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# Proclaim My Gospel

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D&C 71:1–2

On December 1, 1831, when the Prophet Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were engaged in the important work of translating the Bible, the Lord directed them to stop for a season. Instead of translating, they were to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ “unto the world to the regions round about, and in the church” (D&C 71:2). They were also told to “open your mouths in proclaiming my gospel, the things of the kingdom, expounding the mysteries thereof out of the scriptures, according to that portion of Spirit and power which shall be given unto you” (v. 1).

In obedience to this revelation, the Prophet Joseph said,

Knowing now the mind of the Lord, that the time had come that the Gospel should be proclaimed in power and demonstration to the world, from the Scriptures, reasoning with men as in days of old, I took a journey to Kirtland, in company with Elder Sidney Rigdon on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of December, to fulfil [*sic*] the above revelation.<sup>1</sup>

For more than a month, Joseph and Sidney preached in towns near Hiram, Ohio. As to the success of their labors, Joseph wrote, “We did much towards allaying the excited feelings which were growing out of the scandalous letters then being published in the *Ohio Star*, at Ravenna, by ... apostate, Ezra Booth.”<sup>2</sup> In addition, they strengthened the brethren in Ravenna and Shalersville in Portage County, Ohio.

Just as in the days of Joseph Smith, members of the Church each year are asked by the Lord to put aside what they deem “important work” to do the Lord’s work in proclaiming

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<sup>1</sup> History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], 176. Joseph Smith Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Smith, “History of Joseph Smith,” *Millennial Star* 14, no. 8 (April 15, 1852): 115.

the gospel of Jesus Christ. One such man was Elder Daryl H. Garn, who spoke at the April 2003 general conference:

When I was a young boy, my greatest desire was to play basketball. Fortunately, I had a father who was anxious to see that his son's desire was met. Dad and I would practice the basics of passing and dribbling the basketball hour after hour in our small kitchen. I would listen to college basketball games on the radio and dream of playing college ball someday. Serving a mission was far from my mind at that time; consequently, I spent very little effort in missionary preparation. ...

My boyhood dream came true when I made the basketball team at Utah State University. During my second year at Utah State, a returned missionary befriended me. Because of his example I began looking at my associates at school, including those on the basketball team, and realized that the people I most wanted to be like were those who had served missions. With the kind and loving mentoring of my good friend—and, I am sure, as a result of my mother's prayers and good example—my desires changed. After my second year at Utah State, I was called to serve in the Western Canadian Mission.

Three months into my mission, a new missionary from Idaho was assigned to be my companion. We had been together only a few days when I realized something very significant: my new companion knew the gospel, while I only knew the discussions. How I wished that I had prepared to be a missionary as hard as I had prepared to be a basketball player. My companion had prepared for his mission throughout his life and was immediately a valuable member of the team. ...

I believe it is appropriate to compare the game of basketball to **missionary work**. The game of basketball includes not only the time you compete with another team on the court but also the hours of proper training and practice. The great work of saving souls is not limited to the two years that you serve a mission but, rather, requires years of righteous living and preparation in order to meet the standard for full-time missionary service.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Daryl H. Garn, "Preparing for Missionary Service," *Ensign* (May 2003).