

Preaching the Gospel unto All the Nations

J. THOMAS FYANS

I was influenced, as you were, by that very wonderful musical presentation. Someone has penned these lines:

*Of all the arts beneath the heaven
That man has found or God has given,
None draws the soul so sweet away
As music's mystic melting lay.
Slight emblems of the bliss above,
It draws the soul to all consuming love.*

Thank you so much for the influence of that wonderful musical number.

President Oaks, fellow citizens in the kingdom of God, I'm thrilled to be here with you today. As we think back to the meridian of time, when the Savior gave an admonition to those who were closely associated with him in the establishing of the kingdom of God, we remember that he said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

And then, in the beginning of this dispensation, the blessings of which we are enjoying, we hear these words in the very first section of the Doctrine and Covenants: "For verily the voice of the Lord is unto all men, and there is none to escape; and there is no eye that shall not see, neither ear that shall not hear, neither heart that shall not be penetrated" (D&C 1:2).

And then we move to our day. Within just the past few weeks we've heard this from President Spencer W. Kimball: "I wonder if we are doing all we can. Are we complacent in our approach to teaching all the world? We have been proselyting now 144 years. Are we prepared to lengthen our stride? To enlarge our vision?" (Regional Representatives seminar, 4 April 1974).

The Growth of the Church

May we look to history for a moment to see where we are? It took 117 years for the Church to arrive at the point where there were one million members alive at one time. That happened in 1947. In sixteen additional years, or in 1963, the Church passed the two million mark in population. In 1971, in eight more years, the third million was added. Can we sense what's happening as the word is going into all the world? Section 90 of the Doctrine and Covenants gives us some view of what the Lord had in mind. When he was talking with the Prophet Joseph, he said to him:

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That through your administration they [the world] may receive the word, and through their administration [and I think he's talking here about us] the word may go forth unto the ends of the earth, unto the Gentiles first and then, behold, and lo, they shall turn unto the Jews.

And then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations . . . of the gospel of their salvation. [D&C 90:9–10]

I humbly submit, brothers and sisters, that we're just about on the threshold of this day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations.

Preaching the Gospel Throughout the World

As we consider the word that must go forth by us, we wonder what our sources of inspiration are for the word that we will present and take to the world. I'd like to refer, first of all, to section 68 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which says (speaking of the leaders of the Church, the General Authorities, primarily the President and the counselors, those whom we sustain as prophets, seers, and revelators), "And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation" (D&C 68:4). How might we obtain this word? One possibility is, of course, to be present at general conference, when the Brethren, under the inspiration of the Spirit, share with us the mind and the will and the word of the Lord. Another is alluded to by President Kimball, who spoke here on campus some time ago and uttered these words:

I hope you young people all heard the messages of the ages delivered last month [at general conference]. There will be other conferences every six months. I hope you will get your copy of The

Improvement Era and underline the pertinent thoughts and keep it with you for continual reference. [Conference material is now published in the Ensign magazine.] No text or volume outside the standard works of the Church should have such a prominent place on your personal library shelves. ["In the World but Not of It," Speeches of the Year (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1968), p. 3]

So we can attach ourselves to the mind of the Lord by studying his word as it's made available to us in the Church periodicals and specifically in the *Ensign* magazine at the present time.

Now, what about the word that goes out to the world? You're going to have Dr. Ludlow, director of the Church correlation program, speak to you next week. He's a key in the whole nerve center in the creation of materials for the Church. You should listen carefully to what he shares with you this coming week.

Correlation and Church Curricula

From Brother Ludlow and other fine key men, there is a curriculum plan that has been established in the Church and has been very spiritually and prayerfully prepared. It's taken months to consider it carefully. The curriculum is somewhat similar, I suspect, to the influence that comes in your lives here on this outstanding campus as you trek your way towards your doctorate. As you go into your field of choice, you find there are certain influences that must come into your lives to give you more breadth and depth and height in your experience and understanding. This same thing is true in the case of the curriculum of the Church as we consider our trek, not for our doctorates, but for exaltation and return to the side of our Heavenly Father. So this plan has carefully considered what our needs are as children, as youth, as young adults, as mature people with families and responsibilities, as grandparents. Through this curriculum plan will come into our

lives those things that would lead us through this probationary state if we will take advantage of the opportunities afforded by Church participation and the very wonderful inspirational opportunities that are available to us.

