

# “The Uttermost Part of the Earth”

DAVID B. HAIGHT

It is a great honor and privilege for me to be here tonight, and I particularly want to welcome President Dallin Oaks, who is a Regional Representative; other Regional Representatives who are here; and other key school and church officials. We are all proud of the achievements and goals of this University, and of the devotion of the leaders of these fourteen stakes and 137 wards. We acknowledge that this assembly tonight is unique; and in this present academic world, to say it is unique is a major understatement. I pray that I might have the spirit of the Lord with me, so that I might say things that would be appropriate for you to hear; but I pray also that you may be able to hear and witness and understand the thoughts I hope will be appropriate for you this Sunday night.

The choir sang “O Divine Redeemer.” You may not have listened carefully to the words; let me repeat a few. “O Divine Redeemer—turn *me* not away—receive me tho’ unworthy. Hear my cry—behold *my* distress—have mercy, Lord, on thy servant. Hear me, crying out for mercy—please, Lord, protect my soul.” I would say to you, is this not pleading to the Lord to overlook some failures, perhaps? Would comparable statements be: “I didn’t quite understand—I’ll do better if I have another chance—my heart wanted to follow you, so

please give me another chance”—or perhaps, “Now, I understand, O Lord—hear my cry”? I do not know the author of those words, but he gives us a rather dramatic view of an encounter we must all face—when we are judged and assigned to our appropriately earned kingdom beyond.

We learn from divine statements and truths contained in the scriptures of two great missions of the Master. The first was to atone and ransom mankind from the effects of the fall of Adam, as part of the plan accepted in the Grand Council in Heaven. *He is our Redeemer.* And he is also our Savior, for the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world and to bring salvation to all—to “all who believe in his name.” “To save that which was lost”—to save people from their sins—this is his second mission. The Savior taught mankind how to live, how to serve, how to worship; and he taught the principles of the gospel—this gospel

---

*David B. Haight was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when this fireside address was given at Brigham Young University on 5 November 1978.*

which will bring men back into the presence of our Heavenly Father.

A few weeks ago President Kimball spoke to our Regional Representatives, who had assembled from all parts of the world. All of the General Authorities were also in attendance at this very solemn but historic assembly to receive instruction and counsel, “to be built up in faith and testimony” (quoted from President Kimball, Regional Representatives Seminar, September 29, 1978), and to reaffirm to these Church leaders our mission: to assist in saving the souls of mankind and to focus on the things that matter most.

In this comprehensive review of the Church’s progress, we could sense again his—that is, the president’s—anxiety and concern for this work. We who are near our prophet sense his restlessness—because time is moving swiftly, and the world population is growing. But the keys of the kingdom and salvation are here and available to all. We—all of us here tonight—are His disciples.

Of the Regional Representatives, President Kimball asked, “What did the Lord mean when he stood atop the Mount of Olives and said to the Twelve, ‘. . . and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto *the uttermost part of the earth*’ (Acts 1:8; emphasis added)?” “The uttermost part of the earth”? Everywhere? Our prophet then remarked, “We have hardly scratched the surface.”

It was the Lord himself who directed that the “gospel must be preached unto every creature” (D&C 58:64). It was President Kimball, our living prophet, who has said to you and to me that we must find the way to proclaim the gospel and declare its restoration to all mankind. Does President Kimball mean that you are involved? Of course!

“Why me?” you might ask. “Others can do it—I’m so busy.” May I remind you that when you accepted baptism, you made a covenant: (a) to come into the fold of God; (b) to take

upon you the name of Christ; (c) to bear one another’s burdens; (d) to stand as a witness to God at all times, in all places, and in all things, and to serve God and keep his commandments. And if you do these things, the Lord has promised that he will: (a) pour out his spirit upon you, and (b) grant unto you redemption and eternal life (see Mosiah 18:8–10, 13).

