



## EPISODE 15

GUEST: BRO. MARK BEECHER



*“Lift Up Your Voices . . . and Declare My Gospel”*

## Show Notes & Transcripts

### Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Wednesday.

### Podcast Episode Descriptions

#### Part 1:

Should we set goals dependent on others’ agency? Mark Beecher explores the early missionary efforts of the Church and the Book of Mormon’s role in personal conversion.

#### Part 2:

As Brother Mark Beecher explores the themes of conversion and the impact of the early missionary Saints, he also draws parallels with modern-day missionaries.

# Timecodes:

## Part 1 -

- 00:00 - Part 1 - Brother Mark Beecher
- 03:02 St. Louis, Here we come!
- 04:33 Bio
- 07:46 *Come, Follow Me Manual*
- 09:50 Background of Section 30
- 11:15 D&C 30:1-2 - David's 5 worries
- 14:49 Who are you listening to?
- 17:41 D&C 30:5-11 - Guide for covenant relationships
- 20:11 D&C 31 - A Primary song about Thomas B. Marsh
- 23:22 Background of Thomas B. Marsh
- 27:01 D&C 31:3-5 - Missionary favorites
- 29:23 Being called to be Missionary Leaders
- 32:43 Callback to the "Million Dollar Missionary"
- 36:13 A converted heart and the Book of Mormon
- 38:45 Enduring conversion
- 42:31 A mission story and father's promise
- 46:26 D&C 31:9-12 - Warnings to Thomas (and us)
- 48:59 The wisdom of Stephen Harper
- 50:32 D&C 31:3 - "Rejoice, the hour of your mission is come"
- 54:27 When we change souls into just baptisms!
- 56:22 *Preach My Gospel: Chapter 1*
- 58:52 A dirty, little Irish kid
- 1:01:05 The Lord plays the long game
- 1:04:39 The Karate Kid Principle
- 1:08:37 The mission that changed the world (just not at first)
- 1:11:16 A way provided
- 1:14:23 - End of Part I - Brother Mark Beecher

## Part 2 -

- 00:00 - Part 2 - Brother Mark Beecher
- 01:11 Background of Ezra Thayer
- 05:26 Missionary moments in Texas
- 08:02 A 60-year conversion story
- 11:23 Missionaries in training change lives
- 14:09 Opening their mouths
- 17:19 Teaching in normal and natural ways
- 20:01 Brother Beecher shares a personal story
- 24:52 Orson Hyde learns about revelation
- 30:59 Sidney Rigdon and Phoebe Brooks Rigdon

- 35:41 The Lord's message to Sidney
- 39:16 The Lord uses the weak so we know it is Him
- 41:14 David W. Patton
- 42:48 The Lord uses the weak but they are powerful
- 46:34 Hank's hero of the Restoration
- 51:44 The Lord's last words in D&C 36
- 55:21 Brother Beecher shares why he chooses to serve another mission
- 1:01:19 End of Part 2 - Brother Mark Beecher

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## **Biographical Information:**



Mark Beecher grew up in Southeastern Idaho and served a Navajo speaking mission in Arizona teaching the Native Americans. He has degrees from BYU and the University of Utah. Mark

spent his career teaching seminary and institute for 37 years and retired two years ago as a Region Director. He worked with EFY and FSY for over 30 years and is a regular at BYU Education Week. He now teaches 3rd grade at American Heritage in American Fork. He and his wife Kim have been married 39 years and are the parents of 5 children and 10 (soon to be 12) grandchildren. They have been called as Mission Leaders in the Missouri St. Louis Mission and will begin serving there in June.

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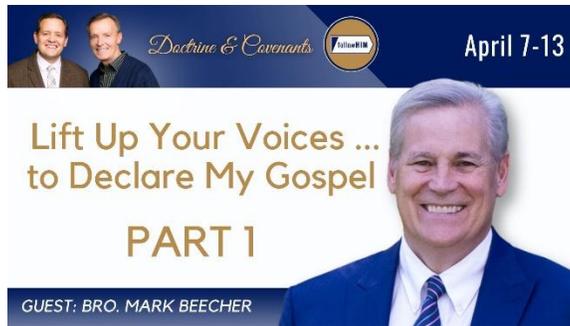
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Hank Smith:	00:00:00	Coming up in this episode on followHIM.
Bro. Mark Beecher:	00:00:02	We got an email from Elder Patrick Kearon's secretary asking us to come in. It was sacred moments. I don't want to share anything that I ought not to. I'll share this portion. There's a lot of questions to be asked and a lot of thinking. And Elder Kearon, I think we've all immediately fallen in love with him as an apostle. I mean, we just adore him and his messages that he's given us already about the Church of Joy and God is in relentless pursuit of you. And as I just sat in his office and my wife and I were going through these interview questions, he paused and he just said, I believe you know where we are in the interview process. Would you like me to continue or would you like a moment?
Hank Smith:	00:00:52	Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I am your host and I'm here with John Bytheway, who has, John, accepted the gospel with singleness of heart. That's Doctrine & Covenants 36 verse seven. Describes you perfectly John.
John Bytheway:	00:01:09	I fulfilled all of my eligibility as a young single adult. I did. And then entered the transfer portal and became a a mid single and...
Hank Smith:	00:01:20	Well John, you can be married and still embrace the gospel with singleness of heart.
John Bytheway:	00:01:25	Oh, I like that. Yeah. Like single-minded, single eye.
Hank Smith:	00:01:28	John, we are joined by our good friend Mark Beecher today. A prolific teacher has done so much in his career. Welcome Mark.
Bro. Mark Beecher:	00:01:39	Thank you. It's great to be here with you two.
Hank Smith:	00:01:40	This is exciting. The church is now well established. We're going to hit the road, we are going to go do some missionary work. So

when you think of early missionary work, John, what do you think of?

- John Bytheway: 00:01:51 One of the things that's so inspiring to me is that these names that we know so well, like Parley P. Pratt and Thomas B. Marsh and stuff, they're called on missions and they, what was it? He read 16 pages of the Book of Mormon and that was enough and how little they knew, but they were so filled with the Spirit that they were willing to travel with knee deep in snow and everywhere and go on these missions.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:17 There was little missions happening, but this first big mission from Peter Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, that's a ways away. It's like going to the moon. I mean it is so far away. Mark, as you've looked at these sections, where do you want to go? What are you seeing?
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:02:32 Thanks Hank. There's so many, as you mentioned, early missionaries of the church, early names that we get exposed to here for the first time, to be able to see them learn as they begin to follow the directions of the Savior to share the gospel. There's just such great, great content here. They're young and inexperienced and I really think it gives all of us so much hope that we can accomplish whatever the Lord wants us to be able to accomplish. We all have daunting tasks in front of us. There's a lot of examples here that we can focus on today.
- Hank Smith: 00:03:02 And you do, you have a big daunting task in front of you as well.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:03:05 Wow. Thanks for bringing that up.. It's true. Yeah. My wife and I have been called to serve as mission leaders in St. Louis, Missouri. We're going to be heading out here in June and it feels pretty big. It really does. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:03:20 So all of our listeners out there in St. Louis, I bet we have a few. Make sure you welcome the Beechers when they join you pretty soon. John, quick story for you. I was speaking for a group of superintendents, school superintendents in St. George. I'm coming back up here to Provo. I was feeling pretty good about myself. Haven't you done that John? Like, oh, today is a good day when my 10-year-old truck that I love but it is old, broke down on I-15 and it's been a long time since I broke down on I-15. I ended up limping into Parowan, Utah and I just have to do a shout out John to Mark and Melinda Berg of Parowan, Utah who were kind enough to say, what's the problem here? I said, I don't know. Mark. Just incredible guy got under my truck and started looking at it and he told me what was wrong. We took it over to a mechanic and these two, John, they drove me towards

my wife who was coming down to pick me up. And so Mark and Melinda, thank you for taking this stranger in your car. It was really kind. I just have to say thank you John. In fact, we were recording the next day and I thought, I'm not going to be there. I'm going to have to record from Parowan, but I made it back because of Mark and Melinda Berg.

- John Bytheway: 00:04:33 Wow. So many good people out there.
- Hank Smith: 00:04:35 John, Brother Beecher has not been with us before on the podcast. You and I have been friends with Mark for a long time. In fact, your wife has been friends with Mark for a long time. So can you give a little introduction to our listeners?
- John Bytheway: 00:04:50 Yes, and thanks for saying that Hank, my wife Kim had seminary at Olympus High School and Brother Beecher was one of her teachers and she speaks so highly of you to this day. Thanks for having that impact and she was excited you'd be on today.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:05:05 That's very kind and also very dating. Thank you..
- John Bytheway: 00:05:08 Yeah, it was a while ago. Brother Beecher grew up in southeastern Idaho. He served a Navajo speaking mission. And Hank, I don't know about you, but how often have you heard Navajo, Finnish and I think Mandarin, some of the hardest languages to learn? Mark speaks Navajo, served in Arizona on his mission. Brother Beecher has degrees from Brigham Young University and the University of Utah. He spent his career teaching seminary for 37 years, retired a couple of years ago as a region director. He's worked with EFY and FSJ and Education Week and he's now teaching third grade at American Heritage School in American Fork.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:05:49 Wow. Shout out to my third graders at American Heritage.
- John Bytheway: 00:05:54 American Heritage School. He and his wife Kim have been married 39 years. They have five children and 10, soon to be 12 grandchildren. And Hank, as you mentioned, soon to be a mission leader in St. Louis. That has a special place in my heart because my mission president's still alive, lives in St. Louis and has, Menlo Smith has had an impact on St. Louis helping to get the land for the temple and some other things there. So we're just really glad to have you Brother Beecher.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:06:22 It's great to join you today and all the listeners.

John Bytheway: 00:06:25 Yeah, and I have to add one more thing. [Mark and Rob Eaton](#), another guest that we've had on the podcast wrote a book years ago called Becoming Great Gospel Teachers and I have the book and the CD that really blessed my teaching Mark and Rob. So I really want to thank you for that contribution.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:06:44 Very kind of you

Hank Smith: 00:06:45 Mark, let's let you just do a quick message. Talk to the Saints in St. Louis. What would you say they're going to greet you here in a couple months?

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:06:53 Wow. I'll start with this. We have had an opportunity, my wife and I, to have a couple Zoom conversations with the current mission leaders there, President & Sister McKay. And I'll just never forget at the end of that first conversation where they said we will ask the missionaries to begin to pray for you. It just hit me like so hard and I've got to tell you I've been feeling those prayers. We were blessed to have a niece who served in St. Louis and this mission she just returned about a year ago. She knows the McKays and she just said, they are the finest saints you'll ever meet anywhere. We're just thrilled to be able to have this opportunity to go to St. Louis. I've never been there, I've never seen the arch, I've never done anything in that area. I've been to the church history sites, they're just outside the mission boundaries, but my goodness, it's an incredible blessing to be able to be there and to meet these saints and to rub shoulders with amazing people like they are.

Hank Smith: 00:07:46 I bet they're looking forward to it. I bet it's fun to every three years get a new mission president and yeah, welcome him to the area. Mark, let's get started here. I'm going to read from the [Come, Follow Me](#) manual and then let's get into these sections and talk about missionary work. It starts this way. Parley P. Pratt had been a member of the church for about a month, when he was called into the wilderness to preach the gospel. Thomas B. Marsh had been a member for even less time than that when he was told the hour of your mission is come. Orson Pratt, Edward Partridge and many others had likewise barely been baptized when their mission calls came. Perhaps there's a lesson in this pattern for us today. If you know enough to accept the restored gospel by baptism, you would know enough to share it with others. Of course, we always want to increase our gospel knowledge, but God has never hesitated to call upon the unlearned to preach his gospel. In fact, he invites all of us, open your mouth to declare my gospel. And we do that best not through our own wisdom and experience, but by the power of the Spirit. Oh, I love it. Man, these missionaries, can you

imagine you've been a member of the church for a whole week, time to go on a mission. So Mark with that, where do you want to go from here?

- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:09:01 It's not too different, honestly. My wife and I have had the opportunity to serve at the missionary training center where I was branch president there for three years-ish. Those missionaries, they walk in and many of them have just decided literally within the last couple of months I'm going to go on a mission and to watch them as they come in. I listened to section four that you taught. If you have desires to serve God, you're called to the work. Just to take that desire and wow the Lord magnifies that and to watch them change in just a matter of a few days. Most of them are there about 12, 13 days at the MTC if they're speaking English and to watch them change, it was a phenomenal experience to watch this literally hundreds of times where they just had only a desire to serve and the Lord said, that's enough. I can take it and I can work with it.
- Hank Smith: 00:09:46 That's awesome. Do we need to catch everybody up in the history?
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:09:51 Yeah, let's do take a few minutes here as we start Section 30, these sections are a great focus on missionary work. Section 30 begins with originally was three revelations, right? David Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, John Whitmer, I think your section heading says, by the time 1835 edition came around, they were all combined into one. [Sister Ulrich](#) that you had when you did sections 12 to 17, covered section 15 and 16 and just did a beautiful job teaching these sections. June of 1829, they're told that the most important thing you can do is to declare repentance unto this generation. And I heard you all expound on repentance and the beauty of it and it seems that now we get to section 30, it's just a few months later they're not doing that. They've not been following the directive the way they ought to have done. And so there's some correction from the Lord, which he's kind enough and doesn't pull any punches to give us when we need that kind of correction to put us on the right track.
- Hank Smith: 00:10:49 Little divine discontent, I think it's been called.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:10:53 It seems that as we begin section 30, that Hiram Page from back in section 28 has had quite an influence and is persuaded a little bit of David Whitmer's direction and focus. And so the Lord wants David and all of us to know about the problem of fearing man and not relying on the strength of the Lord and having our minds more on things of the earth than on the Savior's valuable

counsel here. Could we look at verses one and two of section 30?

