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THE HISTORY OF *PREACH MY GOSPEL*

THE BEGINNING PHASE
(NOVEMBER 1999 TO NOVEMBER 2000)

“[T_{HE}] world . . . desperately needs the gospel of Jesus Christ.”¹ President Gordon B. Hinckley understood this truth. Yet during the 1990s he saw some trends in the missionary work of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that caused him concern. The first trend was the lack of convert retention. He felt strongly that if individuals made the investment to join the Church, they should remain a part of it. President Hinckley gave two general conference talks about retention in 1997 and followed them with a lengthy landmark address about missionary work, broadcast via satellite to the leaders of the Church in February 1999. In that address, President Hinckley stated, “There is absolutely no point in doing missionary work unless we hold on to the fruits of that effort.”²

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President Gordon B. Hinkley, whose concern about new member retention, the inactivity of missionaries, stagnant baptism numbers, and the rote presentation of the missionary discussions led to the development of Preach My Gospel.
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Converts were not the only ones falling through the cracks, though. Some returned missionaries were becoming less active when they arrived home from their full-time missionary service. This was another reason to worry. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland remembered, “That was the thing that was bothering President Hinckley. . . . Why can a missionary come home and be inactive? [President Hinckley] said, ‘I don’t understand that. There are a lot of things in life I understand, but I don’t understand that. How can a missionary come home and go inactive?’”³ Missionary work should lift young men and women in such a way that it helps them to be spiritually strong for the rest of their lives.

Stagnant baptismal numbers were another cause for concern. Total convert baptisms remained relatively unchanged during the 1990s, while the total number of missionaries increased during this period; therefore, the number of baptisms per missionary declined.⁴ This led President Hinckley to wonder about the effectiveness of the missionary program. He pointed out that in 1998 “there were approximately 300,000 convert baptisms throughout the Church. . . . It is wonderful. But it is not enough. I am not being unrealistic when I say that with concerted effort, with recognition of the duty which falls upon each of us as members of the Church, and with sincere prayer to the Lord for help, we could double that number.”⁵

President Hinckley also felt there were times when missionaries held so closely to a memorized discussion that their recitation of the doctrine became

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rote. Some missionaries' presentations had a wooden or mechanical feeling to them. There needed to be a greater attention to the Holy Spirit. He expressed this sentiment when introducing the new *Preach My Gospel* manual:

When I was on a mission seventy years ago, we had no proselyting program. Missionaries would decide each morning on what tract they would use for the day and then go out and knock on doors. Remarkably enough, investigators were found and taught.

Years later, when I had responsibility for the missionary program under the direction of members of the Twelve, the first unified plan was introduced and used. The effects were wonderful. But the plan through the years grew into a procedure where memorization was the principal endeavor. The lessons were given in a rote manner from memory. Missionaries were prone to rely more on their memories than on the Spirit of the Lord.⁶

President Hinckley counseled with the Brethren of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve. Unified in their concerns, they set people to work examining the effectiveness of missionaries in their proselyting endeavors, with the hope of resolving some of these challenges. Under President Hinckley's direction, staff members in the Missionary Department at Church headquarters and the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah, formed committees that would respond to his call to improve the approach to missionary work in the Church. This included finding solutions to the problems of convert retention, returned missionary retention, missionary baptismal productivity, and missionary effectiveness in teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As staff members and volunteers went to work to resolve the challenges expressed by the Brethren about missionary work, a breakthrough finally occurred with the inception of the Curriculum Committee. It was formed in November 1999, "with the commission to identify problems with the missionary curriculum and recommend changes."⁷ Under priesthood

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direction, the Curriculum Committee sought inspiration as they dealt with the missionary concerns. By January 2000, the Curriculum Committee had identified three major problems with the missionary curriculum.

First was the scripted format of the missionary lessons. Early Latter-day Saint missionaries went forth to preach the word with little, if any, formal training. There were no dialogues to memorize or presentations to rehearse. A missionary had to speak by the power of the Holy Ghost from his own personal convictions. As the Lord says in Doctrine and Covenants 11:21, “Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men.” The Curriculum Committee felt that the overwhelming number of missionary programs, policies, and procedures created since the inception of the 1986 missionary discussions had hindered a missionary’s ability to preach the gospel with unfettered conviction.

Second was the role of memorization in presenting the missionary lessons. This role of memorization has varied throughout the collection of the Church’s formal missionary discussions. While speaking of the first three sets of formal missionary discussions (1952, 1961, and 1973), Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught, “Those weren’t bad discussions; but we memorized them, . . . and we had a real problem getting approved proselyting discussions for the whole Church and the opposition was, ‘you’re denying the spirit of inspiration; you’re not letting the Spirit come through and missionaries teach . . . something that’s learned by rote.’ There’s an element of truth in that. . . . We’ve now progressed in the discussion to the point that we memorize not words but ideas that get a concept over.”⁸ The 1986 discussions tried to implement a lighter burden of memorization. This would allow a missionary to teach the gospel by the power of the Holy Ghost with greater flexibility. In this way, a missionary could adapt the message to the needs of an investigator. Elder M. Russell Ballard stated, “Our experience . . . showed that within one year, the tradition of memorization overwhelmed the intention of having missionaries teach the [1986] discussions in their

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own words.”⁹ By 1999, many of the missions in the United States were using memorization as the primary vehicle to obtain the word prior to preaching the gospel. “We did a survey of missions in the United States and of those fifty-four that responded, fifty-two required word for word memorization, and those fifty-two had a very strict certification program to ensure they were memorized.”¹⁰ This rigid memorization approach made missionaries more dependent on a formal discussion booklet than on the Spirit.

Third was the commitment pattern and its enormous influence on all aspects of missionary work.¹¹ In speaking to LDS missionaries, the *Missionary Guide* states, “The commitment pattern is the tool you will use to help others feel the Spirit and obey gospel principles.”¹² This commitment pattern was woven into the 1986 missionary discussions and was the catalyst for the *Missionary Guide*, published in 1988, as a way to teach missionary skills. It placed a heavy emphasis on missionaries developing these necessary skills such as “*preparing* people to feel the Spirit of the Lord, *inviting* them to make commitments when they feel the Spirit, *following up* to help them keep their commitments, and helping them *resolve concerns* that may hinder their progress.”¹³ One of the main intents of the commitment pattern was based on the idea that greater skills meant more productivity, translating into more baptisms. Unfortunately, later research stated, “There is no evidence in this study that increases in proselyting knowledge or skill performance will dramatically increase productivity. . . . These results underscore the difficulty of effectuating major changes in productivity.”¹⁴ This led the Curriculum Committee to ask, “Why do we continue to refine, enhance, and perpetuate an elaborate and expensive structure to support a paradigm that shows no correlation with productivity?”¹⁵

The Curriculum Committee gave a presentation on March 7, 2000, to their executive directors, which included Elder Earl C. Tingey.¹⁶ After a few changes suggested by President Packer, the committee prepared the presentation for President Packer to give at the General Authority training on March 30, 2000.¹⁷ The dominant theme of the General Authority training was following the Spirit. Elder Alexander B. Morrison explained to the assembled

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Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, whose Missionary Curriculum Task Committee was the first to propose modifications to the missionary discussions. © Intellectual Reserve, Inc

Church leaders that “two factors impede the work: (a) Our insatiable lust for complexity. We encumber the simple message of Christ with our own complexities. (b) Our undying enthusiasm for programs. We have programs for everything.”¹⁸ Some of the observations following President Packer’s presentation included “We don’t trust the missionaries so we invent programs” and “Missionaries will do as they ought to do if they know the doctrine.”¹⁹

With a unified desire to further the missionary program, another committee was formed in March 2000 called the Missionary Curriculum Task Committee,

under the direction of the Missionary Executive Council (MEC) with Elder Holland as the chair (hereafter referred to as Elder Holland’s committee).²⁰ He described the purpose of his committee, saying, “I have been chairing a major task committee charged with the responsibility to review various missionary programs for any improvement or revitalization we can give to them.”²¹ As this committee invited others to give their input, the information was compiled and given to the Missionary Executive Council.

The theme of following the Spirit in the March 2000 General Authority training arose frequently as Elder Holland’s committee continued to research. While training mission presidents on June 20, 2000, Elder Dallin H. Oaks identified a central concern: “A major theme of this seminar . . . is teaching and acting by the Spirit. . . . For quite a few years we have had some things associated with missionary work that in their excessive detail seem to assume that no one is getting any inspiration in this work. . . . A medicine of

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regimentation that may be needed by some is a massive overdose for others in whom it can produce an attitude where they do not seek and act upon the inspiration available to them.”²²

THE EXPLORATORY PHASE (NOVEMBER 2000 TO SUMMER 2002)

Following a year of intense review, on November 1, 2000, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles decided that the missionary discussions used in 1986 “should be evaluated to determine if they should be rewritten at this time.”²³ In addition, they asked that the entire missionary effort be carefully reviewed. With so much to explore, Elder Holland’s committee scrutinized every aspect of the missionary program of the Church. This required a year and a half of careful analysis to fulfill the First Presidency’s charge regarding the missionary discussions, while petitioning divine help and intervention.