As this material is created under the course of this curriculum plan, wonderful people—the finest minds on the face of the earth—are molding it together in an instructional development effort. They’re going to package it attractively so that it will penetrate our very hearts and our minds and our eyes. These people, many of whom are here from the campus of Brigham Young University, are giving their all prayerfully and carefully to prepare this material. Then, the correlation process is a process somewhat judicial in nature, one that carefully analyzes all the material to make certain that there’s doctrinal purity in it and that it adheres to Church policy.

I thought it might be interesting for you just to have a chance to step behind the scenes as the materials are prepared and see how they move to the world. We have a distribution center in Salt Lake City—186,000 square feet. Out of that center, in the last few weeks and in the next few weeks, will have flowed millions of pounds of material to the English-speaking world. Large containers have been placed aboard ships and have now arrived in Manchester, England, and in Auckland, New Zealand, where they will be shipped to all the units served by those distribution centers.

Let me relate one illustration that I used at one time to show the extent of one program in the Church, the family home evening program, and the amount of paper that’s used in that one program throughout the world. If we were to take those pages and attach them end to end, put them in a roll at the Salt Lake airport, attach the end of the roll to a jet, and let it take off to the east, it could fly to Denver, Colorado, and there would still be paper on the roll in Salt Lake City. That jet then could continue to Chicago, then to New York, then to London, to

Paris, to Beirut, to Saigon, to Hong Kong, to Tokyo, to San Francisco, and back to Salt Lake City, and still there would be several thousand miles of paper in that roll. That’s the amount of paper used in one program. Can you allow your imagination, then, to move into the various other programs of the Church and see the interesting challenge in getting the word there (meaning throughout the English-speaking world)?

The Challenge of Translation

Section 90 of the Doctrine and Covenants says, “And then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations” (D&C 90:10). The eleventh verse of the same section qualifies the non-English effort of the Church: “For it shall come to pass in that day [and I suggest it’s our day], that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and in his own language” (D&C 90:11). That’s a great effort that is occurring in the international part of Church internal communications. Translation is a very challenging, wonderful experience. I remember in a meeting in Hong Kong, China, a fine man of Chinese descent, speaking in perfect Oxford English, made this statement: “Without translation, there would be no commerce, no social relations between nations. Without translation, salvation would only be available to the nation where the world of the Lord was revealed.”

Translation occurs, in part, in Salt Lake City on the twenty-first floor of that beautiful new office building—not the translation per se, but the preparation to translate. There we go through an adaptation process, where all the materials that I’ve described thus far have been prepared and then are transculturalized; that is, we take out the illustrations that would be pertinent to those of us who are here in Provo, but perhaps not pertinent to those in Tahiti or in Helsinki, Finland. There are introduced into the courses of study, then, appropriate and apt illustrations that will move those people. You see, the challenge is to motivate all of the

eternal spirits in whatever culture they find themselves, just as we in our culture would be motivated as we read the materials prepared for our own edification in the Church.

Translation is a very challenging responsibility. We now have the full Church program in sixteen languages that represent many, many nations. We're doing part of the Church program in an additional twenty-one languages in preparation for missionary work that is just commencing in many parts of the world and in preparation to respond to the call of the prophet as he tells us, "Move into new parts of the world."

One illustration of the difficulty of translation that might be appropriate occurred in a non-Church setting, but I think you can appreciate this. It was a meeting in Vienna, Austria, between Krushchev and President Kennedy. During the course of this meeting, through interpreters, President Kennedy was stressing the fact that Mr. Krushchev of Russia should not miscalculate the American will. As President Kennedy would stress, "Don't miscalculate our will," Mr. Khrushchev would flush and would respond rather negatively. At the end of the conference, President Kennedy was not satisfied with the progress that had been made, and so they went back through the interpretation script to find out what might have happened. It occurred to them, as they reviewed what had occurred, that the person who had done the interpreting from English into Russian had interpreted the term *miscalculate* as "You dumbbell, you could not add two and two and get four."