- John Bytheway: 00:11:20 Absolutely. Behold, I say unto you, David, that you have feared man and have not relied on me for strength as you ought. But your mind has been on the things of the earth more than on the things of me, your maker and the ministry whereunto you have been called and you have not given heed unto my spirit and to those who are set over you but have been persuaded by those whom I have not commanded.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:11:44 In my scriptures I have that broken down into these five things. One, you've feared man. Two, you've not relied on me for strength as you ought. Three, your mind's been on the things of the earth more than on the things of me. Four, you've not given heed to my spirit and what you've been called to do and to those who are set over you and five, you've been persuaded by those that I've not commanded. As I look at that, I have to admit that it's something that I think all of us can fall into in a hurry. I mean when you read those verses you have to go, is he talking to me?
- John Bytheway: 00:12:16 Yeah, that's exactly what I thought today.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:12:22 I'm going to just share a verse from the Book of Mormon. It's kind of one of my new favorite verses. It's Helaman chapter four, verse 13 says this, and because of this, their great wickedness and their boasting in their own strength, they were left in their own strength. That's a pretty sobering thought. Sometimes if you think I can just go it alone and I think the Lord says, well then go it alone and see how that works. The Lord's just saying, you've not relied on me the way that you ought to have done. I just find myself on a Sunday very committed to keeping my covenants. And as the week goes on, I get weighed down with the things of the world and it's just not too far distant from who I am that I've got to be more intent on keeping my covenants. And I really think that's why President Nelson and his incredible messages on keeping covenants is just so pertinent to all of us today.
- John Bytheway: 00:13:12 It's so funny that all three of us looked at verse two and went, that's me. Sometimes I've lost sleep over financial concerns. I don't think I've lost sleep over things that I probably should lose sleep over. Right? But it's easy to do that. I like this reminder. I think throughout the rest of my life I will need constant reminders. What did you say at the beginning Hank? Singleness to keep our eye single to one thing.

Hank Smith: 00:13:41 Singleness of heart.

John Bytheway: 00:13:42 There's other things we've got to do on this temporal earth to take care of our families and our homes and house payments and everything. I'm reading this going, that's me.

Hank Smith: 00:13:53 When I read it, I thought of the parable of the sower where the Lord says, Hey, the soil is good, but there's just too many other things competing. You've got weeds in there, you've got weeds in there. Yeah, it looks like you don't have time for me in this verse. The things of this earth, the persuasions of those who I've not commanded. You've got a good heart, David. You got a good heart, Hank, but you're not weeding your life. You've got to get some of that other stuff out of there. And then John, this last part, you've been persuaded by those whom I have not commanded. Remind me of how [Sheri](#) put this last year we talked about prophets. She talked about how think of all the people that you'd rather take advice from John can you remind me of that? I know you know it better than me.

John Bytheway: 00:14:39 It was kind of a who would you rather have in charge of your life? I mean, you're looking at social media influencers and I loved her little statement that why not go to sources that only speak truth? There's so many that are out there that that might be true. There's a chance that's accurate, maybe. What if we went to sources that only speak truth and yeah, seriously. Who else would you rather have in charge of your life than the influence of the Holy Ghost that giving heed to the spirit?

Hank Smith: 00:15:10 Listen to this [quote](#), my dear friends, this is [Sheri](#). To whom do you listen? Where does the living prophet rank in the list of those you turn to for advice? How many blind guides whose myopic vision of life is no better than yours? Are you following on podcasts and TikTok? Don't let blind guides obscure your vision of seers who see around corners. I remember she talked about most every other person who has a voice wants something from you, has an agenda, wants your money, wants your likes, but prophets, she said they have one goal in mind. To bless your life. And we often are persuaded by those who God has not called.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:15:51 So many great things there. Should we just say one more thing about the timing of this section as well? In 1829, these men were baptized and now they are, things have changed for them. So the Lord's saying, I'm expecting a little more from you. You've got to up your game just a little bit. This portion where we think about the covenant relationship that we have, I've been just completely blown away with [President Nelson's](#) talk

that he gave. It's recorded in the October 2022, Liahona, it's not a general conference, he gave it to leaders. It's called the Everlasting Covenant. It's one of the most fabulous talks on covenants that I think we will ever read. I'm just going to quote one paragraph from that talk. Once you and I have made a covenant with God, our relationship with him becomes much closer than before our covenant. Now we are bound together because of our covenant with God. He will never tire in his efforts to help us and we will never exhaust his merciful patience with us. Each of us has a special place in God's heart. He has high hopes for us. It's just so comforting to me to think about that with how the Lord feels about us in the covenant relationship.

- John Bytheway: 00:17:04 I'm trying to change because of statements like that and others I've heard recently. I'm trying to, in my mind, not think of a covenant as a contract, but think of it as a relationship because you heard that phrase, covenant relationship that's alive and that's living in a relationship and involves loyalty. And a relationship means I have access to that other party's strengths and that's so helpful to realize I am weak, I'm not strong, but the Savior is strong. The Savior has made me strong where I'm not, and if I have a covenant relationship with him, I have access to that strength.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:17:41 Mm, love that John. Section 84 where it talks about the oath and covenant of the priesthood. It starts with for whoso is faithful, and oftentimes we think of that faithful as, oh, I better be more righteous. I need to obey better. But think of it instead, like you've just described it, John, faithful like a spouse to be loyal, to be true, to be committed to them. I think that's what the Lord's speaking of, is that we put him preeminent in our lives even though we are not very righteous, even though we continually make mistakes, but my heart is given to him. I'm loyal to him. A hundred percent.
- Hank Smith: 00:18:15 Hmm. Sounds like that in verse two, doesn't it? You could take this as the Lord is upset with David for not doing something where he might be saying, David, I want to bless you. I want you to give heed to my spirit. I want your mind on the things of me so I can give you all that I want to give you.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:18:34 I've got all these blessings in store for you. Let me hand them to you. That's right. Verse five, that phrase to Peter Whitmer, fear not. Verse eight, be diligent in keeping my commandments. Verse 11, with all your soul, not fearing what man can do, I mean this theme really carries throughout this section of giving yourself over completely of not being too concerned about the

moment, but instead being able to have an eternal perspective and to keep it with us all times. The Lord wants you to have that and he'll magnify you as you keep him at the forefront of your mind and your efforts.

- Hank Smith: 00:19:08 I noticed in verse 11, a little bit of a hint to Peter Whitmer, your whole labor shall be in Zion. I don't think he knows that's actually where he is going to end up on this mission. Close to where you're headed on your mission, Mark.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:19:22 Close to where we're going. That's right. That's right.
- Hank Smith: 00:19:25 Your whole labor shall be in Zion. I'm sure Peter Whitmer is going well, that sounds great. And the Lord's going, you don't know actually,
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:19:32 you don't know what that means,
- Hank Smith: 00:19:33 But you will.
- John Bytheway: 00:19:35 Yeah. Verse 11 again, the scriptures use such strong words. Can you imagine if it said, and most of your labor shall be in Zion? No. It's your whole labor, and labor with a high percentage of your soul. No, with all your soul. It reminds me going back to section four with all your heart, might, mind, and strength, and how if you only with half your heart, half your mind, half your strength, then you'll stand half blameless. So, it's an all in type of a message there isn't it?
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:20:07 Really is.
- John Bytheway: 00:20:08 It makes me feel like I need to step it up when I read it.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:20:11 Yeah. Should we do section 31?
- Hank Smith: 00:20:14 Let's do it.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:20:15 Thomas B. Marsh. He was something. He's one of the great characters I think in all the scriptures. I really do appreciate Thomas B. Marsh. He'd had some amazing opportunities if he'd kind of continue in the direction he was going, we'd probably have to rewrite a little primary hymn. This is why I'm not a primary hymn writer. Latter-day prophets are kind, not harsh. Joseph Smith and Thomas B. Marsh. He would've been number two. He was the president of the quorum of the 12. For a portion of his time.

Hank Smith: 00:20:47 Instead of a Y on the mountain, there'd be this big M. Right? Up there in Provo.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:20:52 That's right. I think most people are familiar with the story of the strippings of milk his wife was involved in. And I heard on one of your podcasts earlier this year, Hank, when you told the story of one of your colleagues that was funny, but probably wanted to forget that story. It wasn't a great moment for him. There's plenty of stories that I don't really want to have retold about me. This is maybe one that where we sometimes dwell a little bit much on [Thomas B. Marsh](#) and his wife and some mistakes that he made along the way. But I love him in so many ways because of his diligence. He accepted some really hard assignments. He did a good job with them. Yes, he had some problems, but he dies in the faith. Like most of these characters, we're going to study it. He's got some feelings, he's got some pride. The Lord's going to give some pretty strong warnings to him in his life. For me, it gives me hope to say, oh, some of these more gray characters in church history might sometimes be a little bit more like I am day to day. I know that I can be able to still have fine favor with the Lord and accomplish his purposes as frail and foolish as I can be from time to time.

Hank Smith: 00:22:03 Mark, I think that is such an important principle and I hadn't even thought of it, but we do sometimes hang on to people's worst moments and perpetuate those stories. Just a couple of weeks ago, [Sister Ford](#) was here, John, she said she learned this from [Dr. Melissa Inouye](#), but I love how Sister Ford related it, that redeeming the dead in part can be saying good about them, talking good about them, not just doing their temple work, redeeming maybe some of the mistakes they've made. And I think Mark showed us how to do that. What are we going to focus on when we think of someone?

John Bytheway: 00:22:40 The idea of redeeming their reputation. The other night our family was trying to do our Come, Follow Me and we're talking about Section 19, of course Martin Harris. Oh, what do we remember about him? We talked about, listen, this whole thing with the lost, and [Gerrit Dirkmaat](#) would say stolen manuscript happened before he was baptized. Well, do we believe baptism for the remission of sins or don't we? Extend some grace to these people like we would like grace extended to us.

Hank Smith: 00:23:15 Yeah. Mark, isn't there a reason that Thomas B. Marsh is called to be the first president of the 12?

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:23:22 Yes. I think there's some great reasoning behind this. Maybe just a little bit of background on Thomas B. Marsh, which I have

to insert here. Four years ago on your podcast, the person who covered these sections was [Robert L. Millet](#). What are you thinking? Having me come here when Robert Millet did them four years ago. I could never fill his shoes. He's incredible.

Hank Smith: 00:23:44 Yeah. Brother Millet is out in Southern Virginia University now. We don't know if he's listening, but Bob, we love you.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:23:52 We sure do Brother Millet. Thank you. Thomas B. Marsh. He's born in 1799 or 1800 depending on what you read. He runs away from home at the age of 14, supports himself doing various odd jobs until he is married in 1820. And then he moves to Boston and joins the Methodist church. Like most of these people that we'll talk about today, they have a very strong spiritual inclination to try to figure out what does the Lord want for them and how can they go about it? And many of them join other churches and have other pathways to get to the restored gospel. He still feels unsettled. He's been a printer's apprentice. He goes to these different churches. None of them just seem to be preaching the gospel though that he found in the Bible. He had this belief that there would be a new church that would arise, that would teach the restored truth.

00:24:48 And so in 1829, Thomas felt led by the Spirit to travel hundreds of miles from his home, from Boston to Western New York. He stays in the area about three months before turning toward home, uncertain why he traveled so far. I just love that. You know, he's just going, All right, I thought this is what I should do and maybe, maybe, maybe not. And then at a stop along the way, he has a host that he stays with that asks him if he's heard of Joseph Smith's golden Bible. And Thomas told the woman that he had not, and then he felt compelled to learn more. She connected him to Martin Harris and directed him to Palmyra. And that's when Thomas B. Marsh goes there, right? And he goes and he actually finds Martin at Grandin's print shop. And not only there but Oliver Cowdery's there as well.

00:25:37 And the printer hands him the 16 pages of the book. If you've been to Grandin's Press, there's this big sheet of 16 pages. So he gets handed these 16 pages of the Book of Mormon, and that's what he reads and that's what he joins the church with. He's reading 16 pages of the Book of Mormon and shares them with his wife and she reads the pages and she believes they're the word of God as well. And Thomas is baptized September of 1830, the power of the Book of Mormon. Just so amazing to me to see this and to be able to feel this incredible journey that he took to get his early start in the church. It's kind of also worth to note Elizabeth's story. Her determination grew out of her

conversion. She believed the Book of Mormon was the word of God, but she wasn't baptized right away.

00:26:24 And after giving birth to a son in Palmyra, she asked the Lord for a witness if the gospel was true. And a short time later she received that testimony and she joined the church. This quote from her I think is powerful as well. "There was a great change taking place with me both in body and mind. I felt a desire to be thankful for what I had received and to still look for more." I think that's pretty awesome that they both start off this way right? With enough to kind of step ahead. But they're going to keep looking for more. It's enough to get me started, but I've got to continue to press forward and keep going. Thus, we get this revelation in section 31 for [Thomas](#), where he's going to get more specific direction for him and his early faith as he's going to be asked to go out and to serve. Section 31 is it opens verses three, four, and five might be some of the most frequently quoted scriptures for all missionaries in this dispensation. We use them at the MTC frequently with missionaries. I know young missionaries as they go out, there's some power there. Hank, do you want to read three, four, and five? And then let's just talk together about those verses of what they seem to give to us for all missionaries and really all of us as we have a work to perform in the Lord's Kingdom.

Hank Smith: 00:27:42 You got it. Section 31: 3,4 and 5, Lift up your heart and rejoice, for the hour of your mission is come; and your tongue shall be loosed, and you shall declare glad tidings of great joy unto this generation. You shall declare the things which have been revealed to my servant, Joseph Smith, Jun. You shall begin to preach from this time forth, yea, to reap in the field which is white already to be burned. Therefore, thrust in your sickle with all your soul, and your sins are forgiven you, and you shall be laden with sheaves upon your back, for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Wherefore, your family shall live.

John Bytheway: 00:28:19 I have always loved verse three. Now when I look back, I think more of that time, I don't think there's a day that goes by that I don't at some point reflect on something on my full-time mission to the Philippines. I mourn and more understand, Hey rejoice, the hour of your mission has come and it feels like an hour. It goes by so fast. You know, I have a son who's just come home. Hank has a son who's just been called. And I think we've been thinking a lot about that, haven't we? Hank this little portion of your life where you get to devote full time to that?