Need I ask, after reminding you of your baptismal covenant—are you part of this heaven-inspired and heaven-directed obligation to teach all mankind? Does the Lord or any of His prophets force you to do His will? Of course not! But the promised rewards are almost beyond our conception. Listen carefully to His promise: “All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ” (D&C 121:29).

The apostle Peter, senior apostle and head of the Church after the Savior had left the earth, in a teaching opportunity asked, “What manner of persons ought ye to be . . . ?” (2 Peter 3:11). He counseled—

*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; . . . the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

[Peter continued:] *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, [that is, the elements and materials rearranged or reorganized,] what manner of persons ought ye to be . . . ?*

[And then he said,] . . . *Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.*

. . . *Seeing ye know these things . . . , beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.*

. . . *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.* [2 Peter 3:10–11, 14, 17–18; emphasis added]

The apostle Peter encouraged and strengthened the saints anciently so they could spread the gospel and save the souls of mankind. Now, in a similar manner, President Kimball, the Lord's prophet, is sounding the trumpet for us today to do what?—(a) to live lives of perfection; and (b) to acquire all the knowledge possible—communication skills and language ability—so that we can move with greater speed in reaching the millions of people in strange-sounding places with strange-sounding names who have been prepared and will receive the gospel.

What does the Lord expect of you? What is your role in this divine drama? Consider—has the Lord not brought the Church out of obscurity? Are not the temples dotting the landscape? Are not the satellites stationed in the heavens ready to beam the message? Are not needed facilities and technical skills available, new developments in radio and television communication being unfolded?

We have, I suppose, nearly 20,000 people in this audience tonight. Would ten people on the front row please stand? This is about the proportion of Mormons in the world in relation to the total world population, if we have twenty thousand people here tonight. Now would five of you please sit down? May I remind you that the five standing represent the active participating members of the Church. You five must convert the other 19,990 in this building—but I say unto you, you must hurry. In a few years the world population will double to eight billion.

Our prophet reminds us that “the uttermost part of the earth” not only means the millions in America, but all of Central and South America, all of the Far East, all of Europe, all of Africa. (More than one-tenth of the world's four billion souls live on the African continent.) China, the third largest country, has nearly one billion people—over half speak Mandarin. Will you be prepared to teach them? And as the prophet asks, will you be prepared to take the gospel to India's three-quarter billion, to

Burma, to Saudi Arabia, or to the 41 million Moslems in Turkey? We are promised that when we are ready—properly prepared as people—barriers will gradually be penetrated and political hard lines will soften. Today, Poland is an example of what will take place. We understand that many people are now going to church in Russia.

In a few years, will we not feel as comfortable and be as familiar speaking of cities in Bangladesh, Iraq, Malaysia, Yugoslavia, and the Ukraine as we now are of speaking of Sydney, Tokyo, Geneva, Walla Walla, and Mexico City? President Kimball reminds us that there is no reason why the Lord would open doors or break down iron or bamboo curtains if we are unprepared to enter.

How can we, he says, be satisfied with two hundred thousand converts a year out of a world of four billion who need the gospel? We are often reminded of Sarah, the wife of Abraham, laughing when told that at her age of ninety years she would have a son. How could she bear children? Yet she did have a son as promised by the Lord. Abraham was to become the father of nations. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Is there anything impossible to Him? If He commands His gospel to be taken to “the uttermost part of the earth,” will he not open the way—if the carriers of the message are ready and prepared?

If each of you was asked to outline what qualities messengers—those authorized to carry Christ's gospel of salvation unto the expanding proselyting world—must have if they were to succeed, your outline would probably include a personal, growing faith in and knowledge of God the Father and Jesus Christ—a knowledge that would be sufficient for one's salvation and a faith such that His saving principles would have become part of one's life. In addition, this outline would include good works and a desire to serve mankind as evidenced by positive actions. Did not the Lord teach as fundamental “. . . Whatsoever ye

would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them . . ." (Matthew 7:12)?