Elder Holland’s committee identified a central question to answer, “What must be done to increase and enhance the impact of the Holy Spirit in missionary work?”²⁴ To answer this and other questions, they recruited others to help with the task of analyzing all areas of missionary work. The work of one of these subcommittees, the Mission Presidents’ Advisory Committee (MPAC),²⁵ was typical and can be instructive of the work done by all committees in preparation for *Preach My Gospel*. Elder W. Craig Zwick of the Seventy served as the chair and reported the MPAC’s discussions, findings, and solutions directly to Elder Holland. The committee was composed of ten mission presidents who had recently returned from serving. They were asked to counsel together, do research to analyze different aspects of missionary work, and report their findings to Elder Zwick.

The MPAC was assigned to explore specific problems or issues relating to missionary work. Statistics and background information were provided to give context to the challenge or problem to be studied. Resources and people were suggested who could possibly give further

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insight. Then these returned mission presidents would go to work. As they labored together gathering information, they would convene approximately every two months to discuss their findings and seek a solution. One of those returned mission presidents noted, “We knew that our solutions were simply recommendations that would go to those who had the keys, power and authority to gain inspiration for the Church as a whole.”²⁶ The work of this committee and others like it continued to seek for foundational principles that would be helpful in the development of *Preach My Gospel*. They were not directly tasked with developing a new missionary manual but were simply asked to study the issues regarding missionary work.

Elder Holland’s committee, the MPAC, and other subcommittees built on the earlier discussions from the Curriculum Committee and explored additional issues, including the trust and maturity of young missionaries, learning and teaching among missionaries, adapting to the unique needs of the investigator, and revising the missionary discussions. Elder Holland regularly reported the results of these explorations to the Missionary Executive Council and on occasion to the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve.

The first proposal for a modified set of discussions was presented to the Missionary Executive Council on November 15, 2000. During this meeting, three options were presented “for revising the discussions to allow missionaries greater flexibility and more reliance on the Spirit.”²⁷ These three options included alternative A, which would be a “create-your-own discussion” approach for missionaries based on their investigators’ individual needs and circumstances. Alternative B consisted of doctrinal packets or outlines that would teach missionaries the necessary doctrines from the scriptures and words of the prophets and then allow them to teach accordingly. Finally, alternative C was a simplified set of missionary discussions.²⁸

After looking at these three alternatives for a year, in November 2001 Elder Holland’s committee favored alternative B (doctrinal packets

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of information). Three guidelines were given to aid in the creation of new missionary discussions: (1) “Rather than scripted discussions, create modular teaching guides that require reliance on the Spirit, encourage flexibility, and promote meaningful study.” (2) “Create teaching guides that challenge missionaries to present them in an order and at a level of complexity agreeable to the investigator, the culture, and as directed by the Spirit.” (3) “Create teaching guides that help the missionaries teach primarily from the scriptures.”²⁹ These guidelines emphasized a missionary’s need to teach by the Spirit, from the scriptures, according to the needs of his or her investigators. The resulting teaching guides, designed as doctrinal packets of information, gave an outline of fourteen fundamental gospel topics ranging from the Restoration to tithes and offerings to Jesus Christ.³⁰ These teaching guides became foundational in the development of the missionary lessons that would be included in *Preach My Gospel*.

With the proposed revision to the discussions came a desire to move away from the skill-based commitment pattern and *Missionary Guide*, which so heavily influenced the structure of how to teach the 1986 missionary discussions. Instead of having the discussions follow the commitment pattern, Elder Holland’s committee proposed a “conversion process,” which would include “Teach the gospel by the Spirit. Build faith in Jesus Christ. Invite to repent. Prepare to be baptized and confirmed. Help make and keep covenants.”³¹ The conversion process model attempted to focus more on the spiritual conversion an investigator should experience leading up to and through baptism, whereas the commitment pattern was structured to function more like a skill set to help the missionary. The committee also discussed making a revision to the *Missionary Guide*. The new missionary handbook would streamline the learning and teaching efforts among missionaries. As with the old *Missionary Guide*, they could use it during their personal and companionship study and train from it in district and zone meetings in the mission field. But the new missionary handbook would be more scriptural and would be more closely tied to teaching and conversion. It would be designed to “help missionaries develop improved

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study skills and an attitude of learning, grow in Christ-like attributes, and learn to teach by the Spirit.”³² It would also emphasize retention, a topic minimally approached by the old *Missionary Guide*. Unlike the old guide’s focus on missionary skills, the new handbook would have skills as a small portion of a much greater whole. Overall, the new handbook would be able to link study, training, and teaching in all areas of missionary work.³³ This proposal eventually became *Preach My Gospel*.

When *Preach My Gospel* was published, one of the main goals in a missionary’s teaching was to connect the baptismal interview questions with the content of what was being taught. Consequently, each of the five lessons in *Preach My Gospel* has the baptismal interview questions right at the beginning of the lesson. In June 2001, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve had given an assignment to the Missionary Executive Council to “rely more on the Spirit, increase flexibility, avoid robotic teaching, reduce the drop-out rate after the first discussion, improve missionaries’ gospel study, and link study, teaching, and training at the MTC and in the field.”³⁴ Elder Holland’s committee felt that one place to start was the baptismal interview questions. They turned to the scriptures for answers. Their formal question was “What must a person understand, do, and become in order to qualify for baptism?”³⁵ The analysis of the scriptures yielded seven passages.³⁶ These passages mapped out the qualifications for baptism. When they compared these scriptures to the existing baptismal interview questions, the committee noticed there were incongruities between what the Lord said in the scriptures and what current missionaries were asking people. Elder Holland showed a particular interest in these developments, and in the spring of 2002 he took them to the Missionary Executive Council. The MEC reworked the baptismal interview questions very carefully, and they were approved by the First Presidency and sent out to the rest of Church leadership on April 30, 2002.³⁷ This became foundational in the future development of missionary lessons for *Preach My Gospel*.

On May 8, 2002, the Missionary Executive Council, with Elder Dallin H. Oaks as the chair and Elder Holland as a committee member, presented the

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Elder M. Russell Ballard, chair of the Missionary Executive Council, who emphasized teaching the message of the Restoration first among the missionary discussions. © Intellectual Reserve, Inc.

findings and recommendations to the First Presidency. This presentation consisted of ways to link studying, training, and teaching for missionaries in the field as prescribed by the First Presidency in June 2001. It also included linking the baptismal interview questions with teaching the gospel. In addition, the MEC presented options for flexible teaching in the revised missionary discussions and suggested making a revision of the *Missionary Guide*.³⁸ The Quorum of the Twelve responded to the presentation with “conceptual agreement to develop curriculum topics that missionaries could teach in any order.”³⁹

THE DEVELOPMENT PHASE (SUMMER 2002 TO SUMMER 2003)

The next step in the building process of the new missionary handbook came in the summer of 2002 when Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve became the chair of the Missionary Executive Council.⁴⁰ His leadership brought a new level of energy to the project. The momentum gained during the preceding months from Elder Dallin H. Oaks’s inspired work as the MEC chair now began to roll forward at an accelerated pace. This accelerated pace started on August 14, 2002, when the MEC held a meeting that generated significant results. Elder Ballard expressed his concern that “the adversary has taken us off our message.”⁴¹ That message was the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ through the Prophet Joseph

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Smith. Elder Ballard felt it was essential for missionaries to teach about the Restoration up front because that message naturally sifted out those who were insincere in their exploration of the Church. Building on common beliefs was important, but people needed to know why members of the LDS Church were different from any other Christian organization.

The Restoration message was having success in the Washington Tacoma Mission. The mission president there, Ron Stone, had a missionary who was frustrated that people could not tell who the missionaries were. President Stone suggested to the missionary, “Why don’t you try teaching the third discussion first, the lesson on the Restoration and Apostasy?”⁴² This missionary and others took ownership of this idea and “essentially took the third lesson and blended some of our Heavenly Father’s plan with it and developed a Restoration lesson, which they taught first.”⁴³ With this new hybrid lesson came a twofold success. First, investigators could understand the Prophet Joseph Smith in the context of dispensations. Now, instead of seeing Joseph Smith as the founder of another nineteenth-century church, people could see God’s pattern throughout biblical history—God revealed his will to prophets, gave them priesthood authority to act in his name, and commanded them to preach his word. Second, there was a noticeable impact on the missionaries. This greater understanding of the role of Joseph Smith as a prophet contributed to a more converted missionary with a deeper sense of purpose. This whole experience illustrated a pattern often seen in Latter-day Saint history—inspiration given to leaders at a local level results in developments that eventually bless the whole Church. Elder Ballard brought this experience to the attention of the rest of the committee. They decided that a test run needed to be done to see if this new lesson would be as effective in other missions as it was in the Washington Tacoma Mission. This MEC meeting and the other meetings that followed became known as the Curriculum Project of the Leadership and Training Committee (hereafter cited as Elder Ballard’s committee).⁴⁴

In September 2002, each of four Utah missions—Salt Lake City, Salt Lake City South, Provo, and Ogden—tested the Restoration-Apostasy hybrid first discussion in one of the existing zones of each mission.