Hank Smith: 00:28:50 Mm-hmm. As I've read these verses, Mark, I thought of how much missionary work blesses the missionary. I think it was

[President Hinckley](#) who said, what appears to be a sacrifice ends up being an investment that pays you dividends for the rest of your life. As the Lord talks about it here, there's not a lot about the people you're going to bring in, but what's going to happen to you as a missionary, you will be laden with sheaves upon your back. The laborer is worthy of his hire. Your family shall live. Just blessings for the missionary.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:29:23

Wow. I love all that. You are both just so spot on. I think my wife and I had this incredible privilege of being called as mission leaders. We had a little prescreen interview with Elder Takashi Wada who's a member of the 70, and he asked some questions to us. It was fun. We got done. My wife said, so now what? And he said, well, you might hear in two days or in two weeks or in two months or in two years or never. And so he said, okay, you know, you just wait and see. And we got an email from Elder Patrick Kearon's secretary asking us to come in. It was sacred moments. I don't want to share anything that I ought not to. I'll share this portion. There's a lot of questions to be asked and a lot of thinking. And Elder Kearon, I think we've all immediately fallen in love with him as an apostle.

00:30:18

I mean, we just adore him and his messages that he's given us already about the church of joy and God is in relentless pursuit of you. And as I just sat in his office and my wife and I were going through these interview questions, he paused and he just said, I believe you know where we are in the interview process. Would you like me to continue or would you like a moment together? And it was. It was a pretty amazing moment. My wife and I looked at each other and said, if it'd be okay, we'd just like a moment together. I thought of these verses because he left us in his office for just a few minutes. It was just so sweet. Well lift up your heart and rejoice for the hour of your mission has come. We had a lot of tears and thinking about what this was going to mean for us.

00:31:09

I couldn't help but think of thousands, thousands of young men and young women and senior couples and people who make this decision every year, every month, every week of their lives, every day to say, I'm going to submit these mission papers and go, my wife and I have had a privilege of, we've already talked with a couple of people who are in our ward and they've already turned in their mission papers. They're going to come with us and serve in our office. And you're just like, wow. People just saying, yeah, we'll come if that's what you need. I'm just floored by this of people who just say, I can lift up my heart and rejoice. I can trust that the Lord's call for me is to go and do his work. And the blessings, the compensation. Well, we

jokingly will say, right, it's out of this world. The pay is out of this world. It really is phenomenal. I've already began to feel it just a little bit. And anybody that I've spoken to who's done this as a mission leader just says it's the most demanding and rewarding thing you'll ever do in your entire life.

- John Bytheway: 00:32:10 I just love how consistently in the scriptures the gospel is described as glad tidings of great joy and glad tidings means good news and gospel means good news. I love how consistent that is when critics speak of toxic perfectionism and legalism and all of that. But when the scriptures speak of the gospel, it's the church of joy, isn't it? I think I choose to want to describe it that way. The way the scriptures do.
- Hank Smith: 00:32:43 I'm reminded, John, you could tell this story better than I can. I think we've done this for a [followHIM favorites, McKay Christensen](#), do you remember?
- John Bytheway: 00:32:51 Mm-hmm. Yeah. [Million Dollar Missionary](#).
- Hank Smith: 00:32:53 The million dollar missionary who's one of the best high school baseball players in the state of California is getting offers not just from colleges but from major league baseball teams, offering him a lot of money to come and play after high school. And when he tells some of these teams and colleges, I'm going to go on a mission, most back out except for one team. Do you remember John offered him a million dollars? This is back in the 19 hundreds, offered him a million dollars if he would give up the mission and come play for them. And do you remember what he said? It was just beautiful. He said, that's awfully gracious of you. My mission is not for sale. Just an awesome statement. Yeah. From a young man who's doing what you said, Mark, making the choice. Here we go.
- John Bytheway: 00:33:45 And you guys both know Brother S. Michael Wilcox.
- Hank Smith: 00:33:48 Mm-hmm
- John Bytheway: 00:33:49 He has taught that the Lord tends to call us when the nets are full. So as soon as Peter gets the biggest catch ever, he's like, okay, drop it and follow me. McKay Christensen is an example of that. Brother Beecher's an example of that. And I don't want to forget those young men and young women who are not hugely accomplished perhaps and are even a little bit afraid. I'm not good at talking to people. Who are willing to go. For them, it's very difficult too because I used to think that maybe if we just talk about the rightness of going on a mission or the

doctrine of it, but then there's young people out there that are afraid they don't have what it takes. And for them it's very hard too to submit those papers.

- Hank Smith: 00:34:35 It is. Wow. And they do it. I think verse seven can give you comfort. It's not your job to convert. Right Mark? I will open the hearts of the people.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:34:46 Isn't this amazing? And see this from a Book of Mormon perspective as the Lord sort of expands on this idea of him doing all the heavy lifting for us, if we'll let him. Alma 16: 15-16, John, do you want to read for us?
- John Bytheway: 00:35:30 And thus did Alma and Amulek go forth, and also many more who had been chosen for the work, to preach the word throughout all the land. And the establishment of the church became general throughout the land, in all the region round about, among all the people of the Nephites. And there was no inequality among them; the Lord did pour out his Spirit on all the face of the land to prepare the minds of the children of men, or to prepare their hearts to receive the word which should be taught among them at the time of his coming.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:35:31 Hmm. The Lord prepares the heart.
- John Bytheway: 00:35:34 Yeah.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:35:35 He's the one who does, again, all the heavy lifting. All I've got to do, we'll see right away here coming in section 33 is I have to open my mouth, but the Lord opens the hearts. He opens the minds. He prepares everything that needs to be done to have his work be accomplished. If we'll just do our little minor part.
- Hank Smith: 00:35:54 I really love that because that can give you confidence as you move forward in your role and his role because maybe someone doesn't accept the gospel and you think, what did I do wrong? It might be, well, that's not one the Lord was opening the heart of, at least not right now.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:36:13 But you continue to do what you do. And we had a missionary in the MTC who was from the South and his dad had enjoyed as a non-member having the missionaries over and kind of hitting them pretty hard with some Bible passages and questions and asking them for proof and things like that. And he'd done this with several sets of missionaries. The area was then, we would call it whitewashed. They changed out the missionaries, they changed out Elders, they put Sisters in. They arranged a time to

come and meet with him and he gladly welcomed them. I think believing that he was going to have a similar experience with these sisters. They just simply said as they sat down with him, they said, we know that you're very knowledgeable. We wouldn't even think to challenge you and your knowledge because you're so knowledgeable. We just invite you to do one thing.

00:37:00 Will you read the Book of Mormon? Because we know you won't be deceived by anything in the book, but you're wise and you're learned, so just give the book a try. It would never persuade you away from what you believe. Well, he literally read to first Nephi chapter eight and called them back and said, I need to join your church. He was a seeker of truth, much like these early leaders and converted by the Spirit. He had to put himself in a position where the Lord could then say, alright, now your heart, I can open your heart and the change will come as it needs to.

Hank Smith: 00:37:33 Hmm. Mark, I'm glad that you brought in the Book of Mormon here. It's almost as if the Lord knew we were going to be doing a lot of missionary work because there is a lot of missionary work in the Book of Mormon and for this book that's going to bring me to Christ, it sure shows me how to bring others to Christ.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:37:52 The Book of Mormon is by far and away the most powerful tool. In fact, here in my notes, I'll just share a few thoughts with you from Preach My Gospel. I've got to tell you, as a mission leader, one of the things that you get early on is you get a missionary portal and it has no joke, 85 tasks that you have to accomplish before you go. That's the number and the minimum amount of time for each one's 20 minutes. There's some podcasts, there's about 20 podcasts you listen to, but some of them are chapter three of Preach My Gospel, which is all of the lessons. I mean it's four or five hours of study, but one of these is to immerse yourself in Preach My Gospel and there's a chapter there on the power of the Book of Mormon. One of the great things that Preach My Gospel teaches about the Book of Mormon is that it leads to lifelong conversion.

00:38:45 So listen to these citations that I've discovered from [Preach My Gospel](#). Page 42, studying the Book of Mormon is essential for enduring conversion. Page 113. The Book of Mormon, combined with the Spirit is your most powerful resource in conversion. Page 114, an essential part of conversion is receiving a witness by the power of the Holy Ghost that the Book of Mormon is true. Page 120 emphasized that the book, reading the book daily is a key to progressing towards baptism and lifelong

conversion. I mean, throughout you hear the power of the Book of Mormon if in lifelong conversion. I just know that these missionaries, it's written as much for them as it is for people who are joining the church. As you stay close to the Lord, as you stay in burying yourself each day immersion in the Book of Mormon, you are guaranteeing lifelong conversion. I've seen it many times over and I've watched missionaries do it and the three of us all know that's completely true.

- John Bytheway: 00:39:49 Was it [Boyd K. Packer](#) that talked about being out at a stake and the stake has all these problems? What should I do? And at the time, someone counseling Elder Packer said, just tell him to read the Book of Mormon. And I discovered as a bishop too, that the prescription for so many problems is get the Spirit into your life and the answers will present themselves. And one of the best ways to do that is to read the Book of Mormon.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:40:18 It's absolutely true, great power there and the missionaries are taught that over and over again and Preach My Gospel and it has to continue throughout the rest of our lives that the Book of Mormon is a central message for all of us.
- Hank Smith: 00:40:29 And the Lord himself. Doesn't he say this in Third Nephi? We all love the first day that Jesus spends with the Nephites, but not a lot of us can quote that second day. Almost the entire thing is about the gathering of Israel in the latter-days, and he basically says, this is the sign that you'll know the gathering of Israel has begun. This is the Book of Mormon. This is 3 Nephi 21 and it's the tool of the gathering.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:40:56 I just don't think that the role of the Book of Mormon can be overstated. We'd learn as missionaries early. Your purpose is to invite others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and his atonement, repentance, baptism by immersion and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, enduring to the end. That doctrine is taught so clearly in the Book of Mormon. More than any other place, I've often wondered why would we start with a story that we do in the Book of Mormon where it's about a family who's going to leave, but first we got to chop off this guy's head, change our clothes and sneak out with the plates. That story might be better buried in Alma somewhere, right? But you can't think of a better way to start. You're going to uproot your spiritual lives. We're going to ask you as you join our church, to leave behind everything, to give your heart over to God, to grab a hold of these plates and to let them become the thing that's going to guide you in your wilderness as you step forward as a new member of this church of Jesus Christ. The story's the perfect

one for all of us, being led by the Spirit not knowing beforehand that which we should do.

- Hank Smith: 00:42:14 Yeah, it's almost a stumbling block or a sieve, how badly do you want this? You hit that first roadblock and you go, do I really want to keep going? Some say, no thanks, I don't want this book. But others, they venture into the book and they find out it's a mansion. I noticed in section 31 verse nine, and it does come up in the Book of Mormon as well. I think it's Alma 17, where the Lord says, be patient in afflictions. That's part of missionary work is going through difficulty and being patient. I got this story from a friend, Allison Jones. She says, during one part of my mission in Brazil, my companion and I were having a difficult time finding people to teach. That never happens, does it you guys? It was my companion's last transfer, and we had gone many weeks with no success.
- 00:43:02 On a certain day we had knocked dozens of doors with no luck. We were exhausted and discouraged in frustration. I turned towards the sky and half pleaded and half yelled at God, please just send us one person. As soon as these words left my mouth, we saw a young man walking on the other side of the street with his head hanging down. We decided to go talk to him. We learned that his name was Matthew and that it was his birthday. We agreed to come visit him the next day with a small birthday present. We began to teach him and fell in love with this sweet young man and his family. He was 16, but as there were no father in the picture, he was the man of the house and he had to drop out of school to provide for his many young siblings. He was really interested in the gospel, carried his Book of Mormon around with him everywhere and asked what he had to do to be baptized.
- 00:43:49 We were overjoyed when someone says, can I be baptized? Why sure! One night as we left his home, we were halfway down the street when we heard a loud whistle behind us. We turned around and we were surprised to see Matthew running towards us. He looked emotional as he approached us. How do you guys do what you do? He asked. What do you mean? we said. He proceeded to tell us that the day we had approached him, he was on his way to his own birthday celebration, but was terribly distraught because he had just learned that his best friend had been killed in a motorcycle accident. Thank you so much, he said, you guys changed my life. I want to do what you guys do. How do I serve a mission? She said, I was amazed when I walked away from that conversation, but even more so when my companion began to sob and told me through her tears, remember this is her last transfer,

- 00:44:44 My dad came from a similar situation. She said he worked from a young age to provide for his family. He found the gospel as a teenager and was baptized right before I left on my mission. My dad told me that I would find a young man just like him, whose life would be completely changed by the gospel the way my life was. I have been praying every day, of her mission for that moment. She said, now I know the Lord has accepted my mission. Now I know. Isn't that just beautiful that the Lord says, be patient in afflictions. I will open the hearts of the people. It wasn't as if this is happening every day. What did she say? Many weeks with no success. Be patient in afflictions.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:45:31 I think that applies to us as we go about our lives with work colleagues, with neighbors, with people that we've tried to work with, that perhaps we've tried several different ways or different times and things just aren't progressing. And so we just think, well, I'm not making any headway and so why do I keep doing this? But the Lord, he'll open the hearts and we be patient. We continually work on his timetable and we know that that timetable is his indeed and it will open people's hearts as they're ready.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:03 Yeah, I think that's important, right? As they're ready, and I think maybe Mark, the Book of Mormon can show you if someone's ready, if someone's taking the Book of Mormon seriously, that might be an indication this person is ready for the message. And if someone's not taking the Book of Mormon seriously, however interested they might be in other programs of the church, that may be the indication that they're not ready.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:46:26 To your point, it can be a sifter for sure. You know, Hank a little further in verse nine, govern your house in meekness and be steadfast. Thomas B. Marsh is given some direction here, even gives him a little bit more caution there in verse 12. To pray always lest you enter into temptation and lose your reward. Thomas is cautioned early on to just be careful of pride and to be more meek and to be more willing to do what the Lord wants. And again, sort of knowing the end of the story, that there are some things with the Brother Marsh that the Lord knows ahead of time and is going to give him the right counsel and the right guidance. He's got to be ready and willing to receive it in all his circumstances that day and into the future. Whenever that becomes even a little bit more pertinent, like all of us, there's counsel that I've received that became more clear years down the road, and that's certainly true for Thomas B. Marsh as well.
- Hank Smith: 00:47:19 The Lord knows his weaknesses here.

- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:47:21 Section 112 is also given to Thomas B. Marsh, verse 10, kind of a famous verse. Be thou humble and the Lord thy God shall lead thee by the hand and give thee answer to thy prayers. Thomas B. Marsh is excommunicated in 1839, and it's not as simple as the strippings of the milk. There's some other events that come about. There's some fallout with Sidney Rigdon and the salt sermon. Some things that happen, a conflict at Gallatin in Missouri. These all contributed to Thomas B. Marsh separating from the prophet Joseph Smith. It's kind of a hard road that he goes, he's out for a while. Thomas B. Marsh leaves. But then he does come west to Utah in 1857. He's rebaptized as he comes back. He spoke of his split with the prophet Joseph. He says about this time I got a beam in my eye and thought I could discover a moat in Joseph's eye, though it was nothing but a beam in my eye.
- 00:48:18 I was so completely darkened that I did not think on the Saviors injunction. Thou hypocrite why beholdest thou the moat that is in thy brother's eye when a beam is in thine own eye? First cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then thou shall see clearly to get the moat out of thy brother's eye. All seriousness. Third graders, I tell them all the time, worry about yourself. You know they're looking at somebody else. Why does he get this? Or how come that? I'm saying, who are you supposed to worry about? Me. But as I tell them that every time I honestly think, am I worried about me and keeping my life and myself in check rather than trying to worry about something else that isn't my concern?
- John Bytheway: 00:48:59 What you just read was referenced in the [Revelations in Context](#), which we've mentioned before. And our friend [Steven Harper](#) wrote that book called Doctrine and Covenants Context also that has things like this in it. I love that Thomas B. Marsh spoke about this later. I heard someone call it the Lord's Law of Learning. Of learning by your own experience. You can tell people things, but some people have to experience before they learn it. Continuing where you were talking about the moats and beams. This is what Thomas B. Marsh said. I talked with Brother Brigham and Brother Heber and I wanted them to be mad like myself. And I saw that they were not mad and I got madder still because they were not, but I love the part that you said at the beginning. I overlooked everything that was right. I spent time in looking for the evil. And then when the devil began to lead me, it was easy for the conman to rise up. If you want to find faults in people, you can, you will, of course, if that's what you're looking for. I love that Thomas B. Marsh came back and is willing to share with us. Yeah, I messed up.

Hank Smith: 00:50:12 And that's such a hard lesson. It's sad to see, but it's also a hopeful lesson for those who have seen people walk away from the faith, that Thomas B. Marsh he comes back. I'm sure the Lord had his eye on Thomas B. Marsh the entire time when he was in, when he was out and when he came back.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:50:30 Mm-hmm. That's right.

Hank Smith: 00:50:32 So Mark, just a quick question for you. Doctrine & Covenants 31 verse three, lift up your heart and rejoice for the hour of your mission is come, your tongue will be loosed. You'll declare glad tidings of great joy unto this generation. Mark, as you're preparing for this three year mission, you and your wonderful wife Kim, what gets you excited? What are you thinking about that says the hour of our mission has come?

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:50:58 Well, I'll tell you one of the things honestly that we have access to that I feel a little bit like cheating. I've listened to the 2024 [Mission Leader seminar](#). So the one from this last June, 20 talks from our church leaders, an amazing amount of knowledge there for these leaders. The thing that I get the most excited about is thinking about these missionaries that I've been trained and taught a lot. The missionaries will be able to have their converts of the people that they'll be teaching, but for you, teachers, your converts are going to be your missionaries. You're going to want to hang on to them and you're going to want to be able to do all you can to help them to stay in the gospel, to keep them firm in the faith and to keep them progressing forward. It's exciting, it's overwhelming. It's a little bit much sometimes to think about it and go, wow, that's kind of a lot on your shoulders.

00:51:52 But at the same time, those who've served missions, you all remember moments. I remember moments from my mission president, from just the experience of when you're out giving of yourself in the Lord's service and probably for the first time in your life, figuring out the world isn't all about me. The 18, 19-year-old person, that there's a lot of other people out there who are way different, who have come from backgrounds that are so much more difficult than what you and I have experienced, and they have been searching and needing purpose and meaning that the gospel brings to them. That excites me and keeps me feeling like I'm thrilled to be able to have this opportunity to go work with the missionaries and watch them as they work with people who join the church.

Hank Smith: 00:52:39 The idea that you might wake up today and change a family tree for eternity, that'll get you out of bed in the morning. Today

might be the day and it might not be, and you might be tired and exhausted and then you get up the next day, right, and go, I'm going to try this again. There's something tiring and wonderful about it. It sounds exhausting. You're on the edge of your seat almost the entire time.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:53:09

As I've been studying all these things that we've been asked to be ready for, for this mission. Preach My Gospel is laser-focused on the missionary purpose. Throughout the book, throughout any of these seminars, talks that I've talked about, they just continually talk about the missionary purpose to be able to invite others to come unto Christ by helping them to receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ. This remaining focus on our commitment to Jesus Christ and to our missionary purpose, not the outward results, is what's going to bring that success, that feeling of comfort, that feeling of accomplishment. We've heard many times people, how many, how many baptisms did you have? What did you do right? I'll just share this piece with you from Preach My Gospel. Your success is determined primarily by your desire and commitment to find, teach, baptize, and confirm converts. Your desire and your commitment to do those things, not by others' agency, but by your desire and commitment. And that again, thinking about that, Hank, as you mentioned, that's what gets you out of bed, right? The desire and the commitment to be able to say, this is what the Lord wants me to focus on and I know that's where I can have my success as I continually keep that at the forefront of my mind.

John Bytheway: 00:54:27

I love that the missionary purpose that you stated is bringing people to Christ. Do you remember Hank, when we had [Steven Harper](#), we were talking about the worth of souls and he said, how sad if we turn souls into just baptisms, and I think that's what you were saying there Mark, is no, our object is to bring people to Christ. The natural result of that, we hope, is that they'll be baptized, but our desire is to bring people to Christ. To your question, Hank, you've heard the Jeremiah 16:16 verse, I'll send forth hunters and they shall hunt them and fishers and they shall fish them. What Mark just defined for us there, your success is your desire and your commitment. It's not a quantifiable goal of baptisms because like we've joked, Hank, if I could set goals for things that were outside of my agency, I would set goals that my favorite football team would win every game. But how could that be my goal if I have nothing to do with the outcome, if my goal is to have my desire and commitment, that's something I have some control over.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:55:37

That's right.

Hank Smith: 00:55:38 I love what you both brought up here. This is not about numbers. It can't ever be about numbers. I think you're going to be frustrated as a missionary if it is more about numbers than about souls. We just talked earlier about covenants. Covenants are not about numbers. It's not about signing a contract. It's not about clicking a button and saying, okay, there's one more. We are inviting people into a relationship with God that I think you're right, Mark. Many people want, they're missing that in their life. What does Joseph Smith write later? Many are kept just from the truth because they know not where to find it.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:56:22 Hank I just love that the scripture that you just quoted is actually quoted I think on page one and two of Preach My Gospel. But this is how the chapter one begins. You are surrounded by people. You pass them on the street and travel among them. You visit them in their homes and connect with them online. They're all children of God, your brothers and sisters. God loves them just as he loves you. Many of these people are searching for purpose in life. They are concerned for their future and their families. They need the sense of belonging that comes from knowing they are children of God and members of his eternal family. They want to feel secure in a world of changing values. They desire peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come. That opening, you just say, that's what it's about, is being able to help people find the eternal purpose that they need here and that focus.

John Bytheway: 00:57:10 It reminds me of the statement of the prophet [Joseph Smith](#). A man filled with the love of God is not content with blessing his family alone, but ranges through the whole world, anxious to bless the whole human race. That's a different kind of motive. It reminds me too, of the prayer of Enos who prays for his own soul and then his soul expands and I pray for my brethren and then, well, I'm going to pray for the Lamanites and maybe even our enemies, the way they'd been treated at the time. And then it was, well, if they won't listen, please preserve the records so that they'll read them one day. And you see that exact thing Joseph Smith talking about has expanded his love and care for the whole world, and that came from a man filled with the love of God, which is getting down to our best motives for serving.

00:57:59 I probably served for a variety of reasons. Well, my dad went and he joined the church when he was 24. I should probably go. My brothers went. I know I should go. I believe it's true. I believe it's wonderful. I love the Savior. I've heard that people will want to date you. All these mixed reasons for going, but then we can't just say, well, I'm going to wait until my motives are perfect before I do this or before I minister or anything,

because you'll never do anything. It's a great idea to go and have the Lord help you refine your heart and your motives.

Hank Smith: 00:58:35 Yeah, I think it's get yourself out there and let the Lord do wonders with you. I think your motives change over time. I've heard many missionaries say, I cried when I landed in that mission and I cried when that plane took off to take me home.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:58:52 Again from one of these talks that I just had been listening to from President Uchtdorf from the 2024 seminar mission leaders. He says, if the Lord's work appears difficult, don't worry. If you go and do, the Lord will provide a way. Remember, it is his work. There's another quote that may help if things start to seem difficult, start by doing what's necessary. The missionaries need to learn that too. Then do what's possible and suddenly you're doing the impossible. I just like that progression that you just do what's necessary and then maybe what you can that's possible and then all of a sudden you'll find that you're doing things that are impossible. That's awesome.

Hank Smith: 00:59:30 Move forward. The idea of God can't steer a parked car, let's move forward in faith. Whatever that faith looks like, as John said, whatever that motive looks like, get started and the Lord can do something about that. John, you are the one that introduced me to this story that I'm about to tell here a couple of years ago. I don't think we've told it in a while. I'll bet you'll recognize it really quick. This is from President Faust. Those of us who have served missions have seen the miracle in the lives of some. We have taught as they have come to realize that they are sons and daughters of God. Many years ago, an Elder who served a mission in the British Isles said at the end of his labors, I think my mission has been a failure. I have labored all my days as a missionary here, and I have only baptized one dirty little Irish kid.

01:00:16 That is all I baptized. Years later, after his return home to Montana, he had a visitor come to his home who asked, are you the Elder who served a mission in the British Isles in 1873? Yeah. The man went on and do you remember having said that you thought your mission was a failure because you had only baptized one dirty little Irish kid? He said, yes. The visitor put out his hand and said, I would like to shake hands with you. My name is Charles A. Callis of the council of the 12 of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I am that dirty little Irish kid that you baptized on your mission. That little Irish boy came to the knowledge of his potential as a son of God. This is President Faust. Elder Callis left a lasting legacy for his large family serving

as a mission president for 25 years. Mark, that makes three years not seem so bad. Right?

- Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:01:04 Right.
- Hank Smith: 01:01:05 Serving as a mission president for 25 years and his apostolic ministry for 13 years. He blessed the lives of thousands. I feel privileged [Elder Faust](#) says, to have known this great apostle of the Lord when I was a young man, this can't be about the things I see happening right in front of me. You don't know the seed you plant and what they will turn into.
- John Bytheway: 01:01:29 I was teaching one of my classes and I mentioned my mission President, President Menlo Smith, and something he had taught me, and this young man came up to me afterwards. He was Filipino and he said, my cousin's name is Menlo. And I said, what you, you're in the Philippines? Yeah. My cousin's name is Menlo. He's named after Menlo Smith, the mission president. I said, really? How did you come into the church? Well, my grandfather was taught by Elder Stoddard and we tried to, but we don't know how to find him. And I went, I've got Elder Stoddard's contact info right here. We both had a moment where he had been looking so that they could get in contact with the Elder Stoddard. I say, he's right here. I just saw him at the missionary reunion and be able to put those guys back together again. It's almost like Hank, you've quoted [Elder Maxwell](#) talking about the Lord putting us in orbits.
- Hank Smith: 01:02:27 Right. We cross orbits. The same Lord who put the star above Bethlehem, does the same thing with us. He puts us in our [divine human orbits](#) where we cross each other's paths. Mark, as I read all these sections, this is mostly about finding people who are not members of the church to become members of the church. They don't have really a reactivation work because there's no one to be reactivated. So what role have you seen as you've prepared in reactivation in missionary work? Does that count as missionary work is going out and talking to those who are not active in the church, who once were?
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:03:10 It's a great question because it comes back to what we were talking about earlier. Are we only counting baptisms? Is that our only measure of success? We've seen people who need people to reach out to them over and over again. In fact, there's a couple of new key indicators that have been added over the last couple of years with the new Preach My Gospel that came out in 2024. It was just this last year, one of which is the tracking of a new convert at sacrament meeting for the first year. That's on the missionaries. Now you're going to track that they're going to

attend sacrament meeting and you want to be able to make sure that they're still doing that and that you're connecting to the people and that you're keeping them active and going, we care about souls, we care about people coming to Christ. If someone is less active, if someone is not attending church, we have every bit of an obligation, and I believe the same missionary rewards for helping them to come back into the fold of the Savior, Luke 15 with the coin and the prodigal son, and that all says go out and get them. Bring them back.