Would your outline not also include the love of people? Love, but with the measuring rod He built in—one must love people to the same degree that he loves himself or it really does not matter. One must be considerate of others and, in addition, not steal, not lie, not cheat, not bear false witness, not plan to take another's life. And then you would include the keeping of God's commandments—all of them. One cannot just pick and choose. "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

When President Kimball indicates an uneasiness about our present pace in converting the world, his concern is not limited to missionaries and baptisms, important though they are, but extends to the development of our teaching and training skills to strengthen and build up the millions of people who will eventually "come unto Christ." Many of you have been on missions, and you say, "I served my two years." Did not President Kimball explain a few months ago on this campus that your mission has no time limit, but could last one hundred years, two hundred years, or whatever might be needed? If you see your role clearly, your two-year mission was a prep school preparing you for further involvement, somewhere in the world, in assisting new members to understand and live the Savior's teachings. You may serve a number of calls as you respond to the needs of an expanding Church reaching out to "the uttermost part of the earth."

Plan your professional and family goals so that you will have a part in this vision of our prophet. Prepare to reach out and to bless more people—keep your life in harmony. What a blessing to have a living prophet in our midst! You can see him, you can hear his voice, you can read his messages to the world, you can shake his hand and look into his piercing eyes. We sing "Come, listen to a prophet's voice, and hear the words of God"—do you get that feeling when you talk about him? To us he is so

human and gentle and spiritual, and yet so forceful. We understand what he means.

Our civilization is entering into troubling times—times that are fed and nourished by people who scoff at divine truths, who scoff at Bible references or at such terms as "under God" or "in God we trust" or at references made to the framers of the Constitution being wise men raised up for that very purpose (see D&C 101: 80).

The part you will play in the coming years is critical. It is meant that all of you be strong—not weaklings tossed to and fro, but valiant leaders who enter the fray as defenders of truth and right. Troubled times require valiant men and women like you—products of this great University and of these student stakes who, in a spirit of love and hope, will teach the world correct moral principles and high ethical standards. Who else will, if you do not?

Some polls indicate that a congressman from New York State, an admitted contributor to the delinquency of a 16-year-old boy, will likely be reelected to Congress. Moral standards? Who cares? I guess some might think that way. A congressman from Michigan convicted a few days ago of 29 counts of mail fraud and embezzling money will likely be reelected ("How Morality Declines in the U.S. Congress," *Deseret News*, October 31, 1978). Perhaps others will be elected on this coming Tuesday who have demonstrated dishonesty, immorality, and disregard for traditional moral standards. A highly respected political writer wrote:

*The critical weakness of our society is that . . . our people do not have great purposes which they are united in wanting to achieve. The public mood of the country is defensive, to hold on and to conserve, not to push forward and to create. We talk about ourselves these days as if we were a completed society, one which has achieved its purposes, and has no further great business to transact. [John J. Jessup,*

*The National Purpose*, Walter Lippman, quoted on p. 1]

Sometimes we hear people say, “The world has changed—the Church is out of step with modern times. The old religious laws don’t apply any more.” Similar voices were heard by the apostle Paul, who wrote:

*In the last days perilous times shall come.*

*For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous . . . , blasphemers, disobedient to parents, . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.*  
[2 Timothy 3:1–4]

Who will be the strong, powerful voice and influence to stem such a tide? *It must be you.* You are in training, but you must believe and live Christ’s teachings if you are to fill your hoped-for destiny in this world.

Your outline of qualifications to become one of the messengers for the Savior would include that one must be morally and sexually pure. I recall the testimony of a young lady at a stake conference in which she told of her dating years. Her mother had helped her to understand the pitfalls. Now a young wife living in an army base, she could look at her husband sitting on the stand at church—a member of the Sunday School presidency—and be proud of him, remembering their wonderful courtship and relationship: married in the temple, nothing to hide, no regrets. She told how they were tempted. But their goal was the temple. They knew the difference between a pure kiss and necking. They knew that virtue is lost by degrees. Their plans were carefully thought out, avoiding the parked car on a lonely road and the late hours alone and the steady dating. She wore a single pearl necklace throughout her courtship as a reminder to remain virtuous.