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Missionaries were instructed to study the doctrines of the message of the Restoration from their new materials, outline the doctrines, and present this message in their own words as prompted by the Spirit to meet the needs of those they would teach.⁴⁵ The four mission presidents' feedback about implementing this method was overwhelmingly positive.

With the success of emphasizing the Apostasy and Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ came the challenge of implementing it worldwide. Approval was given to continue the testing in the four Utah missions.⁴⁶ Additional approval was given at the end of October 2002 to extend the testing to limited areas of the Church, including the seven missions in the British Isles,⁴⁷ for three months.⁴⁸ In addition to teaching the new content of the Restoration and Apostasy in the context of dispensations, President Boyd K. Packer continued to emphasize the teaching of by the Spirit and receiving the revelation necessary to adapt to others' needs, moving away from a rehearsed dialogue.

About this time, Elder Ballard addressed the topic of missionary work in the October 2002 priesthood session of general conference. Although he gave no direct mention of reworking the missionary discussions, he did ask for a higher caliber of missionary to be prepared to teach the message of the Restoration from a pure heart. He essentially "raised the bar" for missionary service in the Church.⁴⁹ This clarion call of a higher standard for future full-time missionaries was the first public clue that the Church's approach to missionary work was being revised. It foreshadowed the need to have missionaries ready to teach the gospel from the heart and not from a discussion booklet.

Many of the points expressed by Elder Ballard in his general conference talk were expanded in an official circular letter titled "Statement on Missionary Work." Issued to all Church leaders by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles on December 11, 2002, it contained five pages' worth of material "to clarify our responsibilities."⁵⁰ Also included was "a statement of principles on eligibility for full-time missionary service; on finding, teaching, and baptizing worthy investigators; and on strengthening new and less-active members."⁵¹ This vital information from the highest

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governing body of the Church helped the rest of the leadership understand the vision the First Presidency had for strengthening missionary work.⁵²

Most noteworthy from the First Presidency was the portion about teaching by the Spirit. After quoting four scriptures,⁵³ the letter stated:

Our purpose is to teach the message of the restored gospel in such a way as to allow the Spirit to direct both the missionaries and those being taught. It is essential to learn the concepts of the standard missionary discussions, but these should not be taught by rote presentations. The missionary should feel free to use his own words as prompted by the Spirit. He should not give a memorized recitation, but speak from the heart in his own terms. He may depart from the order of the lessons, giving that which he is inspired to do, according to the interest and needs of the investigator. Speaking out of his own conviction and in his own words he should bear testimony of the truth of his teachings.⁵⁴

On the heels of the First Presidency's letter came the Church's first worldwide leadership training meeting held via satellite to all Church leadership on January 11, 2003. As a second witness to the "Statement on Missionary Work," President Hinckley gave voice to the new emphasis in his address titled "Missionary Service." After referring to the previous month's letter, he taught:

The question now rises as to how the missionaries shall teach those who are willing to listen. For many years now we have had a standard set of missionary lessons. Great good has come of this. The missionaries have never lacked for something to teach in a systematic way. But unfortunately this method, in all too many cases, has resulted in a memorized presentation, lacking in Spirit and in personal conviction. . . .

They should master the concepts of the lessons. But they should feel free to deviate from the established order, and to teach the concepts in their own words under the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁵

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After quoting D&C 84:85, President Hinckley finished with this observation: “Such teaching will become more challenging, more individualized, and more suitable to the needs of those who are being taught. This is the kind of teaching that will lead to a request for baptism.”⁵⁶ The prophet had left no doubt as to the continued changes that were coming in the missionary program of the Church. The *Church News* summed it up best: “Teaching by the Spirit is at the core of this effort.”⁵⁷

With foundational documents and training in place from President Hinckley and the First Presidency in December 2002 and January 2003, the Church published “Teaching by the Spirit: Guidelines for MTC Teachers and Supervisors” on February 19, 2003. It was the first document distributed to the MTC and all missions Churchwide with instructions for how to implement the revised direction for missionary work. “Teaching by the Spirit” used many of the principles that had been discussed by multiple committees since November 1999. It could be viewed as the first written step toward a new missionary manual. The teachers of missionaries were instructed, “Your objective is to help the missionaries gain knowledge of the doctrines of the Restoration so that they can go into the world and teach by the Spirit at any time and under any circumstance.”⁵⁸ This statement shows the emphasis on the Restoration highlighted by Elder Ballard. This is coupled with teaching by the Spirit according to the needs of each investigator, an idea brought to light in early 2000 by President Packer and thoroughly explored by Elder Holland’s Missionary Curriculum Task Committee. These two concepts seem to be at the heart of the new emphasis in missionary work. The doctrine of the Church has not changed, but the structure of the missionary discussions has been altered over time according to the needs of the people being taught.

As continued testing of the hybrid first discussion appeared to be very positive, Elder Ballard’s committee began compiling outlines for a new missionary manual. The proposal of fourteen doctrinal packages of information was merged with the new direction given by Elder Ballard about the Restoration. This combination would serve as the standard for the

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new missionary lessons. Additionally, other areas essential to a missionary's success, such as teaching by the Spirit and finding investigators to teach, were to be combined with new discussions. One of the first titles given to the new missionary guide was "Fishers of Men: A Guide to Missionary Work," dated December 2002. A short time later, at the end of January 2003, outlines for what a missionary would teach investigators had been refined and were titled "Doctrinal Summaries." More doctrinal teachings were titled "Laws and Ordinances" and were separated into two categories—before baptism and after baptism. The rest of the contents of the new manual were more thoroughly outlined as well. With more than a year and a half until its publication, the proposed missionary manual had a good cohesion of topics that would set a missionary up for success in the field.

In an effort to reduce the amount of materials needed in missionary work, Elder Ballard proposed refreshing the missionary curriculum in May 2003. He expressed concern over many items, including the size and complexity of the missionary curriculum. Documents such as "Teaching by the Spirit" were not being distributed efficiently. Convert retention was not adequately addressed, and questions about the role of memorization persisted. Policies and procedures in the missionary handbook and the mission president's handbook were out of date, including discussions that did not prepare an investigator for baptism. The current missionary materials were not integrated into a missionary's study time, and therefore missionaries had a hard time applying them to real-life proselyting experiences.

On behalf of the MEC, Elder Ballard stated, "We propose that all of the curriculum be combined into one book totaling about 100 pages. This book would fully integrate the instructions that are scattered among several existing documents. It would provide doctrinal summaries to be studied rather than discussion scripts to be memorized. It would emphasize effective scripture study for lifelong gospel learning." On June 12, 2003, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve gave conceptual approval for "refreshing and reducing the current missionary curriculum from about 500 pages to 120 pages in a single manual."⁵⁹ Not only would the missionary

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discussions be rewritten, but all the other areas of missionary work could now be combined into one resource manual that would stand alone.

THE TESTING AND DISTRIBUTION PHASE (SUMMER 2003 TO OCTOBER 2004)

Staff members of Elder Ballard's committee met on July 1, 2003. During this meeting, the new missionary manual finally got a name that stuck. Previous attempts at naming the manual included "Obtain the Word," "Fishers of Men," and "Teach All Nations, Baptizing Them. . . ." It was suggested that the manual be called *Preaching My Gospel* with a reference to Doctrine and Covenants 42. Shortly thereafter, the "ing" was dropped from "preaching," and Elder Ballard added "D&C 50:14" in conjunction with the new title. The name *Preach My Gospel* was officially submitted for approval on August 4, 2003.⁶⁰ The name caught hold and was used everywhere as the title for the new missionary manual. But before it caught hold, the first prototype for the new manual was introduced as "Teach All Nations, Baptizing Them . . ." with its title drawn from Matthew 28:19. With Elder Ballard's suggestion of a single, all-inclusive missionary manual, a conceptual design was created to give a feel for its size and length (see fig. 1).

The heart of *Preach My Gospel* is contained in chapter 3, "What Do I Study and Teach?" This is where the five new missionary lessons appear. They are technically the shortest of any of the five sets of formalized missionary lessons published by the Church, at a total of sixty pages, although the other four sets of discussions were printed on paper half the size of the 8½" × 11" *Preach My Gospel*. These lessons were in a stable form as early as January 2003, with four lessons to be taught before baptism and a fifth to be taught after confirmation. The August 2003 prototype of the new missionary manual contained the first rough draft of the new missionary lessons, totaling only twenty-seven printed pages.⁶¹ The first three missionary lessons built the doctrinal foundation for the gospel. The first lesson was titled

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“TEACH ALL NATIONS,
BAPTIZING THEM...”