- Hank Smith: 01:04:18 I think that's fantastic because in this day that we're reading about, there's not a lot of that work happening, but in 2025, there is a lot of work to be done in that regard and we can't say, I don't want to go reactivate people. That's not missionary work. It is very much missionary work.
- John Bytheway: 01:04:37 It's gathering.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:04:39 Yeah. You know, maybe as we make a little transition now, we could go to section 32 because I think there's kind of a principle there along these same lines. Hank, even though it's dealing with people who are coming into the gospel for the first time rather than reactivating, I think the principle's kind of a neat one. In fact, I almost call it the spiritual Karate Kid principle. Where the karate kid thought he was doing, sanding the floor, waxing on or waxing off, but was actually learning karate in a bigger platform. Spiritually speaking, this is exactly what the Lamanite mission was. In section 32, they go out and they think we're going to go out and we're going to gather the Lamanites. They've read the Book of Mormon that talks about the gathering of these people and they say, we need to go find those who are Lamanites, those who are descendants of Nephi and his family and we need to bring them in. They are doing this, but they're, you know the success of that mission. I think Hank, you've called it like the 24 hour mission before, haven't you?
- Hank Smith: 01:05:44 Yeah. And when I teach this in church history, these four, it completely changes the church.
- John Bytheway: 01:05:53 Absolutely.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:05:53 But not in the way that they think it's going to change the church. Right?
- Hank Smith: 01:05:57 Yep, that's exactly right. You've got Oliver Cowdery, Parley Pratt, Ziba Peterson, Ziba Peterson, however you want to say it,

and Peter Whitmer Jr. who believe. Right Mark? As you said, they believe they're going to go out on the other side of the Mississippi River and [teach the Lamanites](#) and they get to do that for a whole day. But it's what happens on their way when Parley P. Pratt says, let's stop in Kirtland. I used to live here in Kirtland. Yeah, maybe someone will want to hear us here in Kirtland. Then, what is it? A couple of days and they double the size of the church.

- Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:06:29 That's right. 127 converts. Right. With Sidney and the congregation joining the church. Yeah. It's pretty amazing to see. And so I guess sometimes we think, I'm not doing the Lord's work. I'm not baptizing my colleague that I've talked to about the gospel seven times doesn't really want to listen anymore. I feel like I'm a failure, but you don't know what's happening and what's going to come about with this because your job is to open your mouth and then let the Lord be able to make the changes that he's going to make the changes with. And this is certainly what happens to these people in Ohio.
- Hank Smith: 01:07:04 It's incredible. The Parley P. Pratt, John, you probably know this story as well as anyone. That Parley P. Pratt lives in Kirtland. He is a member of Sidney Rigdon's congregation, but then decides to go up to New England.
- John Bytheway: 01:07:17 Mm-hmm. With his wife. Awesome first name, Thankful.
- Hank Smith: 01:07:21 Thankful.
- John Bytheway: 01:07:23 And then gets this impression, I need to get off the boat in this region for a while. I don't know why, but the Spirit has manifested that to me and comes across the Deacon Hamlin. And I love in the movie that the church made, [How Rare A Possession](#), are your views broad enough to accept ministering of angels and then he hands him a Book of Mormon and Parley P. Pratt stays up all night reading it. Sleep was a burden to me, he says. Thomas B. Marsh got 16 pages. Parley P. Pratt stayed up all night, read the whole book, then wanted to go back and find his old minister, his friend, Sidney Rigdon.
- Hank Smith: 01:08:04 Mark, you're exactly right. They think, all right here, we're going to go out to the Lamanites not realizing that just on a stop, let's stop here for a week or two and maybe someone here in my old town of Kirtland will hear the gospel. And now because of that, I go to Kirtland every summer, this incredible place where the church blossoms. I love that idea, Mark, that they think this is what they're doing. And the Lord has completely other plans in mind and you let him do his work. Just be open and available.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:08:37 Again to the Book of Mormon. We know this is the case from the lost manuscript and then the small plates taking this, but maybe just revisiting Nephi's words. I'm going to look at first Nephi chapter nine here, but just look at him as he's keeping two sets of plates and what he says about this, and I think this is poignant for all of us. First Nephi nine verses five and six, wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates for a wise purpose in him, which purpose I know not, but the Lord knoweth all things from the beginning. Wherefore, he prepareth the way to accomplish all his works among the children of men, for behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words, and thus it is. Amen. A little bit of all in there, right? The Lord can do it all. We sometimes would limit that or say, is this working? This isn't right. Or why am I doing this? Or how come this isn't coming out with the outcomes that I think I'd like? And the Lord's going, it's a wise purpose and you just need to hang on. And I've got a way to accomplish all that I need to accomplish.

John Bytheway: 01:09:45 Hank, you mentioned earlier the parable of the sower. I love the imagery of broadcast your seeds. You know, broadcast doesn't come from radio and television, it comes from agriculture. You never know. Reminds me of, is it Mark chapter five? Jairus says, come see my daughter, my little daughter, life at the point of death. And on the way, what happens?

Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:10:07 They have the woman with the issue of blood.

John Bytheway: 01:10:09 The woman with the issue of blood touches him. Boy, be open and available to things that might happen on the way because they might be important too. We thought we were going to the mission to the Lamanites. Well, wasn't it the government Bureau of Indian Affairs that kind of shut off the missionaries efforts and that's why it was a 24 hour mission.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:10:29 The Indian Removal Act. Right, I think is what it was called. Yeah. That they had to do that. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 01:10:34 So they get out there for a whole day. They must have felt like we just walked. Yeah, about 1400 miles.

John Bytheway: 01:10:42 Oh, and it was knee deep in the snow. Right? You've seen the painting. It looks like, can we give them some snowshoes at least? Poor guys, you know?

Hank Smith: 01:10:54 So much more was going on that they didn't know about. And by the way, when they're told, Hey, you got to go back and get a

permit to teach Native Americans, you have to go to St. Louis, Mark. They had to go.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:11:07

That's where we're going to St. Louis to that place. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 01:11:09

Yep. And they had to talk to General Clark, who is the General Clark of Lewis and Clark.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 01:11:16

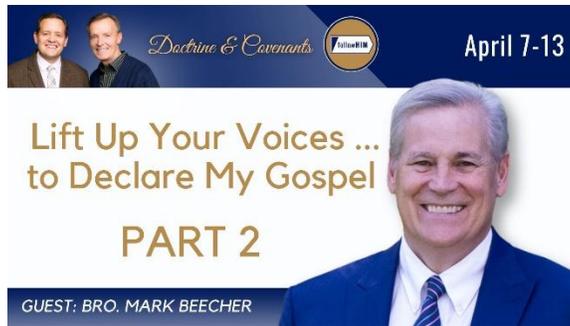
So as we wrap up section 32, I just had this thought from Elder Richard G. Scott, I have to just preface it before I read it by just telling you that if you pinned me down and ask me my all time favorite quote of every general authority, it would be this one. So no expectations, right? don't set the bar high. I just love what he teaches, and I think it's so applicable of this idea that sometimes we think we're about doing this or about doing that. Just understand it's all part of the Lord's plan and you can rest assured that he's got a way provided forward for all of us, regardless of our situations. Here's what it says. It's from October of '99. The Lord has placed currents of divine influence in your life that will lead you along the individual plan he would have you fulfill here on earth.

01:12:03

That's quite a line in and of itself, currents of divine influence to lead you along in an individual plan. Seek through the Spirit to identify it and carefully follow that direction that the Lord has put in your life. Align yourself with it. Choose willingly to exercise your agency to follow it. Do not be overcome by concentrating solely on today with its challenges, difficulties, and opportunities. Such preoccupations must not totally capture your attention so as to consume your life. Oh how I would encourage you to weave deeply into the fabric of your soul, the recognition that your life now is part of a much bigger plan the Lord has for you. You lived part of it in the premortal existence. You were valiant there and came here because you wanted to grow and enjoy greater happiness. What you decide to do now will affect how well you fulfill that divine personal plan he has for you. This strikes me to just see that all these things come together. The Lord's got it. He says in the Book of Mormon, I'm able to do my own work. I've got this, I've got it handled. You lean on me. You were there in the premortal life. It's here in mortality. It's all going to work together. You just keep going about doing what you know I'd have you do, and that plan will unfold as it needs to.

John Bytheway: 01:13:22

Please join us for part two of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:00:00 Keep listening for part two with Mark Beecher Doctrine & Covenants sections 30 through 36.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:07 Mark. We've added some names to our church in these first few sections. Thomas B. Marsh, who's going to have some impact. Parley P Pratt. I don't know if you guys know, but he has some impact. In fact, I taught my first three years of seminary were at Park City, but I don't know if you know this, it was once called Parley's Park City and it was, right there in Parleys Canyon, impactful people.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:32 And Hank, I grew up in the Parley's Stake in the Parley's second ward.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:37 Wow. So he has some impact. This is beautiful. Here's these names that all of us, everyone listening, it's going to have impact on our lives and here they are just in the beginnings. Mark, should we keep going? Who else are we going to add here?
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:00:51 Let's add some more in section 33. Ezra Thayre and Northrop Sweet. John, don't you have a cat named Northrop?
- John Bytheway: 00:00:58 Yeah. Well I think Northrop makes fighter jets too and rocket motors or something like that.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:05 Really?
- John Bytheway: 00:01:07 That was probably not him though.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:08 Yeah.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:01:09 Probably not this guy.
- 00:01:11 As we start with section 33, Ezra Thayre, I'm going to just share with you just a little bit of background on him. In the fall of 1830, Ezra Thayre was living in the township of Farmington,

New York with his wife Elizabeth and their children. He was in his late thirties. He spent several years in the area building bridges, dams, and mills, and he had some interesting reactions. So he's asked, as he comes across the prophet Joseph, he asks, is there a revelation for me? Section 33 opens and says, you know those names, open your ears and hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, whose word is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword. Dividing asunder of joints and marrow, soul and spirit is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. I love that opening. The Lord's voice is sharper than a two-edged sword, right?

00:02:01 And to divide both joint and marrow. I'm not much of a swordsman, but if you were to fight, you want to try to hit somebody here at a joint, but the Lord would say it's both joint and marrow at the bone. The Lord's word is so powerful that it doesn't just come to us in the most convenient or the easiest places to penetrate, but the Lord's voice comes and is so powerful that it can penetrate the impenetrable. Ezra Thayre. He accepts it. Northrop Sweet doesn't. It's kind of an interesting little dual reaction to this revelation as it comes. Ezra Thayre had had a reaction where he'd heard a little bit about the Book of Mormon and the prophet Joseph. And he immediately had rejected it from the beginning because he knew Joseph and his father and his brothers and he just didn't think that they were the ones, that kind of family, that background where he'd say these people are the ones that I want to follow.

00:02:58 But he gets a little perturbed as some of his family members start to give heed to the words. They begin to join the church. He says, alright, what is there to this? I want a chance. I want to try to listen. He decides that he better go and hear. He goes and he listens. He hears a little bit about it and then is slow to get this as again, this is why I like this opening, right? The Lord's word is quick and powerful, to the dividing asunder. But his heart is so hard that the first couple of interactions that he has, he says, I don't particularly care for this message. And then they go to a Smith family farm in Manchester. There's a lot of people there. And so Thayre kind of, let's see this proven wrong once and for all, moves himself to the front and wants to hear the message.

00:03:49 And so he jostles his way up to the front and Hyrum Smith begins to preach and Ezra Thayre's resistance melts, it changes the spirit. Finally, he's allowed it in enough that it could really take over. He wrote of this experience, he says, every word touched me to the inmost soul. I thought every word was pointed to me. The tears rolled down my cheeks. I was very

proud and stubborn. There were many there who knew me. I sat there till I recovered myself before I dare look up. He just says it. It just changed him in that moment, how it often goes for us in missionary work that we maybe make several attempts when the heart is ready, the Lord will let it be penetrated and changed. And Ezra Thayre has this change come to him.

Hank Smith: 00:04:40 When the saints go West. [Brigham Young](#) does something I think is brilliant, which is as you're moving west, you are helping with crops that are growing. You come first, you plant the seeds and then you keep going and the next group does some watering and weeding and then you keep going and the next group comes. They continue to help the crops grow and it keeps going till the last group gets to eat. You're planting seeds that you are never going to harvest, but someone else is doing that for you ahead of you. Doesn't it feel a little that way Mark? That this maybe set of missionaries do this part and maybe this neighbor does this part, and then another set of missionaries. Feels that way with [Ezra Thayre](#).

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:05:26 I had a son who just returned from a mission a year and a half ago in Houston and he tells a story of as they were on a P day, the call comes from somebody who needs some help moving in. And my son says, oh man, this is our one day, you know, to not be doing quote unquote missionary work. And they talk it over a little bit and decide, yeah, let's hurry. Let's just go help this family. And so they move this family in. As they get there, they find out that this call had come to them from some other missionaries who had sent these people from Arizona to Texas. Somehow it had been relayed to my son and his companion. They moved these people in. As they helped them move in, then they began to talk to them a little bit more about the gospel and found out that this couple were, what you might consider, you know the eternal investigators, right?

00:06:15 The eternagators, they've been going a long time, had been literally for 20 years, had had missionaries. He started when he was 18 and now he's 38 years old and he's still not joined the church. This woman says as they had these missionaries finally come and help, she said, I've been resistant as well too. But I sort of told myself, if these young men really did come and help, because the missionaries had promised, we'll find somebody to help you on the end as you come in. That's really the case, I'll give them a little listen. They gave them a little listen and they realized soon that as they began teaching, that this man could almost teach them the Joseph Smith story. He knew it well enough that he was just like, I've heard all this before. In their

next planning session, my son and his companion prayed and they said, what are we going to do?

00:07:05 What's the next step for this family? It was simply this. They had them get the app on their phone that shares a scripture from the Book of Mormon each day. And they said, will you read this scripture each day? One verse each day? And they said, yeah, we can do that. I can do one verse. My son and his companion were able to be the ones at the end who harvested 20 years of missionary labor. To your point, Hank, this happens over and over again where we have to just say it's going to come, it's going to come. We talked about in our last section, right, that the Lord's words are going to touch the people as they're ready and we have to just be content with his timeline and his power and his will be done. That's fantastic.

John Bytheway: 00:07:54 Brigham Young took a couple of years. Some of these guys we're talking about today were relatively quick. Brigham Young took a couple years.

Hank Smith: 00:08:02 Everybody's different this way. July 2024, Liahona Magazine, [Christy Monson](#), the title of this article is a Missionary Success Story: 60 Years in the Making. She says, I've always loved Doctrine and Covenants 18 the worth of souls is great in the sight of God. And then she writes, and sometimes it takes many of us working together in sharing testimony to bring souls to the Savior. I was reminded of this beautiful concept of collective missionary work. When I received an email one day, a brother who said he was the son of the mission president in Wichita, Kansas, wondered if I was the wife of Robert Monson. The brother went on to say he was looking for the Elder Monson who served in the Central States mission in 1959. That was my husband. He told me about two young elders, Elder Bennett, Elder Thompson, who were inspired recently to enter an apartment building.