You can avoid the tragedy, the heartbreak, the suffering of sexual impropriety. You control your circumstances. You know the pitfalls—why not use time together constructively in

wholesome activities or uplifting discussions? Study together. Do you really know each other? Do you really? Take time to expand your minds. Have gospel discussions. Can you read or speak Russian? Mandarin Chinese? Why not try it? My wife is taking Spanish 101 at the University of Utah now. There is so much to learn.

Can you imagine a greater waste of your parents’ money, saved for your education, than going to filthy movies or buying porno-type magazines? Man’s reproductive ability was divinely created for family development but today is cheapened and degraded to some animal behavior. Never, never permit yourself to compromise God’s instructions. “Thou shalt not,” he said. “. . . Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge,” he has recorded (Hebrews 13:4). “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.” (Psalm 24:3–4).

Have pride in your personal being, your appearance, your clothes, your manners. Learn to say thank you. Learn to speak well, pronouncing correctly and clearly. You need not look like some television character, and I hope you will not, because you are different—you have a divine obligation.

I hope that your personal outline for true messengers of the Lord will include the Savior’s instruction that his disciples be family oriented. Men and women marry—they marry forever—not as an experiment or a trial. They love each other and none other, forever. They raise eternal families and fulfill God’s law to multiply and replenish the earth.

Dr. Elliot Landau wrote recently of a survey taken over fifty years ago of some fifteen hundred children in public schools in California with IQs well over 135—all of a genius caliber. They have been located and interviewed now that fifty years have gone by and they were asked what had given them the most satisfaction in life. The majority of these individuals,



now in their late sixties, said that their family had given them the most satisfaction and came first—came before their profession or friends or the making of money.

Is it not interesting how the centuries-old basics of true happiness and fulfillment keep returning—because they are true, solid, never-changing? After a lifetime of study, the world-famous historian and philosopher, Will Durrant, now 92—a man who had never been considered religious—recently wrote, “My final lesson of history after all my study is the same as that of Jesus, ‘Love one another.’”

The Savior time and time again has stressed the commandment to love one another. It is the golden thread woven into His gospel. As the result of a recent revelation to our prophet, all the people of the world must hear Christ’s teachings—all the people of the world. In this brief period that we have been together hopefully your vision has been broadened as you reflect on your personal obligation.

This University advertises that “The World is Our Campus.” May I also add that the world is yours to convert. Many of the needed new techniques and communications approaches will develop on this campus—but most important will be your heart and your desire. Cultivate Christlike qualities and you will be “anxiously engaged,” as you have been instructed to be, in this great cause. You, my dear young friends, can and will be such an influence for good. The Lord needs your imprint on the world. Someone has written:

*Nothing touches the soul but leaves its impress, and thus, little by little, we are fashioned into the image of all we have seen and heard, known and meditated; and if we learn to live with all that is fairest and purest and best, the love of it all will, in the end, become our very life.*

President Harold B. Lee, who so much loved this great University and all that it represents, taught us:

*You cannot lift another soul until you are standing on higher ground than he is. You must be sure, if you would rescue the man, that you yourself are setting the example of what you would have him be. You cannot light a fire in another soul unless it is burning in your own soul. [Conference Report, April 1973, p. 178]*

Now as I leave you with my witness and my testimony and my blessings, I want all of you to know that I *know*—that I do not just hope or anticipate, but that sacred experiences have been mine, one only a few weeks ago in the temple—that God lives, that He is real, that He is our Father, that He loves us, and that Jesus Christ is His Son, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. I know this to be true.

I know that President Kimball is a prophet of God. I know that the temple is the house of the Lord. I leave you with my witness and my blessing that your own vision might be broadened, that you too will *know*, that someday, somewhere, somehow you will desire to go with others to “the uttermost part of the earth.” May you be so blessed, I pray in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.