— Matthew 28:19



A GUIDE FOR MISSIONARY WORK

Figure 1. The first prototype for the all-inclusive missionary manual. All Preach My Gospel images courtesy of Richard I. Heaton.

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“The Message of the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ” and focused primarily on what missionaries had already been teaching: the Apostasy-Restoration first discussion as implemented through Elder Ballard’s leadership. “The Plan of Salvation” was the second lesson. Missionaries would teach investigators about where they came from, why they are here, and where they are going in the next life. The third lesson, titled “The Gospel of Jesus Christ,” taught about the first principles and ordinances of Christ’s gospel, including enduring to the end. The fourth lesson deviated significantly from the first three because it was structured differently. It was titled “The Commandments: Before Baptism and Confirmation,” and listed thirteen commandments that needed to be taught to an investigator before baptism and confirmation. As with the other lessons, how and when to teach this lesson was determined under the inspiration of the Spirit and was based on the needs of investigators. The key was flexibility. This ability to adapt is so important that it is emphasized three times at the beginning of lesson four in *Preach My Gospel*.⁶² Lesson five, “Laws and Ordinances: After Baptism and Confirmation,” was designed the same way as the fourth, with the exception that it was to be taught after baptism. This instruction was to be done under the direction of the bishop by full-time or ward missionaries or a combination of both. Although these five lessons in August 2003 were very similar to the way they would appear in the final version of *Preach My Gospel*, they were still referred to as teaching guides at this point in the project.

Many of the other chapters in *Preach My Gospel* were assembled during the latter half of 2003. Some chapters were more difficult to assemble and get approved than others. Often the chapter number and order in the manual evolved until the final draft. Chapters that needed little to no changes were the ones discussing the Spirit, Book of Mormon, Christlike attributes, and baptism preparation. Some of the more difficult chapters requiring multiple revisions included those containing the new missionary lessons and planning tools and those about learning a foreign language.

The introduction to *Preach My Gospel* helped explain to mission presidents and missionaries the changes in the missionary program. One of the

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major changes came to the missionary daily schedule. It now allowed for thirty minutes to exercise, thirty to sixty minutes of additional language study, and an additional half-hour planning session at 9:00 pm. The introduction also defined personal and companionship study, district meetings, and zone conferences. It redefined what was included in the books of the missionary library. In many ways the introduction was a memo to the mission field about how *Preach My Gospel* fit with current proselyting activities.⁶³

The purpose statement in chapter 1, “What Is My Purpose as a Missionary?,” contained the most-revised sentence in *Preach My Gospel*. It teaches missionaries to “invite others to come unto Christ by helping them receive the restored gospel through faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.”⁶⁴ This is a prophetic statement of the doctrine of Christ in the twenty-first century, combining elements from the third and fourth articles of faith and including the principle of enduring to the end, which appears in many scriptures. This statement gives a focus to all missionaries and instructs them to be in harmony with the Godhead and their Church leaders as they measure all their missionary activities against the standard.⁶⁵

The first spiral-bound draft of *Preach My Gospel*, complete with all chapters written, appeared in December 2003. A picture of Dan Jones preaching the gospel in Wales appeared on the cover without an accompanying scriptural reference but with the subtitle “A Guide to Missionary Work” (see fig. 2). This first draft contained 163 pages. Its table of contents continued to become more refined. The page layout contained icons to help navigate the pages. A draft copy of a First Presidency message, written by a staff member, was included at the beginning of the manual.

After some minor corrections, a second draft of *Preach My Gospel* appeared in January 2004, one month after the first. Noticeably absent was a picture on the front cover. In its place, the word “DRAFT” appeared in all caps on a white cover, with the title “Preach My Gospel” in quotation marks and with the scripture reference D&C 50:14. The most noticeable

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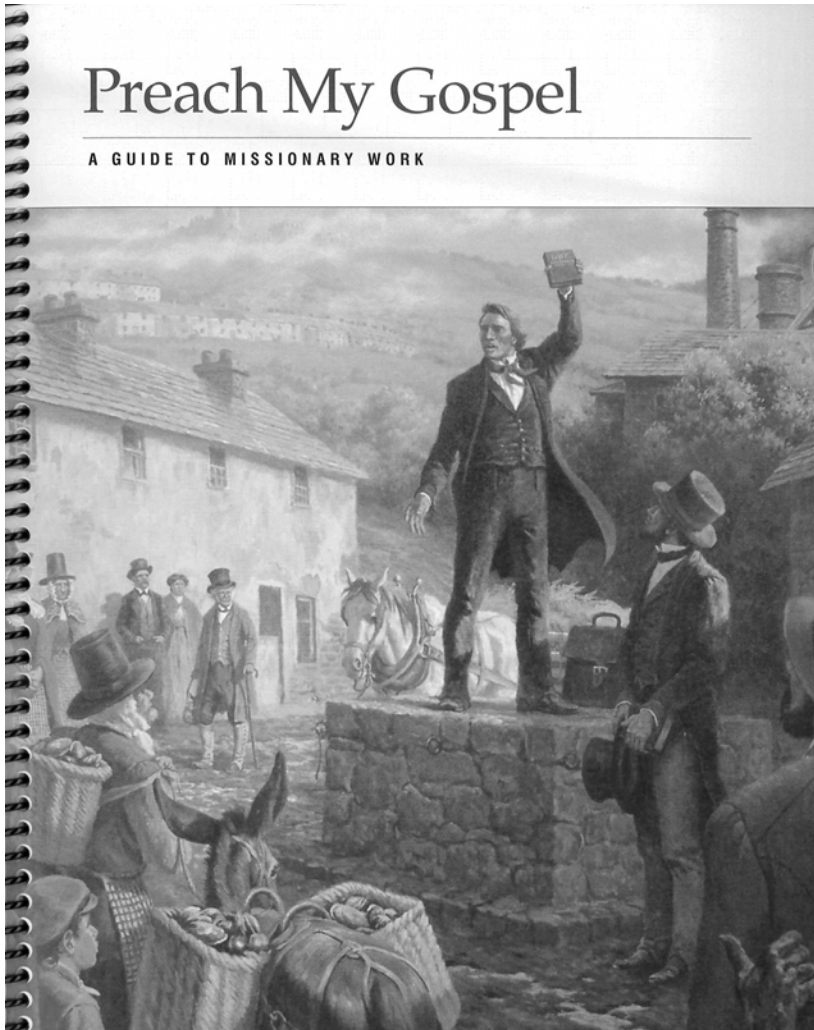


Figure 2. The first spiral-bound draft of Preach My Gospel, complete with all chapters written.

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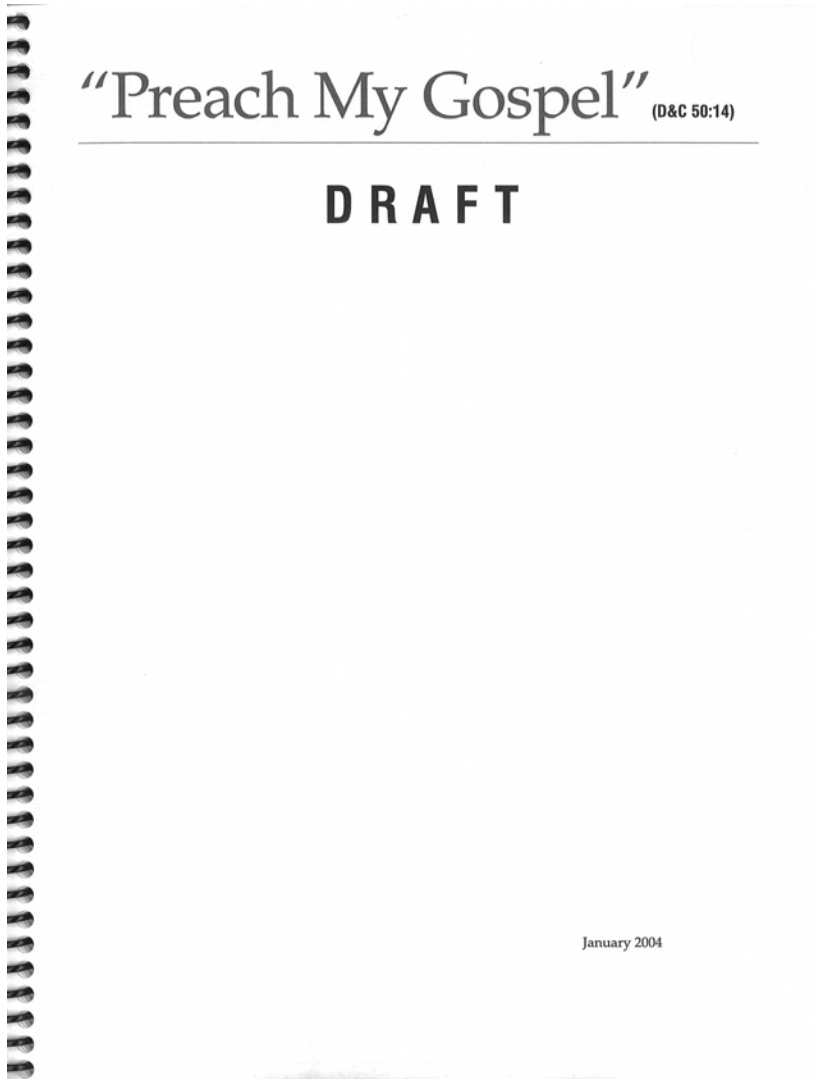


Figure 3. The second draft of Preach My Gospel, with a plain white cover.