We must be very careful not to translate just word to word, but it must be feeling to feeling. That's the challenge of our wonderful translators all over the world. We have translating teams in Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, throughout the Middle East, South Africa, down in Brazil and Spanish-speaking Latin America, Tahiti, Samoa, Tonga, up through

the Indonesian area in the Thai language, the Vietnamese. We're translating in Hong Kong, Taiwan, in Japan, and in Seoul, Korea, and that's where the work is done. It's an interesting challenge, you see, to operate in a church that is international, that is intercultural, and that is multilingual. As we think of meeting the challenges of personnel, of communication, of transportation, of going through customs, it's possible only because those involved in the process live close to the Lord.

Let me share with you a couple of personalities who have operated in the translation department. We'll first go to Sweden, if we might. There Sister Margstrom (who has now passed away, by the way), after being very crippled with a disease that wouldn't allow her to operate normally as we operate, translated the book *Jesus the Christ* from English into Swedish. Her script came in typewritten. That doesn't seem unusual until you recognize that his crippling disease that she had would allow her only to hold in one hand, with some pain, a stick with a rubber tip. She typed that transcript one letter at a time.

There are wonderful people like that all over the world. A sister down in Tahiti, as she responded to her family's comments about "Why do you put so much time in translating?" said, "Well, you go out from our home to gather the wealth of the world, and I stay here to gather the wealth of the Lord."

We had a seminar of our key people from various parts of the world not too long ago in Salt Lake City. There was a man from the South Pacific, Brother Bill Roberts. He had charge of all of the South Pacific at that time. Another man, Immo Luschin von Ebengreuth, from Frankfurt, Germany, plus a man from the Orient, and a half dozen or so key people from throughout the world also attended the conference. As we closed this several-day seminar with a little luncheon and a testimonial meeting, Brother Roberts in his testimony was very overcome emotionally. I wondered a little

about it. He said, "You know, I want to express love for Brother Luschin."

When Brother Luschin stood to express his testimony, he reciprocated the statements made by Brother Roberts and said, "I have in my heart a very special love for Brother Roberts. Perhaps you'd like to know why we are making these kinds of expressions. Brother Roberts was a commissioned officer in the New Zealand armed forces; I, a commissioned officer in the German armed forces. We fought each other in Africa, in Italy, and right up into Germany. At that time, we were trying to kill each other. Now, we know that that feeling has been completely erased, and we love each other with all our hearts." That's some idea of what the word will do as it impresses the mind and the heart of a member of the Church.

Stake Conferences

The word goes forth each weekend in stake conferences. The General Authorities move around the world, as do the Regional Representatives of the Twelve. In interim meetings and in regional meetings, they take the word out to the world. A week ago today, I was a third of the way around the world from here in Bai Blanca, Argentina. We'd started the meeting there at seven o'clock in the morning. It had lasted about three hours, and about this time we were running to catch a plane to fly several hundred miles to Buenos Aires, where we were to hold two more meetings, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Now that schedule is almost typical of the lives of the General Authorities, I am finding. They move around the world; it's been calculated there's something like seventy-five thousand miles traveled each weekend by the cumulative mileage of the General Authorities. Add to that the distance the Regional Representatives of the Twelve travel, and there is a tremendous amount of impact throughout the world.

Area General Conferences

The world must go forth, and stake conferences, regional meetings, stake priesthood leadership meetings, and various other approaches are used very effectively. It was mentioned that there was some participation on our part in the area general conferences. Interestingly enough, Brother Robinson and Brother Peterson, who are here, are Regional Representatives of the Twelve for two of the Scandinavian countries and are a part of a very key committee that is now planning what will happen over in Stockholm in the middle of August.

These area conferences are wonderful experiences. They're something fairly new in the Church, as you know. Let's go to Manchester, England, for just a glimpse. The ecstasy on the faces of the Saints as they saw the prophet was more to be felt than to be described. To see the tears coursing down their cheeks as they came in close proximity to him was wonderful. Let's look into the mind of the prophet for a moment. On Saturday, we had two meetings going simultaneously, a meeting for adults in one building and one for youth in another. President Joseph Fielding Smith was to be the first speaker in the adult session and then, halfway through, at the rest song, was to move to the other meeting. At the time of the rest song, then, Arthur Haycock (the prophet's secretary), a physician, and myself were accompanying the President between the two meetings. Halfway through the walk we were complimenting President Smith on how well we felt he had done and how he had impressed the Saints with his testimony. He stopped, got our attention, and said, "I haven't come this far to fail." You could just feel his whole body desiring to respond to the Spirit of the Lord and to reach out and touch those members that were there assembled.

