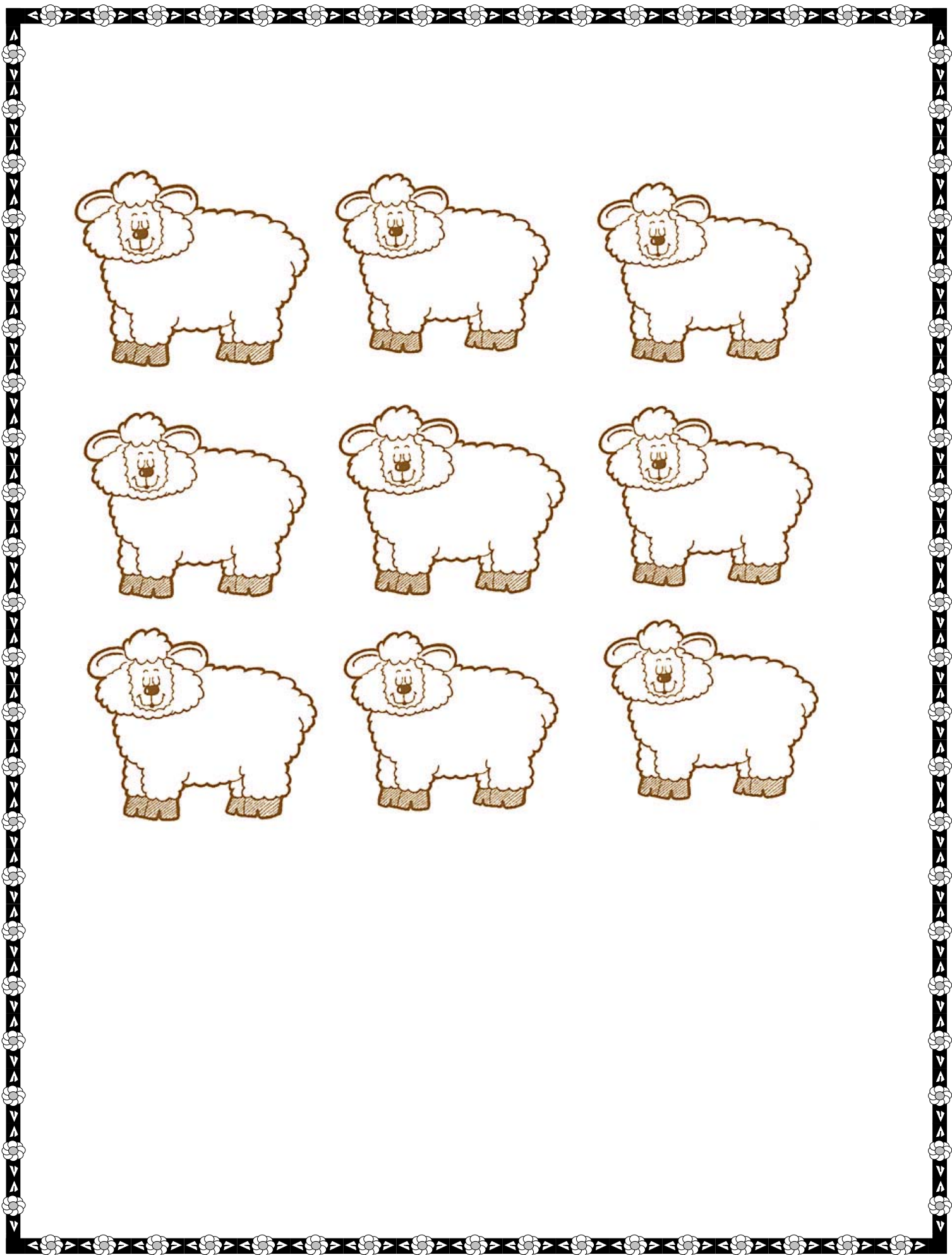
## Good Shepherd Game

Written by Jennifer Hughes

Jennifer Hughes, "Good Shepherd Game," *Friend*, Mar. 2001, 33

If a lamb is lost, a good shepherd finds it and brings it back to the fold. Jesus Christ is our Good Shepherd because He rescues us when we are lost. Before playing the Good Shepherd Game, glue this page to poster board and let the glue dry. Color each lamb a different color or a different pattern of colors. Then cut out the lambs. Play the game in family home evening by hiding a lamb and letting a member of the family find it. If you wish, you can bleat "baa" louder or softer as he or she gets closer to or farther from the lost lamb. Let everyone have a turn being the shepherd. Or each family member can take turns finding all nine lambs.

You can play another game called Please Don't Eat Shawna the Sheep. Lay the sheep on a flat surface. Then place a small candy on each sheep. One family member leaves the room while everyone else chooses one sheep to be Shawna. The person comes back and begins to eat the candies one at a time. When the person tries to eat Shawna, everyone yells, "Don't eat Shawna!" That person's turn is over. Replace the eaten candies and let someone else have a turn.