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difference on the inside was the removal of the First Presidency letter because it would be written by a member of the First Presidency upon completion of the manual. This draft also contained 163 pages, which were printed on a glossier paper stock (see fig. 3).

The third draft of *Preach My Gospel* actually had two iterations that were almost identical and which will therefore be combined here. This draft appeared in February 2004. The cover looked almost identical to the second edition, except for an enlarged “DRAFT” and the February date in the bottom right corner. As with the second draft, the title page contained the word “DRAFT” again, with the instruction that the manual was for training missionaries in selected test missions. A place for a message from the First Presidency was reinserted and left blank. Twenty-five additional pages of material were added to this draft, over half of those coming in the missionary lessons, for a total of 188 pages. The most noticeable difference in the interior design of the pages was that the top of every page had an entire bar of color with the chapter number and title instead of just a small bar containing the chapter number. This same color was repeated throughout the chapter to match the subheadings as well.

With the entire manual compiled, Elder Ballard’s committee made plans for its testing in the mission field. They sought to answer five questions: Is each chapter simple and easy to use? After studying the materials, do missionaries know what to do? Can the missionaries apply the principles in their study and proselyting? Are there important things that have been overlooked? What considerations need to be made for full implementation?⁶⁶

The Missionary Executive Council selected fourteen missions to test *Preach My Gospel*, including two difficult foreign-language missions, Japan Fukuoka and Japan Tokyo North; two easier foreign-language missions, Mexico Puebla and Mexico City South; two non-American English missions, England Manchester and England Birmingham; and eight United States missions covering the East Coast, West Coast, and Utah—California Anaheim, California Carlsbad, Washington Tacoma, Washington Spokane, Utah Salt Lake City, Utah Ogden, New York New York North, and New York

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New York South. The committee felt that this would give a complete and accurate representative sample for testing the manual, in addition to saving on the cost of travel and testing by pairing missions that bordered each other. The fourteen-mission field test occurred from March to May 2004. This thorough testing process was observed over three visits to each mission by the staff of the Missionary Department. The first visit consisted of training missionaries about *Preach My Gospel*. Employees from the Missionary Department reviewed the training material with the mission president, trained the zone leaders, and participated in training the missionaries at zone conferences. During the second visit, about two weeks later, Missionary Department employees meticulously observed missionaries in all of their proselyting activities, including their planning and study time. On the third visit, two weeks after the second, staff members conducted focus groups and administered questionnaires to the missionaries who participated in the test.

Each mission studied the introduction to *Preach My Gospel*; chapter 1, “What Is the Purpose of My Mission?”; and chapter 2, which included the missionary lessons. Each of the fourteen missions was assigned three or four additional chapters to test from *Preach My Gospel*. At least four missions studied each chapter.⁶⁷ The Missionary Department gathered over one thousand pages of feedback from multiple sources, including General Authorities, mission presidents, missionaries, and Missionary Department staff.⁶⁸ In addition to the fourteen-mission test, Elder Ballard sent draft copies of *Preach My Gospel* to many other people, ranging from General Authorities to lay members of the Church, for their review. The sum of all the feedback about *Preach My Gospel* continued to be overwhelmingly positive; however, many of the individuals also made helpful suggestions that led to further refinement.

The fourth draft of *Preach My Gospel* appeared on June 5, 2004, after the feedback from the fourteen-mission field test was completed. A picture appeared for the first time since the painting of Dan Jones on the first draft. The cover of the fourth draft had a picture of John the Baptist performing the Savior’s baptism (see fig. 4). It also contained a noticeable tan box on the cover

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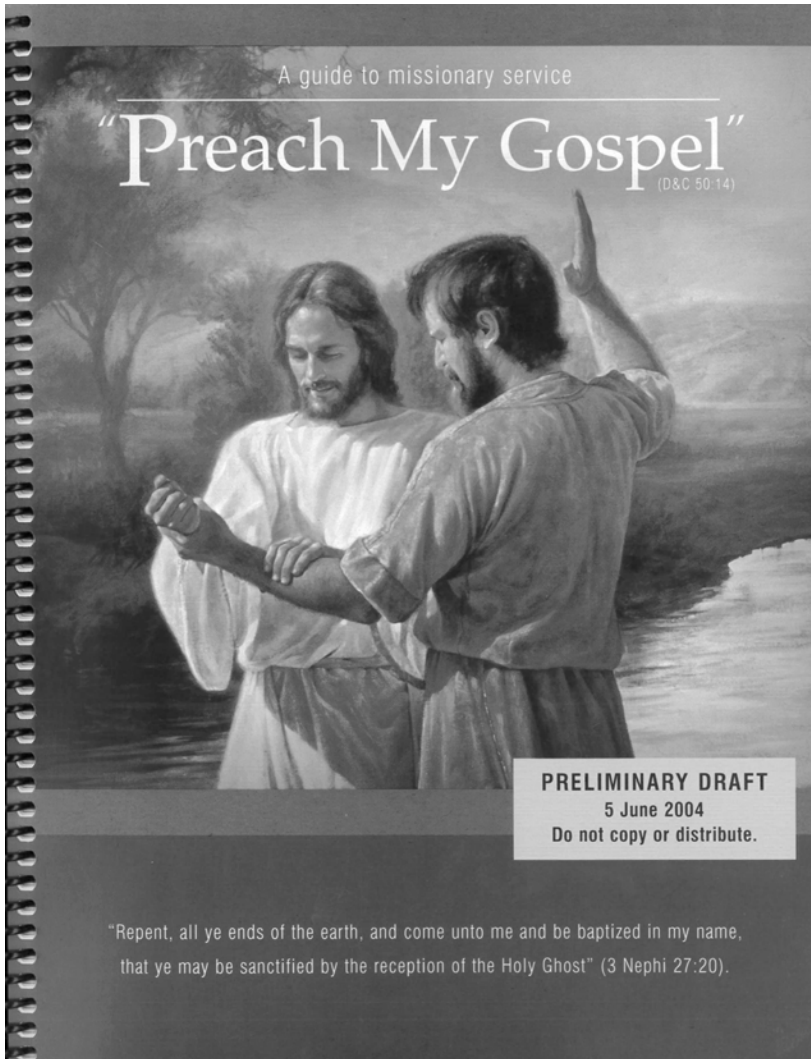


Figure 4. The fourth draft of Preach My Gospel, featuring the image of John the Baptist baptizing the Savior and containing an expansion to thirteen chapters.

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with the words “PRELIMINARY DRAFT” and the instruction “Do not copy or distribute.” This instruction was repeated on the first page of the manual. The table of contents showed an expansion to thirteen chapters, and the total number of pages increased to 222. The thirty-four-page increase was mainly reflected in eight additional pages given to the missionary lessons, appearing now as chapter 3, and the addition of a new eight-page chapter 11 titled “How Do I Help People Make and Keep Commitments?” which was separated from chapter 10 about teaching skills. The most noticeable difference throughout the manual was the elimination of the icons that pointed missionaries to important keys, scriptures, and helpful ideas. The icons were replaced with simple titles like “Scripture Study” and with color-coded activity boxes.

The fifth draft of *Preach My Gospel* was nearly identical to the fourth; the changes were minimal and dealt mostly with spacing. The two noticeable differences came with the cover and title page. The cover had a date of June 11, 2004, and the title page showed that each manual had been given a draft number. The fifth version also explained that it was a preliminary draft given “to acquaint general authorities, area authority seventies, and mission presidents with the adjustments in missionary training and proselyting. This copy is given to you on the condition that you will not make copies or distribute it in any way.”