The Saints in England sang, as a closing number of the conference, an original hymn, the words written by one of the stake presidents, Ernest Hewitt. Can you imagine now, at

the close of this wonderful series of three days of spiritual, uplifting experiences, those Saints singing these words?

*In Britain's chosen countryside,
Mid England's dales and Scottish hills,
Welsh mountains green and Irish lakes;
Here we live, and here we will serve.*

*God gave to us this special land,
He made us men of character;
Our women fair and steadfast too.
Here we will live, here we will serve.*

*Here we were called by God above,
To join the special chosen few,
To be His saints, called, set apart.
So here we live, here we will serve.*

*This is our place, here we will stay,
To build, to strengthen ward and stake
Until the Lord supreme shall reign;
This is our place, here we will serve.*

There wasn't a dry eye in that building as these words were echoed in song and spirit, and I felt very sorry for the stake president who had to offer the benediction. He choked up, as you would, an almost inaudible prayer as he expressed appreciation to our Heavenly Father for the spirit of that occasion.

Mexico City, 1972: Those Saints came from the deserts. They came from the industrial cities of the north. They came from the small pellittos in the east and west. They came from the tropical coastlines down south in Central America. Throughout the summer those Saints had saved and borrowed and sold whatever they had to try to get together the two hundred pesos per person that was necessary for bus tickets. I'll just use one illustration. Four busloads came from a very distant area. There was no money left over for food, but that didn't matter. This group decided that they could fast for the three or four days of the conference.

Most of the Saints arriving at the area general conference in Mexico City didn't have two pesos (about sixteen cents American currency) for a cot, and so they spent those nights on hard floors. But, oh, what an inspiration it was to witness sixteen thousand members of the Church sustain President Harold B. Lee for the first time in a general conference as the President and the prophet, seer, and revelator of the Church! There were so many choice experiences that time will not permit me to relate all of them.

Munich, Germany, for just a thought or two. There, people had come from Germany and Austria and Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, and Spain. Speakers of all those languages were there to hear the world of the Lord. Interestingly enough, they could all hear it simultaneously. Those that didn't understand German were furnished with tiny transistor-type affairs with earphones. They could dial their language. If I were speaking in English and your native tongue were Italian, you could just turn to Italian and my words would come automatically to you in the language to which you were native.

One final illustration related to the Munich conference didn't happen in Munich, but in Holland. Just after the conference, Brother de Jager, Regional Representative of the Twelve, was in his own ward. There, interestingly enough, he heard the choir sing at sacrament meeting, not in Dutch, but in German. He asked them afterward, "Why are you singing in German in the sacrament meeting?"

They, with spiritual smiles on their faces, said, "Brother de Jager, this is one of the hymns we learned at the area general conference." You remember the occupation of Holland by the Germans, and yet you see how the Saints had reciprocated the Spirit of the Lord.

A brief testimony, now, as we think of the word going forth. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, with great boldness and assurance:

No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done. [Documentary History of the Church, 4:540]

Our present prophet, seer, and revelator, President Spencer W. Kimball, stated:

Using all the latest inventions and equipment and paraphernalia already developed and that which will follow, can you see that perhaps the day may come when the world will be converted and covered? If we do all we can, and I accept my own part of that responsibility, I am sure the Lord will bring more

discoveries to our use. He will bring a change of heart into kings and magistrates and emperors, or he will divert rivers or open seas or find ways to touch hearts. He will open the gates and make possible the proselyting. Of that I have great faith. [Regional Representatives seminar, 4 April 1974]

I bear you a personal witness of our modern prophet. His trumpet has given us a certain sound. We must be prepared to march to all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. I know that God lives. I know that Jesus is the Christ. If we can link our efforts with their power, we can accomplish the objectives that our Father in heaven has in mind in bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. I bear you that witness humbly and with every fiber of my being and in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.