

*We're going*

# 'THE EXTRA MILE'



## IN THE AUSTRALIA NORTHEAST MISSION

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Dear Fellow Missionaries:

Enthusiasm in the Lord's work, is the key to the success we are enjoying in August, the first full month of the new Australia Northeast Mission!

In recognition of your enthusiastic, faithful, diligent and enduring service, the Lord has blessed the mission with 11 great conversions last week! We can really count our blessings when we realize that the total of 11 conversions are primarily families, that is the Daykin family of 5 at Bundaberg; the Mathews family of 3 at Mackay, and the Baillie couple who are newly married at Mt. Isa. The other conversion was a fine male adult at Mt. Isa. We are indeed reaping the blessings for following the admonition of the Prophet Joseph Smith when he directed that the Gospel be taken to "families," and that we should not teach wives or children or servants without first acquiring the blessings of the father and head of the house. Keep up your good work... "Your enthusiasm is the key to your success."

Although I don't have specific approval from Elder Dan Milton Ainsworth, I'm going to share with you his most spiritual experience for the past week:

"My most spiritual experience this week came on Saturday when we baptized the Daykin family. This was the first family that I have been able to teach all new discussions to, and to baptize. Seeing the whole family; father, mother and three children, dressed in white and ready for baptism was like having a bit of the celestial kingdom here on earth. I have never felt such joy as I did when I saw Bro. Daykin baptized and as each member of his family was baptized he greeted them with a hug and a kiss, this real love he has for his family made me think of the love our Father in Heaven has, and feels for his children as they accept the Gospel and are baptized. My wish right now is that I would be able to give each missionary a particle of the joy I felt in seeing this family baptized, because if each missionary could, they would never again settle for anything less than the whole family unit. This, I know, is the Lord's plan, because he has given us an inspired method of teaching his children that works!!! I am so thankful for the testimony building experiences I have had, and my testimony of the divinity of Jesus Christ, Joseph Smith and the Gospel.

Sincerely,  
Elder Dan M. Ainsworth"

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Elder Bruce R. McConkie delivered an inspired message at the General Conference at Salt Lake City on April 6, 1973. I would like to bring to your attention a few of the important points made by Elder McConkie which are particularly pertinent to each of us as missionaries.

Elder McConkie advised that in the early days of this dispensation the Lord said: "...elders, priests and teachers of this church shall teach the principles of my gospel, which are in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, in the which is the fulness of the gospel." (D & C 42:12) He pointed out that on another occasion the Lord said that we were sent out "to testify and warn the people..." (D & C 88:81) He went on "I suppose these two commissions--on the one hand to teach the doctrines of the gospel, and on the other hand to testify by personal knowledge that we know that the things that we are proclaiming are true--I suppose these are perfectly illustrated in the ministry of the sons of Mosiah." In Alma 17:2-3 "they were men of a sound understanding," who "had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God. But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God."

You can readily understand from what Elder McConkie was saying that we are first obligated and required to know and understand the doctrines of the Church, we are to

treasure up the words of eternal life, that we are to reason as intelligently as we possibly can and that we are to use every faculty and capacity with which we are blessed to carry forth the message of salvation to our Father's other children. Elder McConkie went on to say that "after we have done that, and also in the process of doing it, we are obligated to bear testimony--to let the world know and our associate members of the Church know--that in our hearts, by the revelation of the Holy Spirit to our souls, we know of the truth and divinity of the work and of the doctrines that we teach."

What Brother McConkie was saying was simply this, that we must magnify our abilities and talents, extending them to the limits in order that we might prepare and qualify ourselves to declare and proclaim the word of the Lord to the peoples of the world and not only is it sufficient that we teach with this knowledge and teach the true doctrines of salvation, but that after we have done all this it is then our obligation and our opportunity to bear witness that in our hearts and by the revelation of the Holy Spirit we know the truth and the divinity of the work and the doctrines that we teach.

If you as a missionary are living the rules of the mission and heeding the commandments which God has given to us and magnifying yourself to the utmost of your abilities and talents then you can indeed proclaim the great and eternal message of the restoration. If you are able to teach by the Spirit then you can, without hesitation, tell your investigators, "The Holy Spirit of God has born this witness to my soul." and if this is your testimony then there is nothing to debate with your investigators. It simply is impossible for an investigator to argue or debate with that kind of a presentation. It is then up to the investigator to accept or reject the witness that you have born--either it is true or it is false--and there is no middle ground.

I would like to quote further from the remarks given by Elder McConkie.

"Now how do you prove and establish that the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith; that angels came in our day; and that there has been a restoration of the gospel; that all the glorious things we present to the world are true? Well, you reason out of the revelations. You can make a good case; and that isn't any problem. The truth is with us. The Lord is the author of this system we have received. But after you have reasoned and after you have analyzed, you have got to stand as a personal witness who knows what he is saying. You have to do what the sons of Mosiah did--speak and teach by the spirit of prophecy and the spirit of revelation; and the result is that you speak as one having authority. This is the great thing that separates us from the world, and thanks be to God we have this knowledge. We have received this revelation and we are in a position to speak as those having authority."

Fellow missionaries, let me again re-emphasize "We have...the keys of salvation for all men everywhere" and that if you teach effectively to the very utmost of your personal capabilities and you conduct your life in complete accord with the rules for missionaries, heeding the commandments of God in every detail and then exercise your obligation and privilege, "to bear testimony...that in our hearts, by the revelation of the Holy Spirit to our souls, we know of the truth and divinity of the work and of the doctrines we teach." you will be blessed with success in serving the Lord and the joy that comes therefrom.

I pray that each of you will understand and heed these admonitions and that by so doing you will realize the joy that the Lord has promised to those faithful in their missionary calls.

Faithfully your companion

J. Martell Bird, President