The picture of Christ’s baptism on the cover was determined during a meeting with Elder Ballard’s Curriculum Committee. While looking at the picture of Dan Jones, the feeling was expressed that he was a great missionary but that the image did not capture the fullness of missionary work. If the purpose of missionary work was to bring someone to the waters of baptism after they had faith in Christ and repented of their sins so they could have full access to the Atonement, then that saving ordinance should be depicted. The committee went to work finding a number of different baptismal pictures and, along with Elder Ballard, recommended to the Missionary Committee the one that now appears on the cover. Christ being baptized spoke volumes because that is the example for all of God’s children to follow.⁶⁹

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Elder Ballard introduced *Preach My Gospel* to over one hundred new mission presidents assembled at the Missionary Training Center at the end of June 2004. He used the fifth draft of *Preach My Gospel* with the June 11, 2004, date for part of their training at the seminar for new mission presidents. Elder Ballard built up to this introduction by citing the foundational documents that led to *Preach My Gospel*. He then cited the Missionary Committee's June 12, 2003, decision to reduce the missionary curriculum from 676 pages of material to fewer than 250 pages. After opening the new missionary manual, mission presidents were instructed, "You are free to teach from this guidebook all of the chapters with the exception of chapter 3. Chapter 3 is the new presentation of the gospel in four discussions and a fifth discussion after baptism. The reason you do not teach from that now is because your missionaries do not have it and will not have it until we can have the final edit and then print tens of thousands of them."⁷⁰ Elder Ballard gave each chapter a brief review and called upon two mission presidents from missions in Utah to share their experience testing the new manual. The purpose of this training was to instill in the new mission presidents confidence for implementing *Preach My Gospel*.

The sixth draft of *Preach My Gospel* came forward after the seminar for new mission presidents. It was called the redline draft because it included all the changes requested by the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and the Church's Correlation and Editing Committee. Any additional comments to the changes already in the manual were to be referred to Elder Quentin L. Cook by July 20, 2004 (see fig. 5). Elder Ballard and Elder Cook personally hand-delivered copies of *Preach My Gospel* to all members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and First Presidency for their review.⁷¹ The redline draft addressed their concerns and corrections. Text that was added appeared in red, and text stricken from the manual appeared with a black line through it. Some of the changes were substantial, including the addition of whole paragraphs. Other changes were as minimal as a word or even a letter. Rarely, if ever, do manuals in the Church have such detailed input from all the members of the First Presidency and Quorum of

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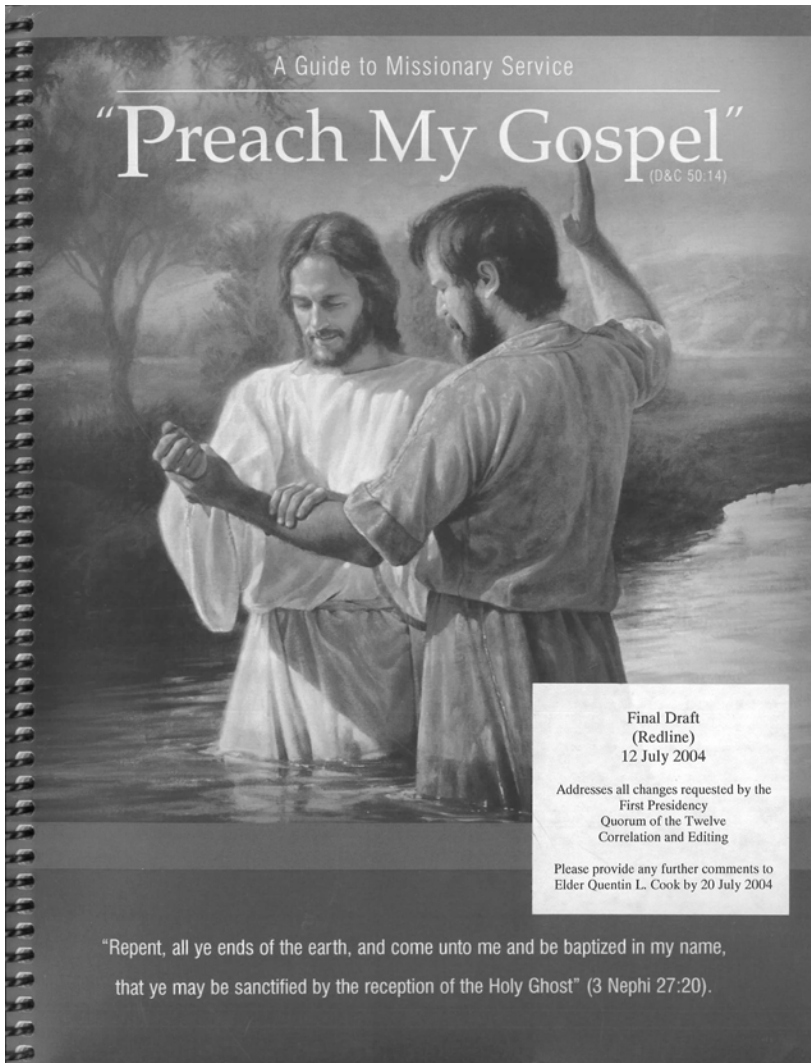


Figure 5. The redline draft, which included all the changes requested by the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and the Church's Correlation and Editing Committee.

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Twelve. It is a testament to the importance of missionary work and the need to have the best materials possible in the hands of missionaries.

The seventh draft of *Preach My Gospel* was the one given to missionaries in the fall of 2004. It incorporated all the changes from the previous redline draft into a final manual ready for missionary proselyting. This final draft also included a four-page index at the end with a “Remember This . . .” box on the final flap of the book, containing admonitions a missionary must always keep in mind. The total number of pages increased to 228 because of the addition of the index.

Early in 2005, the second printing (eighth draft) of *Preach My Gospel* was published. It was produced only a few months after the manual was introduced to the Church. About forty minor revisions were made to clean up errors in the first edition (October 2004). Most notable was the elimination of the quotation marks from the title of *Preach My Gospel* (see fig. 6). Also, the table of contents was adjusted to match the correct page numbers from lesson 4 to the end of the manual.

Preach My Gospel was revolutionary because it broke the color-printing barrier for manuals published by the Church. Manuals printed before it were black and white with few illustrations. *Preach My Gospel* was designed with technologically savvy young people in mind. It was important to have a twenty-first-century design with pictures and graphics. *Preach My Gospel* was assembled for a missionary to use for his or her entire mission. It is an interactive study guide with ideas for study and application at the end of every chapter, including spaces on every page for taking notes.⁷²

All mission leaders, including the mission president, his assistants, and zone leaders, were gathered by means of a satellite broadcast for training on October 15, 2004, to introduce the new missionary manual. The purpose of the broadcast was to train the leaders of the 338 missions worldwide on how to use *Preach My Gospel* and to prepare them to teach it to their missionaries. Elder Ballard conducted the missionary training satellite broadcast, and it was interspersed with instruction from President Hinckley, members of the Quorum of the Twelve, members of the Seventy, and leaders of

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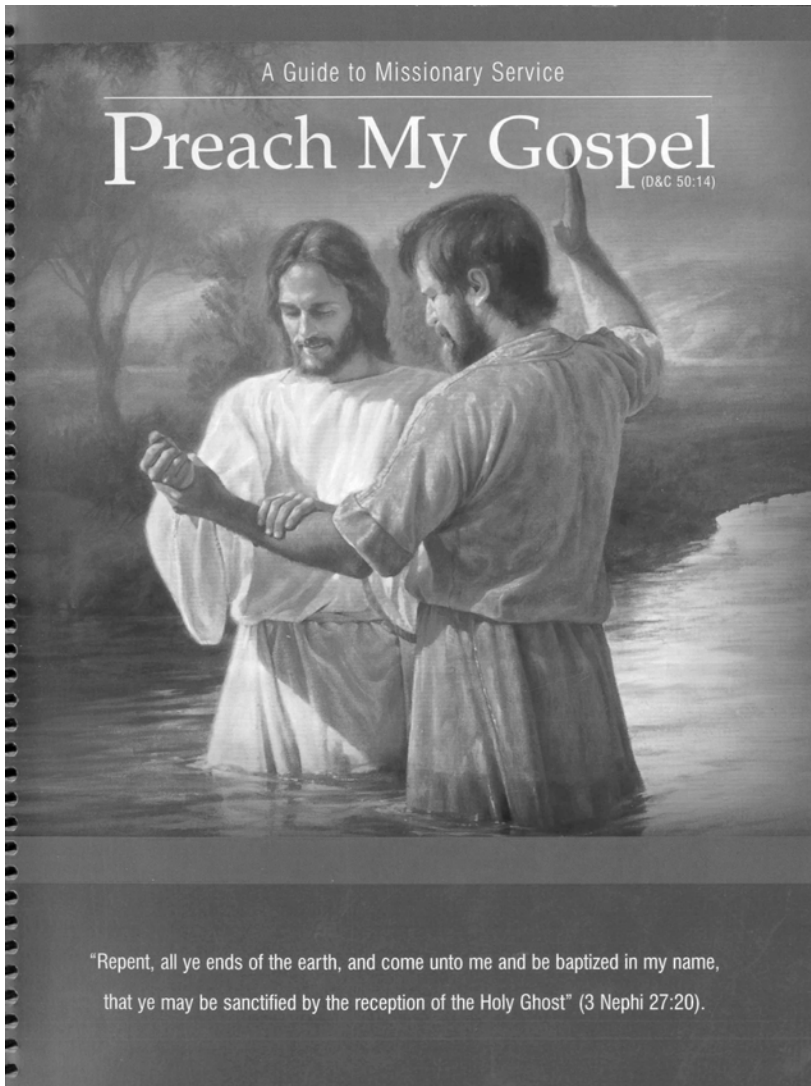


Figure 6. The eighth draft featured only minor revisions, including the elimination of quotation marks around the title.