00:08:56 They knocked on the first door and found an elderly lady who invited them to come back the next day and they set a time. When they returned for the appointment, they learned that this elderly sister had an old triple combination the missionaries had given her in 1959. She had read it many times and knew the teachings in it were true. She had not joined the church then because her husband did not want her to attend church or be baptized. Her husband had passed away recently and she prayed that she might find the missionaries again. In her triple combination were the names of the two missionaries from 1959: Robert Monson and Granade Curran, my husband and his companion. Over the next several weeks, the woman learned

about the plan of salvation and the blessings of the temple. Her son had passed away at age 22. She was thrilled at the possibility of being reunited with him, she joyfully accepted the invitation to be baptized.

00:09:51 Both my husband and his companion Elder Curran have passed away. But I imagine them attending this beautiful baptism from beyond the veil. As the mission president's son told me the story, I was reminded that the Savior does not forget any of us. Two sets of missionaries, one over 60 years ago and then one more recently brought this sister to Jesus Christ and in turn strengthened their own testimonies and found joy in the Lord. I love it. I love it. We do our part. It reminds me of 1 Corinthians 3. This is Paul. I have planted, Apollos, another missionary, watered, but God gave the increase. What does the Lord have to say to these two, Ezra and Northrop?

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:10:35 Well this is where we get in verses 8, 9 and 10, three times the Lord's injunction to open your mouth. Verse eight, open your mouth and they shall be filled and you shall become even as Nephi of old who journeyed from Jerusalem in the wilderness. Do you want to really become as Nephi whose brothers persecuted him a little bit? You know? Took him out back and tied him up on the ship and gave him a hard time. I think what it's saying here, right, open your mouth and you'll become as Nephi of old who journeyed in the wilderness not knowing beforehand the things that he, which he should do. I like this. We've taught this principle a little earlier today. You open your mouth and just start in and see how the Lord begins to fill it with what you need to do and say, it will be his will.

00:11:23 And you can trust that you've done what you needed to do. If you open your mouth, verse nine, open your mouth and spare not, don't make a judgment call on who you're going to share the gospel with. Just be able to say, is there somebody here that could use this? We had four sisters in the MTC, you have the sisters, if they go to a visitor center mission, they come to the two weeks of the MTC training and then they do one more week of visitor center training and they have some additional classes. And then on one of the last days of the week before they depart the MTC, they get on the train and they ride up to the Salt Lake visitor center and they shadow some sisters there for a day and they have an opportunity to maybe see how it could work.

00:12:06 And it's a really neat thing for them to have some hands-on experience with it at a visitor center before they go. These sisters were going to Ohio and to Illinois to Kirtland and Nauvoo

sites where they were going to be doing this. As they rode the train up, they had a great day there at Temple Square and then they got on the train to come back down and as they got on the train to come back down, there was a man who was a little disheveled and didn't smell great and was a little bit nerve wracking for some people on the train, began to talk with them. Now they had four of them there. They weren't feeling threatened or anything, but felt like let's just visit with him. We're okay to do that. And so they began to have this conversation and these sisters spoke so kindly and so gentle and open with him and he asked questions that were not necessarily on topic and they just continued to be the most kind and courteous as they could be.

00:13:05 The man got off somewhere as he's coming down I-15, he got off probably around the Draper area and the sisters continued on and as they continued on, another man got up from his seat and came over to these four and he said, I noticed how you spoke with this man. And he said, I and my girlfriend had been dating for quite some time and she's asked me to leave the church and to not have anything to do with it anymore. And he said, I watched how you talked with this man. And he said, it brought back so many memories to me of what it is to follow Jesus Christ. And he said, I'm going to go home and I'm going to tell my girl we can either be in the church or we'll have to separate. But that's what I've decided to do. And he got off in Lehi and was gone. I was just blown away by this from these four sister missionaries who just opened their mouth, had no idea that they were being watched.

John Bytheway: 00:14:09 Recently I came across a talk, her name is [Diana Hoelscher](#) and she gave this talk called [the Missionary Next Door](#). So good. Oh my goodness, it's so good. Have you heard it Hank? She talks about her family growing up in, I think it was Wisconsin or somewhere back there. And now they had pictures, Book of Mormon pictures on the walls and they'd invite friends over, what's that? She said, we without fail, people would ask a question about what's that? She said, we had these little two sentences, we each memorized something just to open our mouths. Oh, that's Nephi, that thing he's holding, that's the Liahona. And it helped him through the wilderness. And after that we now wait. They just had a way of opening their mouths and it was super motivating to hear. It reminded me too of power of everyday missionaries.

Hank Smith: 00:15:02 Yeah, from Brother Christensen.

John Bytheway: 00:15:04 Yeah. Somebody says, what did you do this weekend? Usually we start talking about Saturday. Why not say, man, we had the best lesson in Sunday school. Why not talk about Sunday? Let that out there and open your mouth. When I showed up at the MTC, Elder Joe J. Christensen was the MTC president. The first meeting we all got in a big room and he read verses 8, 9, and 10. He taught us, open your mouth. That whole principle. I'll never forget that first day.

Hank Smith: 00:15:37 Yeah, that's great. This is a story by [Dan Malcolm](#). He's talking about the idea of open your mouth. He said, one of many experiences that I have had personally in opening my mouth at the right time was while I was serving in Paraguay, I had met a young woman who had spent quite a lot of time considering whether to become a nun and was on hiatus from her time in the convent. She was kind, intelligent, very quick to offer a friendly hand. Our first meeting was only in passing and I was never very good at remembering names. When I saw her several weeks later giving up her seat to an elderly woman on a bus, I recognized her. But I was embarrassed to open my mouth because I just could not remember her name. The spirit indicated me that this was a very important moment in time.

00:16:22 I needed to speak to her. My heart pleaded with heavenly father, please help me open my mouth and say the right thing. He said there was absolutely no time to waste. And at the moment I began to open my mouth. She reached up to grab the handrail above and a bracelet on her wrist came into my view, which bore her name. Gladys, I said in a seemingly confident voice, which covered the true timidity I was feeling, she responded with a wonderful smile and a happy greeting, a warm conversation followed in the succeeding weeks with my companions, Elder Woolley, Elder Colina, Elder Hawes. I would spend hours with she and her baby sister Sindy unfolding everything we knew of Jesus Christ and his redeeming mission. To my eternal joy they accepted baptism in the Lord's kingdom. On July 21st, 1984, I had the blessing of confirming them members in his church. Gladys has remained true and faithful to her covenants. Open your mouth.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:17:19 Again. Remember it's the Lord's responsibility to open the hearts.

Hank Smith: 00:17:22 Mark I've noticed in section 33 the Lord tells him, well here's my gospel. If you want to teach my gospel, I'll give you a quick version.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:17:30 Yeah, I love verses 11 and 12 and 13 there where it just says this is what it is that you've got to be able to teach. Now maybe one of the reasons why we hesitate in speaking to others is because look at verse 10 where it says to repent and prepare the way of the Lord. We think we've got to declare this message of repentance. But think more on the first principles of the gospel. This is what the Lord wants us to start with, which is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Talk about the Savior, talk about his goodness, what he's done for us. Bring him to life a little bit more. Help them to be able to see this is something that's made a huge difference to me. We can all spend a lot more time in the joy of the Savior. We're just asking them to open their heart to Jesus Christ for a few minutes. That's going to make all the difference to them. And that's again, I think why we see this pattern of the doctrine of Christ.

Hank Smith: 00:18:25 I wonder in verse 10 and 11 here, if the quotation of John the Baptist might mean that I can be a John the Baptist type figure that prepares for the Lord to come into someone's life. So it's not necessarily call on your friend to repent as it is to see yourself as maybe a John the Baptist type figure who is introducing them to someone who is about to enter their life.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:18:51 I think that's absolutely true. Yep. And upon this rock, I'll build my church, come forward with the Savior and that's where the foundation begins.

Hank Smith: 00:18:59 Mark, I love this idea. Talk about the Lord. You can talk about him in very natural normal ways. I think that's President Uchtdorfs line. Normal and natural ways. It's easy to talk about the Lord when it's just part of your everyday life.

John Bytheway: 00:19:15 I was watching the [Follow Up](#) show on BYU TV and this sister talked about hitting rock bottom. I just loved what she said. I wrote it down because she had a tough time in her life and she said I hit rock bottom and then I discovered the rock was Jesus Christ and that's where I could start building. I thought what a great way to look at it. And I think it might be fun to mention because sometimes I don't think we have to be tied to one definition of what the rock is because Joseph Smith had referred to the rock as the rock of revelation in the Matthew 16 story. But here it sounds like the rock is the doctrine of Christ.

Hank Smith: 00:19:53 You build upon the doctrine of Christ, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you. This verse says my church.

John Bytheway: 00:20:01 This section, we're hearing some different parables throughout the standard works here in verse three. We've got the laborers

being called to the vineyard in verse four, here's a vineyard that's been corrupted every wit and that sounds like Zenos's allegory, a favorite of Hanks. I know in Jacob chapter five and then we've got Matthew 16, the whole story about building upon the rock there in verse 17, having your lamps trimmed and burning and oil with you. We've got the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. How fun that the Savior here is getting them ready and saying, draw on this, draw on this, draw on this.

- Hank Smith: 00:20:39 Right. He even mentions Nephi in verse eight. It's someone who speaks scripture can put together something like this.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:20:48 Love that.
- John Bytheway: 00:20:49 And as you mentioned John the Baptist in verse 10, you know, make his path straight. That's a very John the Baptist way of talking.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:20:57 So if it's okay, I just want to end section 33 a little bit on a personal note, I grew up different than a lot of people in the church. My family started off with kind of a rough beginning. My parents were married under some a little bit difficult circumstances. My dad, second marriage, he was 36. My mom was 19. You can imagine my mom's parents and their reaction to the marriage was not very positive. They promptly moved away to California when I was born, about six months after they were married. And so it just was a difficult beginning as they tried to find their way and they both had grown up very active homes in the gospel, but as they tried to find their way back, my mom, she was more active than my dad. I remember going to church with both of them enough during my early years, was baptized, and then my mom had her second child.
- 00:21:51 My little brother, I was not quite 10, I was nine years old when he was born and she passed away four days later of complications of childbirth. She'd always had some tough physical difficulty. Challenges. My little brother went to live with my grandparents, my mom's parents raised him and I stayed with my dad. And my dad really wavered with his faith and testimony. I felt drawn to stay as close as I could to the gospel. It's interesting that as we look at some of these early church leaders, these men who come and go and have these spiritual moments and then maybe fade a little bit, I just felt to try to stay as close as I could. I went to church quite a bit by myself as a young, probably 12 to 18-year-old, but my life forever changed the day that I committed to go on a mission and opening my mouth and being able to take this gospel to other

people, put me on a trajectory that I've been forever grateful for.

00:22:56 You know, my dad, eventually he did come back before he passed away. He'd lost his membership in the church through some difficult choices, but came back and was, had his temple blessings back before he passed away. I've just been amazed to watch and see how the Lord works with us over time in this simple pattern of the gospel that I, we've kind of outlined here in section 33, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We start there. That's where you start with anybody preaching him. Jesus Christ and him crucified. I can't begin to tell you the number of divine intersections that I had with the Spirit where the Lord would just give me something that I needed at that moment to know that the Savior was real, to have my testimony deepened just a little bit more to keep my baptismal covenants, to want to repent, to just have the Spirit come.

00:23:53 You know, those that faith, repentance, baptism and the Holy Ghost. It worked. It's what we do for people. It's what we try to bring to them. I just want to share with you that I'm a living witness of the power of Jesus Christ and his atoning sacrifice. I just would be remiss if I didn't somehow take this opportunity to share it with anybody who will listen and let you know that no matter where you are, no matter how far maybe you feel like you've strayed or if you're wondering if God has a plan for you, I just want to bear witness that he does and it's that simple plan. Have faith in Jesus Christ. Repent. Cling to covenants. Let the Holy Ghost work in you and that will bring you back home to Him. Thanks for letting me share it.

Hank Smith: 00:24:51 You're doing exactly what we're talking about today. Open your mouth and teach Mark, thank you so much for what you've taught us so far. I noticed that we bring in even more important names. Section 34, Orson Pratt, he's around for a while. Section 35, Sidney Rigdon. If you've done even just a little history of the church, you know that name. And then section 36, one of the greats of the history of the church, Edward Partridge. I mean you've already introduced us to Parley P. Pratt, Thomas B. Marsh. Now it's Orson Pratt, Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge. What do you want to do here?

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:25:31 Let's look at the Savior and what he teaches to each of these three and then maybe we'll just intersperse some stories about them as we go. But look at section 34 verse one, my son Orson, hearken and hear and behold what I, the Lord God shall say unto you, even Jesus Christ, your Redeemer, the light and life of the world, a light which shineth in the darkness and the

darkness comprehendeth it not. So that's John 1:5 language of how as the Savior introduces himself, that phraseology to me is so fitting for all of us to understand a little bit more about the Savior. The idea that he says the darkness comprehendeth it not. That word comprehend can mean it didn't perceive or receive or admit it into them, but it also means that the darkness couldn't apprehend it. The Savior, everything about darkness is completely overpowered by him.

00:26:33 He shines wherever he goes. Satan and his darkness cannot overcome that. And for Orson, who is this little brother of Parley Pratt, as you've said, he wants to be able to have a revelation. Parley's had his experience. He's the one of course who read the Book of Mormon all day and all night as you've talked about and had this amazing experience and Orson wants to come to know about the gospel too. And so Parley comes and and teaches him and Orson is baptized on his 19th birthday. Then asks Joseph for, is there a revelation for me? Orson's reaction to this. The revelation that comes as the Savior's more revealed to him is precious stuff. He says this, he says, Orson still anxious to know what the Lord's will was for him, asked Joseph whether he could not ascertain what his mission was. Was there a revelation for him as there had been for his brother?

