



“That the generation to come might know them...”

Psalms 78:6

A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

“You may not be a Jonah – but you may have a Jonah in your Sunday School or MBA class”

**An excerpt from an address by Apostle Richard Christman
to General Church Conference, October 9, 2005**

This inspiring statement should touch the mind of every teacher who has ever taught a young person the stories of the *Bible* and *Book of Mormon*. It is a message of hope that our children will be used to do greater things than we have done. Every generation of *The Church* has had this hope and it is no different today. Our job is to empower our young people with knowledge and inspire them to serve *The Church* as it labors to fulfill its *Divine Commission* to take the *Gospel* to the *Seed of Joseph*, who are the Native Peoples of the Americas, and to all nations.

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles believes that one of the highest priorities of *The Church* is to establish and implement a curriculum of instruction world wide, not only for children, but for the entire membership, regardless of age or position of leadership. It is vitally important that all members of *The Church* have a common understanding of our *Faith and Doctrine* and basic scriptural truths. A training program for all Elders has been implemented to ensure that the ordinances of *The Church* are administered uniformly throughout the world and that our ministry understands every aspect of our calling, duties and responsibilities.

This endeavor is an enormous and difficult project that will require the collective efforts and long-term commitment of every member of *The Church*. The following points illustrate why this is necessary:

Why is this necessary?

- a. It is important that *The Church* has unity of purpose and thought as we continue to take the Gospel throughout the world. Everyone should have the same message to give.
- b. We must rely on the scriptures and not base our beliefs on personal opinion. Every Branch and Mission, regardless of size or resource limitations, must receive the same instruction.
- c. Unless there is an established curriculum we can never be sure that everyone has received the same instruction. If a particular location concentrates on only certain subjects, its membership will have limited knowledge of the complete scope of *The Church*. If children are taught the same stories over and over their spiritual development will be slow. Without a curriculum to follow individual teachers are not likely to build upon previous lessons or transition well to subsequent teachers.
- d. A complete curriculum based approach, with lesson plans and teacher guides, will encourage more people to volunteer to teach lessons.

Will this inhibit the inspiration of God in our teaching?

- a. An established curriculum will not inhibit the *Spirit of God* in the preparation and delivery of lessons. The curriculum will prescribe the topics to be taught and when. Although teaching aids will be supplied they will not prohibit individual inspiration and creativity in covering the material. Some of the most successful teachers are able to use their own knowledge and personal experiences to complement every lesson they deliver.
- b. The curriculum will not require that specific topics be covered every single week of the year. The

program will allow significant opportunity for impromptu or special topics as desired.

What are the benefits?

- a. Members will be empowered with knowledge to understand and defend the *Faith and Doctrine of The Church* and will be prepared to witness to others.
- b. There will not be confusion on what *The Church* believes and there will be unity of thought and purpose.
- c. There will be a coordinated plan for *The Church* in its entirety to receive well balanced education and training on a continual basis no matter the size of the congregation or limitations of resources.

How will this be implemented?

- a. *The Operations Support Committee* of the *General Church* will be responsible to work with the *National Education Committee*, *Educational Curriculum Committee*, and other resources throughout *The Church* to accomplish this project. Participation and support at the local branch and mission level is essential.
- b. This committee reports directly to the *Presidency of the General Church*. Implementation of all programs will be coordinated through *Regions*, *The Quorum of Seventy Evangelists*, *The GMBA and GLUC*, *Branches*, *Missions* and *Sunday Schools of The Church*.

When will it happen?

- a. The process has already begun. *The Educational Curriculum Committee* has developed a curriculum for Pre-school Ages 3-5, Grades 1-3, Grades 4-6, Grades 7-9 and Grades 10-12. They have also published teaching strategies and sample lesson plans and are currently developing many more lesson plans for all age groups. Curriculums for Adults and New Members, as well as specific implementation plans, are in the planning stages.
- b. Partial implementation of this project should begin sometime this year for *The Church* in the United States and Canada. It is hoped that the project can be expanded to foreign lands within the next two to three years.

Is such an undertaking worth the time, effort and expense?

- a. *Yes it is! We cannot afford not to do this.* Our children, our families and *The Church* in general will benefit from this endeavor.
- b. The Quorum of Twelve is fully committed to seeing that this project is implemented as soon as possible.
- c. *The Operations Support Committee* is charged with the responsibility to utilize resources from within *The Church* and from outside sources. All staffing, technology, equipment, and funding needs will be under the direction of the *Presidency of The Church*.

The process has begun and curriculum instruction will be implemented soon. However, none of this will do any good if we do not participate in the learning process. Are we supporting our local Sunday Schools and MBAs with our attendance? Are we volunteering to teach classes? Are we giving financial support? Are we being the examples we should be to our brothers and sisters in Christ, our children and visitors? **Now is OUR time** to increase our involvement and prepare *The Church* for more effective learning. **Now is OUR time** to make sure we adequately prepare the Jonah's of our day to do "*The Great Work of The Lord!*" The words of Nephi, which follow, are still true:

Wherefore, these things shall go from generation to generation as long as the earth Shall stand; and they shall go according to the will and pleasure of God; and the Nations who shall possess them shall be judged of them according to the words which are written. For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.

2 Nephi 25: 22-23

This is the fifth of a series of messages to *The Church* to reinforce various topics of our *Faith and Doctrine* and *Vision for the Future*. For more understanding of *What We Believe* please visit our web site to obtain resource and contact information: www.thechurchofjesuschrist.com.