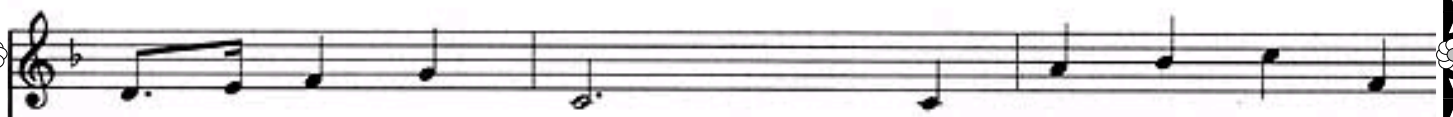
# I Want to Be a Missionary Now

Brightly

Words and music by Grietje Row



1. I want to be a mis - sion - a - ry now. I don't want to  
(2. I) want to tell my friends a - bout our church And the hap - pi -  
(3. Then) I can be a mis - sion - a - ry now. I don't have to



wait un - til I'm grown. I want to share the  
ness it brings to me. I'll tell them how the  
wait un - til I'm grown. I'll live each day the

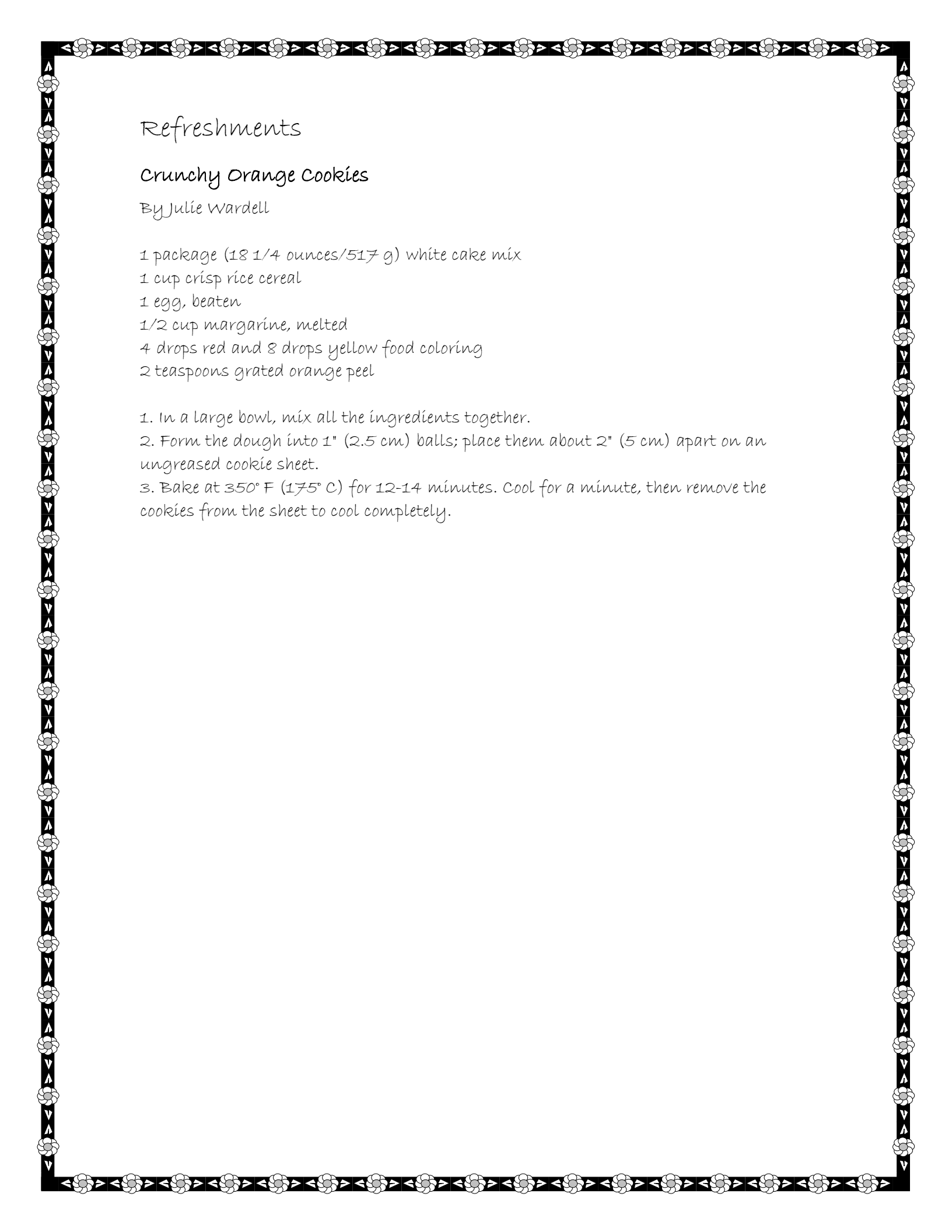


gos - pel while I'm young, For I have a tes - ti - mo - ny of my  
gos - pel was re - stored, Tell them how the Book of Mor - mon came to  
best that I know how, And they'll see I have a tes - ti - mo - ny



own. 2. I  
be. 3. Then of my own, a tes - ti - mo - ny of my ve - ry own.





## Refreshments

### Crunchy Orange Cookies

By Julie Wardell

1 package (18 1/4 ounces/517 g) white cake mix  
1 cup crisp rice cereal  
1 egg, beaten  
1/2 cup margarine, melted  
4 drops red and 8 drops yellow food coloring  
2 teaspoons grated orange peel

1. In a large bowl, mix all the ingredients together.
2. Form the dough into 1" (2.5 cm) balls; place them about 2" (5 cm) apart on an ungreased cookie sheet.
3. Bake at 350° F (175° C) for 12-14 minutes. Cool for a minute, then remove the cookies from the sheet to cool completely.