00:27:31 Joseph Smith invited Orson Pratt and John Whitmer upstairs into the chamber where Joseph had recently completed the translation of the Book of Mormon. In this more private space, Joseph asked Orson if he would be willing to write the revelation down as he spoke it. Being then young and timid and feeling his unworthiness, Orson asked if John Whitmer might act as scribe. Joseph agreed and produced a small stone called the seerstone and putting it into a hat, soon commenced speaking. We've heard of this method of translation and it ought not to throw anybody in church history to know that this is somehow a way that Joseph sometimes received revelation. Orson then later described his feelings upon hearing the Lord speak to him through Joseph. I thought that it was a very great and important calling and I felt altogether incompetent and lest the Lord qualified me by his Spirit.

00:28:25 This moment where Joseph gives this revelation and Orson feels it like he's really experiencing it and these words about the Savior and who he is being revealed to Orson just really humbles him to his very soul. He says, I felt oft times to tremble and shrink in fear for I should never be able to fulfill and accomplish so great a work. Just that feeling that Orson comes through with just says, wow, I have felt things that I've never

felt or experienced before. I love this section because of what it brings to all of us in remembering that we've all had these spiritual promptings, these moments where the Lord has really touched us and he wants us all to know that that's something for each of you. Just as Parley had his experience Orson had his, you and I can each have ours as we humbly turn to him.

- Hank Smith: 00:29:19 That is wonderful. When I first see his name here in section 34, I think we can at least in a little way have the perspective of the Lord because this little 19-year-old has no idea what's in store for him. He becomes the first member of the church to enter the Salt Lake Valley on July 2nd. Can you imagine telling him right now, thousands of miles away, you're going to be the first person to enter what's going to be the Salt Lake Valley, which is going to be kind of important in the church. I just think it's magnificent and poetic. Maybe I'm being too excited here, but I love that this is just the beginnings of this.
- John Bytheway: 00:30:02 I have written in my margin that he's the last surviving member of the original 12 and you can go see his headstone up in the Salt Lake City Cemetery.
- Hank Smith: 00:30:13 And here he is entering the scene with the powerful experience. Like you said, Mark.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:30:18 With this amazing experience that's almost overwhelmingly available to all of us, that the Lord would speak and give you and I a vision of what we could accomplish and what we could do just as he did Orson and Parley and some of these other. I think sometimes we read these sections and we think, oh, all the great work of the church is done, these people have all kind of started everything and got it going. And yet to think where we are now with over 300 temples now announced or dedicated or in process of being built and where we're at with being able to be in these latter-days when the Lord's going about his work the way he is, it's as phenomenal for each of us as it was for them. Oh, I love it.
- John Bytheway: 00:30:59 I like verse five. I think missionaries probably have it underlined more blessed are you, because you are called to me to preach my gospel, so there's where we start seeing that phrase.
- Hank Smith: 00:31:10 Yeah, so Mark, that's Orson Pratt. We have another name that is pretty well known, come up for the first time in section 35, [Sidney Rigdon](#).

- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:31:20 Yes, we've talked a little bit about Sidney already that of course he was very influential in being able to have a lot of people join the church. Sidney of course, was born 1793. He married [Phoebe Brooks](#) in 1820. He's a former Baptist preacher and he really spends about 10 years preaching for different religions. He's a Methodist, Campbellite, Sidney's son, his name is John M. Rigdon writes this about him, he became a great historian, the best I ever saw. He seemed to have the history of the world on his tongue's end, and he got to be a great biblical scholar as while he was familiar with the Bible as a child, as he was with a spelling book, he was never known to play with the boys. Reading books was the greatest pleasure he could get. He studied English grammar alone and became a very fine grammarian.
- 00:32:12 He was very precise in his language. He's a scholar and he's excited about religion and he wants to preach. He again does this from congregation to congregation. He starts in 1818 when he's still quite a young man and finally then has his own congregation that he's charge of with some other people that we know. Parley's a member of this congregation. They are all taught again by Parley as he comes back and the others come back on their way to their Lamanite mission and preach to him. Sidney reads the Book of Mormon. It takes him two weeks, but he reads the Book of Mormon in two weeks. They come in October and he is baptized in November. Sidney's just great, he knows things. He's older than the others and he's much more experienced and yet says when he hears the gospel, this is what I'm looking for, this is the right answer. This is where I'll take my life next.
- Hank Smith: 00:33:07 Yeah, I'm sure both of you know the story of he and his wife Phoebe. You know, sometimes, kind of like we talked about earlier with Thomas B. Marsh, we focus on Sidney's downfall. There is something to be said there, but from my knowledge, he's doing pretty well as a preacher there in Kirtland to join the church is going to mean a significant financial loss. Maybe you're going to bring this up, Mark, but I think it's beautiful. It says, when Rigdon ultimately became convinced of the new revelation, restored authority and the necessity of obedience thereto, he first informed his wife and asked her, my dear, you have followed me once into poverty. Are you willing to do the same? Phoebe answered, I have counted the cost and I am perfectly satisfied to follow you. It is my desire to do the will of God come life or come death.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:34:01 You mentioned that sometimes we can't focus exclusively on some of the later years, some of the difficulties. I mean, we

know that Sidney does leave the church. For [Sidney](#), at least in 1832, he is there at the John Johnson farm on March 24th when Joseph is drug out in the middle of the night. He's tarred and feathered along with Joseph, and Sidney is tied by his heels to a horse and the horse is then whipped and Sidney is drug on his head and he has people call it sometimes episodes where he kind of has difficulties. He has a moment with Joseph where he says that all the keys of the kingdom have been taken from us. There's some questions about that, and Joseph takes him back in and I believe the terminology says he reordains him, so I, I don't know what happened there for a period of time, but, Joseph understands this is a man whose heart is dedicated to your point. And Phoebe are dedicated from the beginning.

Hank Smith: 00:35:01 Definitely going to be traumatic and he's going to go into Liberty Jail. I like what you're teaching us here is yes, we need to learn like Thomas B. Marsh from his pride and mistakes, and same with [Sidney Rigdon](#), but let's not forget the incredible things these people did and their incredible sacrifices. Just as we can do with everyone in our life, we can choose to focus on the good.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:35:24 We don't know. We don't know all the circumstances of what might have led somebody to make these choices and these difficult things that have happened. We're going off pieces of history that we have. I want to be as liberal with them as I want the Lord to be as liberal with me in my judgment.

Hank Smith: 00:35:41 Oh, that's awesome. Mark, what does the Lord have to say to Sidney?

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:35:46 Well, as you look in section 35 and we see an opening here of the Lord preaching about him, I love these sections as they teach, particularly 33, 34, 35 as they all open there, 36, the Lord identifying himself, the Lord wants us to know who he is and His power. Coming back to our missionary theme, the missionary purpose, where we say that it's through faith in Jesus Christ. As a bishop, I served a couple of times in that capacity and it's easy to try to have people who come in who need to repent to focus on the task of repenting. We talk about repenting. It seems as though we focus on all the things that we need to do and how we need to change and become different. I remember as a bishop learning this lesson very clearly that rather than giving people a list of things to do, have them focus more on Jesus Christ and his goodness.

00:36:51 Instead of focusing on your inadequacies, focus on his adequacy. Rather than looking at the emptiness that you are full

of, look at Jesus Christ and his fullness. The more I spend my time looking to him and letting him fill me, the less I have to worry about changing things because it's naturally going to push anything in me that needs to be changed out because I filled my life up with Jesus Christ. My wife has an amazing [book](#) that she's written on mindfulness. She shares this idea in one of the opening chapters where she quotes from Haggai, I'm always impressed, anybody who can quote from Haggai, you're pretty awesome. Okay, I'm going to read Haggai chapter one, verse six, but I think it's typical of what's going on with the Israelites at the time, but isn't it true of all of us as well? Haggai chapter one, verse six, you have so much and bring in little, you eat, but you have not enough. Ye drink, but you are not filled with drink.

00:38:01 Ye clothe you, but there is none warm, and he that earn the wages, earn wages to put them into a bag with holes. The Savior who says, I am the bread of life. I am living water. I can fill you up. These sections here in 34 and 35 and 36. As we look at them, you're going to have some things revealed to these early church leaders about the Savior, and I think he wants to say, fill yourself with me, lean on me, put me more in your life. And then the thing will be, you'll have the hope and the capacity to repent and make covenants and change and become the people I want you to be. But start by filling yourself up with me.

Hank Smith: 00:38:46 In section 35, the Lord tells Sidney, he's kind of like John the Baptist. He had this big group of people prepared for the message when it came, when those four missionaries showed up from New York, including his old friend, Parley P. Pratt. He had a group of people prepared and ready.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:39:04 He certainly was an instrument to have those people come in.

Hank Smith: 00:39:06 And it's probably going to be like the St. Louis mission here in a few months. They're going to double the size of the church. That's what happens in Kirtland.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:39:16 That's right. Absolutely, and maybe we'll have our theme be verse 13. I call upon the weak things of the world, those who are unlearned and despised to thresh the nation by the power of my Spirit. The Lord uses those who are inadequate but says, we'll harvest. We will bring that around and for verse 14, their arm shall be my arm. I will be their shield and their buckler. I will gird up their loins and they shall fight manfully for me and their enemy shall be under their feet and I'll let fall the sword in their behalf and by the fire of my indignation I preserve them. Again, it's the Lord's power. He wants them to know who is in

charge and he can bring about these great and miraculous changes.

Hank Smith: 00:39:57 That's wonderful. I'm going to use you so everybody knows it's me.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:40:03 Oh, isn't that true?

Hank Smith: 00:40:03 I'm going to choose the weakest of the world to do a great work.

John Bytheway: 00:40:08 I've got above that in my Doctrine & Covenants, that the weak, unlearned and despised is evidence that people are not converted to the messengers. They're converted to the message.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:40:18 Yeah. Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:40:21 And they're perceived by the world to be weak, unlearned and despised. Even Jesus, we esteemed him as not, I mean, we're really bad at estimating things as human beings, right? I love that. Their arm shall be my arm. I have in my notes the Ammon story because Ammon says, I will show forth my power and then he corrects himself, oh wait, or the power, which is in me. At the end of that little episode, Alma chapter 17 verse 37. This sounds like Mormon abridging because he's not first person anymore. He caused them to flee by the strength of his arm. I like to ask my class, is it Ammon's arm? Then we go to section 35 verse 14 where the Lord says, their arms shall be my arm. I will be their shield and their buckler. I will gird up their loins. They shall fight manfully for me.

00:41:14 I mean, whoa. What a verse that is right there. I was looking in my book called [Revelations of the Restoration](#), and there was a story about Elder David W. Patten, Wilford Woodruff and Warren Parrish were together preaching the gospel in Tennessee, a local sheriff arrested them on false pretenses at the urging of a Methodist priest. A mock trial was held in which the defendants were not allowed to say a word in their own behalf. They were pronounced guilty. Brother Patten being filled with the Holy Ghost arose to his feet by the power of God, bound them fast to their seats. While he addressed them, he rebuked them sharply for the wicked and unjust proceedings. Brother Parrish afterwards said, my hair stood up straight on my head for I expected to be killed. When Patten closed, the judge addressed him saying, you must be armed with concealed weapons or you would not treat an armed court as you have

this. Patten replied, I am armed with weapons you know not of, and my weapons are the holy priesthood and the power of God. God is my friend and he permits you to exercise all the power you have, and he bestows on me all the power I have.

- Hank Smith: 00:42:26 Wow.
- John Bytheway: 00:42:28 Yeah. This idea of their arm shall be my arm. You can get courage from that, even if you feel like I don't know how to talk to people. I'm weak. I'm unlearned, I'm despised. It's okay. You're on the Lord's errand. The message, not necessarily the messengers, will be what people are drawn to.
- Hank Smith: 00:42:48 I want to look at this really quick Mark and ask you a question. He says, I call upon the weak things of the world, unlearned and despised. I look at these young people who go on these missions. When I was called on a mission, I thought I knew a lot and now it's been decades since then. You know what? I would be much more knowledgeable now, if I were to go on a mission. Here we use these young people, what are you looking forward to? Maybe it's a little bit mean to call them the unlearned and despised, but we might just call them the inexperienced.
- John Bytheway: 00:43:19 Or in the world's view. They are.
- Hank Smith: 00:43:22 In the world's view they're inexperienced, they're weak.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:43:24 It's phenomenal that it's the Lord's plan. I mean, you said it a minute ago, Hank, how did you say it? It was so beautiful. I used you so that you would know that it was me.
- Hank Smith: 00:43:33 Yeah.
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:43:34 I mean, this is what he does, right? He says, you are weak. You are unlearned. Who could think that you could possibly go out and do this? And yet to be able to rely on the Lord the way that these missionaries do? It's just incredible to me to watch and see. When we served at the missionary training center, it was just incredible to watch. They come in on a Wednesday, they arrive at the missionary training center. I was asked a couple of times to help as they were greeted, they drop them off in the underground parking lot. They come up the stairs and they get their keys to the room and then they walk and they greet a member of the mission presidency. Or if there's large groups, then they have branch presidents or wives who also fill in there. Here they are wiping the tears out of their eyes.

00:44:23 Oh, you know, they've just gotten out of the car and you put your arm around them and you say, now turn and look. And there in that building on the missionary training center campus. There's Jesus. It's him calling forth his disciples to go and teach all nations and baptize them. It's that picture and to just have them and just say, tell me what you feel. Alright. It just makes me emotional. You just have these kids who've just given everything up and walked out the door and here they are, and they come in and they just bear this testimony with power. And I'm overwhelmed by it, watching this and I'm just like, oh my goodness. You know, we step in on a Thursday night, they've come on a Wednesday. Our responsibility is to find district leaders and sister training leaders and zone leaders and organize them all. You interview them for six minutes. That's what you've got. You've got six minutes with each with each missionary set. Two of them, you'll bring the companionship together and you interview them and you walk out. And the Lord just makes it clear here they are. They can do anything. They are so powerful. I just have this witness of yes, they're weak and they're unlearned by the standards of men, but they are the Lord's servants. They are disciples of Jesus Christ being set apart by priesthood authority. They can go out and do anything. It's incredible to watch and be part of.