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the Missionary Department. This training lasted more than two and a half hours. Elder Ballard summed up the experience of producing *Preach My Gospel*: “Under the direction of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, *Preach My Gospel*’ has been produced. . . . Every word has been studied by the full First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve; this has their complete and total blessing and endorsement. So we are proceeding under their direction as we unfold for you today how to implement the teachings within this marvelous guidebook for missionary work.”⁷³

The lengthiest portion of the broadcast taught about the heart of *Preach My Gospel*—the new missionary lessons in chapter 3. “The previous discussions . . . were addressed to the investigator, but this material is addressed to you.”⁷⁴ Missionaries were expected to learn the doctrine for themselves and then prepare to teach individuals according to the level of their understanding. The lessons were written in prose instead of dialogue form for the specific purpose of eliminating memorization as a method of learning and presenting. Elder Ballard made concluding remarks to wrap up the training, stating, “Remember never to lose sight that our major message is the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ through the Prophet Joseph Smith.”⁷⁵ He also stated that this message would have an effect on them for the rest of their lives in living and teaching the gospel. He finished with his testimony and said his prayers were with them in moving *Preach My Gospel* across the earth.

Preach My Gospel was introduced in print to the general membership of the Church on November 6, 2004, in the *Church News*. The article presented color pictures of each of the thirteen chapters and gave a general outline of the events leading to its publication. Most notable was the invitation at the end of the article, which said, “*Preach My Gospel* is available at Church Distribution Centers for \$6 a copy.”⁷⁶ The missionary lessons had never been made readily available to the general membership of the Church before. The *Ensign* published information about *Preach My Gospel* in January 2005. Similar to the *Church News*, the *Ensign* recounted highlights from the events that brought the new missionary manual to publication. In conclusion, the article stated, “The lessons in *Preach My Gospel* are . . . a return to

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the unscripted preaching of early Church missionaries and a step forward, providing missionaries with greater support materials that have been developed based on many years of experience.”⁷⁷ In April 2006, the one millionth copy of *Preach My Gospel* was printed.⁷⁸

CONCLUSION

President Boyd K. Packer said *Preach My Gospel* was designed beyond the veil and put together here.”⁷⁹ Everyone involved in the project, from the prophet to the staff workers, acknowledged the hand of God in putting the manual together. Elder Richard G. Scott stated in the April 2005 general conference, “Those who participated in its development are witnesses of the inspired direction of the Lord through the Holy Ghost in the conception, framing, and finalization of the materials in *Preach My Gospel*.”⁸⁰ Elder Scott then taught, “The former missionary materials were effective for their time, but the world has changed dramatically.”⁸¹ With this change he emphasized that missionaries would now teach the Savior’s message in their own words as guided by the Spirit.

This article illustrates how the work of councils of the Church helped bring about one fulfillment of the ninth article of faith, “We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.” The First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, and many committees under their direction counseled extensively for all the best answers and possibilities to determine how to assemble *Preach My Gospel*. The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve directed a multitude of staff workers on the project. They in turn generated ideas and gathered information, the best of which was eventually presented to the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve. With priesthood authority and direction from the Holy Ghost, the Brethren would approve the committee work and move forward or ask for more information until the right answers were discovered. This process of counseling together allowed for *Preach My Gospel* to be seen from

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all angles and gave presiding authorities of the Church the best information for receiving inspired direction.

A significant change in the focus of the missionary lessons contained in *Preach My Gospel* was summarized by Elder Holland, who said, “This was created to convert the missionary before we tried to convert the investigator.”⁸² He went on to admonish missionaries that all of what is contained in *Preach My Gospel* “is supposed to get in your bones, it is supposed to be down in the marrow of your soul. The most important contact and conversion, investigator and baptism you will ever have is yourself. In a way we could say that your mission will be a success if you don’t convert anybody but yourself. It will still be worth it and it will still be right and it will still have its impact.”⁸³ Only time will demonstrate the long-term effect *Preach My Gospel* has had on President Hinckley’s initial concerns about convert retention, returned missionary retention, missionary baptismal productivity, and missionary effectiveness in teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁸⁴

NOTES

1. “Statement on Missionary Work,” First Presidency letter, December 11, 2002.
2. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Find the Lambs, Feed the Sheep,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 108.
3. Jeffrey R. Holland, Missionary Training Center devotional, Provo, UT, January 13, 2009.
4. Directions for Missionary Work, Folder 1, 239, in Peter Rawlins, comp., “Preach My Gospel Development Team Records, 1998–2005,” DVD, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. References hereafter will be cited as Archive Disk with a folder number and page number separated by a colon.
5. Hinckley, “Find the Lambs, Feed the Sheep,” 108.
6. Gordon B. Hinckley, Missionary Training Satellite Broadcast, October 15, 2004.
7. Peter Rawlins Journal, Archive Disk 1:123.
8. Bruce R. McConkie, Confidential Minutes of Committee to Revise Missionary Discussions on May 16, 1984, Archive Disk 1:131.

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9. M. Russell Ballard to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, memorandum, May 19, 2003. Miscellaneous minutes and correspondence were made available to the author by officials at the Missionary Training Center in Provo, Utah. Other documents of this nature will be cited with “MTC” following them.
10. Peter Rawlins, interview by the author, June 1, 2009.
11. For a detailed review of this problem, see “Missionary Work: The Problem,” as drafted by the Curriculum Committee, Archive Disk 1:120–22.
12. *Missionary Guide* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1988), 42.
13. *Missionary Guide*, 42; emphasis in original.
14. Missionary Performance Testing, Research Information Division, 1996; in-field n approximately 1,000; Archive Disk 1:122.
15. “Missionary Work: The Problem,” Archive Disk 1:122.
16. Rawlins Journal, Archive Disk 1:123.
17. Rawlins Journal, Archive Disk 1:124.
18. Rawlins Journal, Archive Disk 1:125.
19. Rawlins Journal, Archive Disk 1:125.
20. Minutes from the Task Committee on Increasing Convert Baptisms and Retention, March 26, 2000, MTC.
21. Jeffrey R. Holland to select Brethren, August 2, 2000, MTC.
22. Dallin H. Oaks, “Introduction,” Seminar for New Mission Presidents, June 20, 2000, Archive Disk 1:244.
23. Minutes from the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve meeting on November 1, 2000, MTC.
24. Minutes from the Task Committee on Increasing Convert Baptisms and Retention, March 26, 2000, MTC.
25. MPAC was originally titled Missionary Programs Advisory Committee as early as March 2000.
26. Michael A. Goodman, interview by the author, December 9, 2009.
27. MEC minutes, November 15, 2000, MTC.
28. “Missionary Discussions,” PowerPoint presentation, May 2000, Archive Disk 1:219–20.

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29. Missionary Curriculum Report, November 2001, Archive Disk 1:376.
30. The doctrines included Jesus Christ, the family, ordinances and covenants, the priesthood, the Church, service and sacrifice, tithes and offerings, commandments, the gospel, the plan of salvation, the Book of Mormon, truth through revelation, the nature of God, and the Restoration. See Archive Disk 2:26.
31. “Improving Missionary Teaching,” presentation given to the MEC, April 2002, Archive Disk 2:75.
32. “Improving Missionary Teaching,” Archive Disk 2:77.
33. See “Improving Missionary Teaching,” Archive Disk 2:76–77.
34. MEC Minutes, November 30, 2001, MTC.
35. Missionary Curriculum Report, November 2001, Archive Disk 1:372.
36. 2 Nephi 31:10–14; Mosiah 5:2–4; 18:8–9; Alma 7:14–16; Moroni 6:1–4; D&C 20:37; Articles of Faith 1:4.
37. For a complete list of the old and new baptismal interview questions, see Benjamin White, “A Historical Analysis of How *Preach My Gospel* Came to Be” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 2010), Appendix C.
38. For more on these decisions, see “Improving Missionary Teaching,” a presentation to the MEC dated April 16, 2002, Archive Disk 2:61–82.
39. Presentation given to Leadership Training Committee and MEC dated October 8, 2002, Archive Disk 2:216.
40. Elder Richard G. Scott was added as a member of the committee as well.
41. Ron Stone, interview by the author, May 19, 2009.
42. Stone, interview.
43. Stone, interview.
44. Richard Heaton file, memorandum, October 8, 2002, Archive Disk 2:158. The most frequent participants in these meetings were President Boyd K. Packer, Elder M. Russell Ballard, Elder Richard G. Scott, Elder Charles Didier, Steve Allen, Ron Stone, Tracy Watson, Richard Heaton, and Peter Rawlins, although various others participated from time to time.
45. Information in this paragraph comes from a presentation to the Leadership Training Committee and MEC dated October 8, 2002, Archive Disk 2:216.