Hank Smith: 00:45:47 John, I think of your kids out there. I think of all those young adults out there that my students and there they go to take on the world and you think, oh, be safe. Be safe.

John Bytheway: 00:46:00 I know. Every night. Yeah, I see them out there. And you do too, both of you, as you travel, you run into missionaries. You just want to grab them and say do you have any idea how unique what you're doing, who you are, that out of billions of people on this earth, you have walked away from your life and are doing this and the Lord sent you here now for a reason and you know it, but I just wonder if they sense that. Because it is pretty remarkable.

Hank Smith: 00:46:33 Wow.

John Bytheway: 00:46:33 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:46:34 What great kids. I've noticed, the Lord says in verse 26, lift up your hearts and be glad your redemption is drawing nigh just so positive about all these brand new members. We all have our own heroes of the restoration. So I might gush a little bit, John, you'll have to hold me back because I'll, we'll get more chances.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:46:55 Edward Partridge.

Hank Smith: 00:46:55 To talk about him. A lot of people know the music. If you've listened to our podcast before, there's a little music that starts us out. Since we first started John, we got to choose that music way back when we had to hurry and start. And my friend [Marshall McDonald](#), who wrote that music, wrote, let Zion in Her Beauty Rise the hymn written by Edward Partridge. He is my hero. Edward and Lydia Partridge are just my heroes of the restoration. So you might hear me gush as we talk about them for the next weeks. Their introduction is right here. Mark in section 36, what do you want to look at?

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:47:35 I guess Hank I want to give it to you for a minute. I want to hear you gush. Will you gush just a little bit? Come on.

John Bytheway: 00:47:40 Yeah.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:47:41 Let's just gush for a minute. Go.

Hank Smith: 00:47:43 I love Edward Partridge, my friend [Sherilyn Farnes](#), she's a historian in the church history department, also teaches in the religion department at BYU. She has done so much research on Edward Partridge. I wish she was here. I'll kind of fill in for her. She wrote this, in the fall of 1834, young men in their late teens or early twenties appeared at the door of Edward Partridge's hat shop in Ohio. As Partridge listened to the men's extraordinary tale of a restoration of authority and revelation of new scripture, he called them imposters and sent them away. Yet after they left, Partridge sent one of his employees after the men, in order to purchase a copy of the book they carried, the Book of Mormon. He and Lydia end up getting baptized. In fact, the saints there, or the people, I should say in Kirtland, they want to know about Joseph Smith.

00:48:34 Now they all can't go back to New York. They send Sidney Rigdon, of course their religious leader, their preacher, but they send what Sherilyn calls the most honest, the one who they trust the most with Sidney back to New York to meet Joseph Smith and it's Edward Partridge. Spoil it too much, but he becomes the first bishop of the church. I love good bishops and their wives who give and give and give. He's a hatter. Every formal suit in those days comes with a hat. It's an important piece of clothing. I can't imagine I've met a hatter today and Edward Partridge is just going to give and give and give.

John Bytheway: 00:49:15 Doesn't he get separated from his wife where he has to go to Missouri and she's back there and what they give up for the gospel? No wonder he's a hero to you, Hank.

Hank Smith: 00:49:26 Yeah. Let Zion in her beauty rise.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:49:29 I love him too. He administers the law of consecration that's coming just in a few sections coming up. He's the first one to kind of be able to do that as a bishop, isn't he the one that they say that he's a man without guile.

Hank Smith: 00:49:42 A man without guile like Nathaniel of old.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:49:45 Like Nathaniel of old. It's just coming up in section 41 verse 11 as it describes Edward. Well, just a little bit further, if I back up to verse nine, Edward Partridge, a commandment appointed but to be ordained a bishop verse 11, and this because his heart is pure before me. That word is, I've got that word just highlighted there in that verse, is pure before me. For he is like unto Nathaniel of old in whom there is no guile. I mean Edward Partridge is just true and true, pure and pure all the way through, and like you said, is going to be making some incredible sacrifices and just begins his service here in section 36. Let's look at one verse in 36 to just maybe put this on Edward Partridge. Let's look at verse six, crying repentance saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation and come out of the fire hating even the garments spotted with the flesh.

00:50:45 That's an interesting phrase. You're going to go through whatever you're going to go through and Edward's going to go through some things. He's going to be purified even more so by these difficulties and he will separate himself from the flesh, the world. Maybe this comes full circle to what we began with in Section 30 with David Whitmer, where the Lord says, your mind's been too much upon the things of the world. Here's Edward Partridge and the Lord's saying, you continue faithful and go through this and there'll be nothing that will taint your garments, that will stain you in any way. You will remain pure and holy and more refined as you go through what I ask you to go through.

Hank Smith: 00:51:30 Would to God that I could be like Edward Partridge just good all the way through. I hope the Lord one day can say, your heart is pure before me. We're going to hear more about these people coming up here John.

John Bytheway: 00:51:44 The last words in section 36, I am Jesus Christ, the son of God. Wherefore, gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple. Even so, amen. And I noted something, maybe it was four years ago. Section 33 ends with behold I come quickly. Section 34, I come quickly, section 35, I come quickly, section

36. I come suddenly and I thinking quickly, quickly, quickly. He's, you've been saying you're coming quickly for 200 years. you keep on using that word. I don't think it means what you think it means, right? But if you ask [Elder McConkie](#), he would say quickly means with a suddenness, that will leave time for preparation behind. They're kind of synonyms. I'll come at a time you think not. I'm coming quickly or I'm coming suddenly. So I like the idea of come to Christ now. Then you don't have to worry when or how quickly he comes because you'll already be there.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:52:44

I love that, John. It's a pattern that I also noticed. Just pulling the curtain back a little bit on John and Hank, they said, what kind of things are you looking to be able to teach and do you have two or three points? Do you have something that you want to kind of end with? This was my ending, those verses 36. At the end of each of these sections, he talks about coming quickly and the second coming, 33, having your lamps trimmed and burning with oil. The parable of the virgins. I mean, as he ends these sections, we hear about the second coming and I just couldn't help but think of [President Nelson's](#) most recent talk in general conference in October where he just talks about the second coming, being ready and knowing. I remember a lot of people saying, oh, well, is he announcing something?

00:53:33

Well, to your point, John, he's been announcing something for you know, 200 years a couple hundred years. He's been saying this over and over again. I did want to highlight just this one little piece here from President Nelson as he talks about preparing for the second coming. Regular worship in the temple will help us. In the house of the Lord, we focus on Jesus Christ. We learn of him. We make covenants to follow him. We come to know him. As we keep our covenants, we gain greater access to the Lord's strengthening power. In the temple we receive protection from the buffeting of the world. We experience the pure love of Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father in great abundance. We feel peace and spiritual reassurance in contrast to the turbulence of the world. Here is my promise. Every sincere seeker of Jesus Christ will find him in the temple.

00:54:29

You will feel his mercy. You will find answers to your most vexing questions. You'll better comprehend the joy of his gospel. Those words to me are so powerful as we think about preparing for the coming of the Savior again and being able to find him. Now, to your point, John, I'm coming quickly, to be ready. The temple's going to help us to be able to find him now. We're going to be ready. As we continually focus our efforts on the covenants that we've made, keeping them and finding the

Savior more powerfully in the temple is an incredible means to that end.

- Hank Smith: 00:55:06 The Lord just drops that little hint. I suddenly come to my temple. I'm sure they looked at each other. What? What do you mean by that?
- John Bytheway: 00:55:15 Wait, what year is this? 1830. Yeah. What temple? Six years away.
- Hank Smith: 00:55:21 That's not for a while. Mark, this has been a fantastic day. I knew preaching the gospel was in your heart and mind right now. I was excited we were able to bring you on. Just to wrap up, I mentioned Edward and Lydia Partridge. Here they go here, they begin to give up so much and I just thought the work continues. Today we have Mark and Kimberly Beecher, who are ready to go and walk away from a wonderful life they have going on with children and grandchildren, and they're going to head to St. Louis. Very similar as the Partridges were headed west, the Beechers are headed east. If some were to ask you and Kimberly, why are you doing this? You worked so hard, you just retired, you're teaching third grade. It's a perfect thing you got going on. You could build a home and enjoy the fruits of all that you've worked so hard and yet here the Lord has called and you're going to go. If you were to just answer that to one of us sitting by saying, why would you do that? What would you say?
- Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:56:25 Thanks for the question, because I've asked it a little bit to myself. It really has been an amazing journey this last few months. Some people say, did you see it coming? Did you feel it? The answer is no, I'm probably just out of tune or something. But I've just thought, well, if it was going to happen, it might've happened earlier in life, but not at this point. Things are different now, and I'm retired and moved on. And when we opened our call, and this was a, it was a very wonderful sacred moment with our family. We were told that we could open the call with just our children and grandchildren, and that we had to then keep it confidential until it could be announced in the church news. We got our call the 8th of December, and we just had to sit on it for a month, but we opened it with our kids and shared it with them, and of course, you, we've all been to mission call openings.
- 00:57:20 It's an amazing thing. It was something to kind of be on the other end of this, right? To watch my little 11-year-old granddaughter just burst into tears. How come you're going to go? You know, it's just something to say to her. The last line of the call letter says this, our Heavenly Father will reward you for

your efforts and desires. Great blessings and joy await you as you humbly and prayerfully serve the Lord in this labor of love among his children. We place our confidence in you and pray that the Lord will strengthen you as you fulfill your missionary assignment. That's all the reasons why, because you know that the Lord's going to magnify us in whatever he asks us to do. We know that the Lord needs people who are willing to go out and do whatever he asks, and whether that's being a primary teacher with a rowdy bunch of five year olds or mission president, it doesn't matter.

00:58:21 It really truly doesn't matter. Another day I'd tell you how I know that for sure, but we all understand that it's absolutely true. The Lord has placed confidence in us. He's asked us to go and to do this work. You mentioned earlier, Hank, billions of people and millions of members of the church, and only thousands of people going out as missionaries. We're a very small minority, but the Lord works with small numbers, and I just want to bear witness that they that be with us are more than they that be with them. The Syrian hosts that Elisha and his servant learned about is still true today. The Lord's work is moving forward and will continue to move forward, and it's a blessing and a privilege. We'll be part of it in whatever capacity we all get a chance to serve in.

Hank Smith: 00:59:18 Wow. Well, we love you, Mark and Kimberly, and we're excited for the people of St. Louis, the St. Louis mission. They're going to get quite a blessing.

Bro. Mark Beecher: 00:59:29 Been a joy being with you both today. Thank you.

Hank Smith: 00:59:31 We have loved it. We have loved being with you. We want to thank soon to be President Mark Beecher for being with us today. We want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and we always remember our founder. He was quite a missionary, Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week. We have more of the Doctrine & Covenants to study on followHIM. Today's show notes and transcript are on our website. Followhim.co. That's followhim.co. Of course, none of this could happen without our production team. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra, Amelia Kabwika, Heather Barlow, and Annabelle Sorensen.

Speaker 4:

## MISSIONARY WORK, I CAN DO IT IN MY SLEEP



- Hank Smith: 00:03 Hello, welcome to followHIM Favorites. John and I are sharing a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, we have a bunch of sections of the Doctrine & Covenants this week, 30 through 36. They're all about missionary work and this phrase comes up over and over. Open your mouth. In all of these sections. Open your mouth. You've told me that you have a story for that phrase.
- John Bytheway: 00:25 Oh, Hank, you're just not going to believe this. Years ago I did a tape. Remember cassette tapes?
- Hank Smith: 00:30 I remember those.
- John Bytheway: 00:32 About meeting people from the Book of Mormon because they say, I will meet you. I mean, it's going to happen. Nephi says, one day you'll meet me. This kid said, I was working at a car dealership and I was listening to that tape on my Walkman on a bus, and I fell asleep. And that is usually the impact my tapes have on young people. He said, I fell asleep. I woke up and this man was looking at me and he said, who's Nephi? And I was like, why? And he said, you in your sleep, I guess you were asleep, you said, hi, Nephi And he was like, oh, well it's this person in the Book of Mormon. It's this book called The Book of Mormon. And he started telling this guy and he gave him his seminary scriptures, this kid, and told him all about who Nephi was. He sent me an email about this and he was so excited. He said, I met that man later and he had joined the church and I'm like, okay, if a kid can say two words in his sleep, imagine what we could do when we're awake. And all he said was, hi Nephi.
- Hank Smith: 01:43 Hi Nephi. That was it.
- John Bytheway: 01:45 I love this chapter too, Hank, because when I entered the MTC, the first talk we were given by Elder Joe J. Christensen, the MTC President, he went through this section, section 33, just open your mouths and they will be filled.

Hank Smith:	02:00	Open your mouth, start talking about it in normal and natural ways.
John Bytheway:	02:05	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	02:05	It's totally fine to talk about your church. You wouldn't be upset if one of your friends talked about their church. You wouldn't go, Hey, you can't talk about that. So why can't we do that with others? I remember once in seminary, our seminary teacher said, what if on the other side someone comes up to you and says, why didn't you tell me you knew? Why didn't you tell me? Well, I didn't want to ruin our friendship. Why would that ruin our friendship? Well, I didn't want to offend you. What kind of friend was I that you thought might be offended by that? And it helped me go, you know what? I can say something. Doesn't mean you have to call them to repentance. Just means you can open your mouth.
John Bytheway:	02:42	And the the everyday missionaries ideas. If somebody says, how was your weekend? Don't think about Saturday, think about Sunday.
Hank Smith:	02:48	Sunday.
John Bytheway:	02:49	Normal, natural. Oh, we had the best lesson. It was about...
Hank Smith:	02:52	Yeah, I love my church because I have all these friends there. Anything like that.
John Bytheway:	02:57	Yeah. How would you like a couple of hundred friends? Come with me next time.
Hank Smith:	03:01	Come on over. We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it anywhere you get your podcast. We're with Mark Beecher this week. He's serving a mission soon. So he's perfect for these sections. You're going to love what he has to say and then come back here next week. We'll do another followHIM Favorites.