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46. Richard Heaton to Stephen Allen, memorandum, October 17, 2002, Archive Disk 2:227.
47. M. Russell Ballard, MTC all-employee meeting, January 12, 2003.
48. Richard Heaton to file, memorandum, November 1, 2002, Archive Disk 2:173.
49. See M. Russell Ballard, "The Greatest Generation of Missionaries," *Ensign*, November 2002, 46.
50. First Presidency letter accompanying "Statement on Missionary Work," December 11, 2002.
51. First Presidency letter, December 11, 2002.
52. This letter was reissued from the First Presidency with very little change on February 6, 2008.
53. Doctrine and Covenants 46:2; Doctrine and Covenants 42:13–14; Moroni 6:9; and Doctrine and Covenants 84:85.
54. "Statement on Missionary Work," 3–4.
55. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Missionary Service," Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting, January 11, 2003, 19.
56. Hinckley, "Missionary Service," 20.
57. "Call for Generation of Greatest Missionaries," *Church News*, February 1, 2003, 6.
58. "Teaching by the Spirit: Guidelines for MTC Teachers and Supervisors," The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, February 19, 2003, 1. The bottom of the page identifies it "for use in missionary training centers."
59. F. Michael Watson to M. Russell Ballard and the Missionary Executive Council, memorandum, June 12, 2003, MTC.
60. Stephen B. Allen to Elder Charles Didier, memorandum, August 4, 2003, MTC.
61. Twenty-seven pages is an approximate number. It varied by a few pages depending on the rough draft a person possessed.
62. *Preach My Gospel* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2004), 71–72.
63. Information from an interview with Stephen Allen by the author on July 21, 2010, was used in this paragraph.
64. *Preach My Gospel*, 1.

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65. Information from an interview with Stephen Allen by the author on July 21, 2010, was used in this paragraph.
66. Presentation given in MEC on March 10, 2004, Archive Disk 4:106.
67. Information from this paragraph was obtained from the presentation given to the MEC on March 10, 2004, Archive Disk 4:106–12.
68. From a presentation titled “*Preach My Gospel: Approval and Production Process*.” See Archive Disk 4:5, 10.
69. Information from an interview with Tracy Watson by the author on July 21, 2009, was used in this paragraph.
70. M. Russell Ballard, “Seminar for New Mission Presidents,” June 22, 2004.
71. Quentin L. Cook, Missionary Training Center devotional, Provo, UT, June 6, 2006.
72. Information in this paragraph comes from interviews with Stephen Allen on July 21, 2010, and Ric Ott on April 3, 2009.
73. M. Russell Ballard, in “*Preach My Gospel: Introduction for Leaders*,” Missionary Training Satellite Broadcast, October 15, 2004, DVD.
74. Richard I. Heaton, in “*Preach My Gospel: Introduction for Leaders*,” Missionary Training Satellite Broadcast, October 15, 2004, DVD.
75. Ballard, “*Preach My Gospel*” broadcast.
76. Shaun D. Stahle, “Preach My Gospel,” *Church News*, November 6, 2004, 8.
77. Adam C. Olsen, “New Preach My Gospel Program Being Launched in Missions Worldwide,” *Ensign*, January 2005, 75.
78. See the plaque hanging in the Church Office Building on the third floor of the west wing.
79. Boyd K. Packer, “One in Thine Hand,” address delivered at mission presidents’ seminar, Provo Missionary Training Center, June 22, 2005, 4.
80. Richard G. Scott, “The Power of *Preach My Gospel*,” *Ensign*, May 2005, 30.
81. Scott, “The Power of *Preach My Gospel*,” 29.
82. Holland, Missionary Training Center devotional.
83. Holland, Missionary Training Center devotional.
84. For a more complete analysis, see the author’s thesis: White, “A Historical Analysis of How *Preach My Gospel* Came to Be.”

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PREACH MY GOSPEL TIME LINE

November 1999—The Curriculum Committee is organized with Elder Sheldon F. Child as chair. Its commission is to identify problems with the missionary curriculum and recommend changes.

Spring 2000—The Missionary Curriculum Task Committee is organized under the direction of the Missionary Executive Council with Elder Jeffrey R. Holland as chair. Its purpose is to be “a major task committee charged with the responsibility to review various missionary programs for any improvement or revitalization we can give to them.”

November 1, 2000 (Official Beginning)—The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve decide, “The current [missionary] discussions should be evaluated to determine if they should be rewritten at this time.”

June 13, 2001—The First Presidency and Quorum of Twelve Apostles ask the Missionary Executive Council to prepare a proposal for a missionary curriculum that would help missionaries rely more on the Spirit; increase their flexibility; avoid robotic teaching; reduce the drop-out rate of investigators after the first discussion; improve their gospel study; and link study, teaching, and training at the Missionary Training Center (MTC) and in the field.

February 28, 2002—The First Presidency issues a letter announcing that the stake mission presidency is dissolved and that responsibility for missionary work lies with the bishop at the ward level.

April 30, 2002—The First Presidency issues a letter announcing the revised baptismal interview questions.

May 8, 2002—The Missionary Executive Council presents to the First Presidency its proposed direction for revising the missionary curriculum.

May 14, 2002—The Missionary Department executive directors approve development and limited testing of draft materials for study, training, and teaching, including teaching guides.

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Summer 2002—Elder M. Russell Ballard is appointed the chair of the Missionary Executive Council.

August 2002—The Missionary Executive Council holds meetings that give extra emphasis to the Restoration.

September–October 2002—First field testing in four Utah missions of (1) fourteen outlines of gospel topics, (2) a discussion of the Apostasy and Restoration, and (3) the Message of the Restoration Study Guide.

October 5, 2002—Elder Ballard gives his “Greatest Generation of Missionaries” talk in general conference, thus “raising the bar” for missionary service.

December 11, 2002—The First Presidency issues the “Statement on Missionary Work.”

January 11, 2003—President Gordon B. Hinckley gives his Worldwide Leadership Training address about missionary work.

January 12, 2003—A meeting is held for all MTC employees with President Boyd K. Packer, Elder Ballard, and Elder Richard G. Scott, emphasizing the move away from memorizing the discussions.

February 19, 2003—The “Teaching by the Spirit” document is given to all missions and is used at the MTC.

April 25, 2003—A Missionary Training Satellite Broadcast is held with all missionaries to give instruction about changes to the missionary program of the Church.

June 12, 2003—The First Presidency approves refreshing the missionary curriculum and reducing it from about five hundred pages to 120 pages in a single manual.

July 1, 2003—The name *Preaching My Gospel* comes forward as the title for the new missionary manual.

August 4, 2003—The name *Preach My Gospel* is submitted for approval.

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August 2003—The first copy of a new missionary manual is unveiled, titled “*Teach All Nations, Baptizing Them . . .*” with a blue cover and a picture of Dan Jones.

December 2003—The first spiral-bound draft of *Preach My Gospel* appears with a white cover and a picture of Dan Jones.

January 2004—The second spiral-bound draft of *Preach My Gospel* appears with a blank cover.

February 2004—The third spiral-bound draft of *Preach My Gospel* appears with a blank cover and is distributed to be tested in the mission field.

March–May 2004—Various chapters in *Preach My Gospel* are tested by fourteen missions, including Utah Salt Lake City, Utah Ogden, California Anaheim, California Carlsbad, Washington Spokane, Washington Tacoma, New York New York North, New York New York South, England Manchester, England Birmingham, Japan Fukuoka, Japan Tokyo North, Mexico Puebla, and Mexico City South.

June 2004—The fourth and fifth spiral-bound drafts of *Preach My Gospel* appear depicting John the Baptist performing Christ’s baptism on the cover. The fifth is used for training at the mission presidents’ seminar.

July 2004—The sixth spiral-bound draft of *Preach My Gospel* appears; it is called the redline version because it contains all the corrections made by the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, and Correlation and Editing.

August 2004—The printing of the final draft of *Preach My Gospel* begins.

October 15, 2004 (Official End)—A Missionary Training Satellite Broadcast is held to introduce *Preach My Gospel* to all missions worldwide.

Spring 2005—The second printing of *Preach My Gospel* appears. It corrects minor errors in the October 2004 edition, eliminating the quotation marks around *Preach My Gospel* and fixing the table of contents page numbers.

April 2006—The one millionth copy of *Preach My Gospel* is printed.