

# THE CALL FOR SEVENTY AND THE ELDER AS MISSIONARY

All elders are called to be ministers of mission. They are called to support congregational missionary ministries. Some elders, because of their gifts and interests, serve in specific missionary roles such as missionary coordinator, missionary pastor, and missionary preaching. The elder's primary focus in this ministry will be to develop the congregation's corporate witness of Christ and invitation for all to come. This is best done through individual expression of missionary skills and spirit. *"There is a great work to be done by mine elders...that as ministers of the gospel they may win souls unto Christ."* (D. & C. 119:2)

Some elders are called to serve as seventy. When a person is ordained a seventy, the *basic missionary ministry is expanded*. While the seventy is encouraged to keep sharpened the skills and gifts that are brought to this office, there are other requirements inherent in the calling.

The seventy should be free to:

- \*travel in her/his ministry beyond the local congregation
- \*provide leadership in the development and implementation of missionary strategies
- \*train and mentor others in missionary ministry
- \*participate in regular gatherings of other seventy for training and support.

A seventy normally does not provide pastoral visiting, work at reclaiming inactive members, or perform other important ministries to which congregational ministers are called.

There is a natural bridge between the elder with a missionary focus and the seventy. Whenever possible the two ministers should work closely together to ensure that the established church is strong in its witness so new areas have opportunity to receive the gospel.

**SEVENTY:** All seventy are called to be forerunners of Christ's peace. *"To accelerate the work of sharing the gospel, the Twelve and the Seventy should be closely associated in implementing wholistic evangelistic ministries. The seventy are to be the forerunners of Christ's peace, preparing the way for apostolic witness to be more ready received."* (D. & C. 163:5b) The Seventy share with the Apostles responsibility as special witnesses of Jesus Christ.

The primary call of the seventy is to *"preach the gospel, and to be an especial witness...in all the world"* (D. & C. 104:11e), fulfilling the great commandment from Jesus to *"reach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"* (Matthew 23:18 IV).

To assist those involved in responding to the leadings of the Holy Spirit both in initiating and receiving a call to seventy, the following functional areas of ministry are identified as critical to the church's response to the Great Commission:

- \*church planter/expansion minister
- \*congregational missionary consultant
- \*missionary specialist
- \*setting-in-order minister

### **Church Planter/Expansion Minister**

The term “*church planter*” refers to the seventy who shares the gospel and establishes the presence of the church where it does not currently exist. It could be in a new geographic location where the church currently does not have a presence, or it could refer to a ministry reaching out to a new “*constituent group*” (i.e. an ethnic or age group) that a current congregation is not reaching.

The term “*expansion minister*” refers to the seventy who utilizes the strength of an established church presence to expand the ministry of outreach in the same geographic area.

### **Congregational Missionary Consultant**

This area of seventy ministries is critical in that it deals with the core potential of the church today. It stands as a supportive role in the numerous opportunities for other aspects of missionary ministry.

- \*\*Constantly work toward a cooperative, mutually trusting relationship with the congregation.
- \*\*Strive to increase the independence and recognize the giftedness and abilities of the congregation.
- \*\*Help the congregation diagnose their own situation.
- \*\*Serve as a sounding board to help congregations hear their own stories.

### **Setting-In-Order Minister**

It is a ministry that can be defined in two basic categories:

- \*provide ministry to congregations which are not oriented to mission
- \*reestablishing the work in areas where it has become disorderly or out of order

The ministry of setting in order by the seventy is provided at the request and with the support of a church administrative officer (field apostle and mission center president).

## **Missionary Specialist**

This seventy is committed to responding to the ever-changing needs specific to that ministry. This specialty reflects one of the missionary priorities of the church and supports the missionary strategy for the field of assignment.

Examples:

- \*urban and metropolitan
- \*intercultural and ethnic
- \*young adult
- \*youth
- \*children
- \*hard-living
- \*missionary pastor
- \*visionary catalyst
- \*sign ministry

Other possibilities as a missionary specialist could be outreach in worship, outreach to young married couples, seniors, and students attending universities. As need arises, the missionary specialist will always come to the forefront on addressing those needs.

**ELDER AS MISSIONARY:** Responds to a call that brings invitational ministry to those not yet involved in a church or congregation, often to persons who have yet to form a relationship with Jesus Christ. Today's missionary elder is called to carry the affirming witness of the gospel to individuals outside the walls of the congregation and into the surrounding community. *“The work now lying before the missionary quorums of the church is of such increased magnitude and importance—the field so white unto the harvest, and the need for laborers so great—that the Twelve and the Seventy under their direction, together with such high priests, and elders as can travel and preach as missionaries, shall be free to wait upon their ministry in gospel work.” (D. & C. 122:7a)* The ministry of missionary elders includes ministry of fellowship, welcoming, hospitality, and nurturing.

A missionary elder might include one or more of the following areas of invitational ministry:

- \*personal invitation
- \*community witness
- \*worship
- \*planning
- \*teaching
- \*specialized ministries
- \*pastoral care and support
- \*congregational awareness
- \*financial

**PERSONAL INVITATION:** One-on-one sharing of the gospel through invitation.

**COMMUNITY WITNESS:** Promoting congregational involvement in the community with a focus on invitation.

**WORSHIP:** Planning, presiding, and pulpit ministries that create seeker-friendly or seeker-driven worship experiences.

**PLANNING:** Organizing intentional missionary events, programs, and activities.

**TEACHING:** Providing seekers or inquirers classes and Christian education that upholds the missionary invitation.

**SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES:** Creating programs that encourage invitation by members and welcome guests (children, youth, young adults, seniors, ethnic).

**PASTORAL CARE AND SUPPORT:** Providing opportunities for individual and group missionary prayer, encouragement, and celebration.

**CONGREGATIONAL AWARENESS:** Keeping missionary ministries in the forefront of congregational life through scheduling, sharing, and promoting.

**FINANCIAL:** Including missionary items in the budget, maintaining an awareness to support missionary program and training.

## QUOTES

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3. Matthew 23:18 IV
4. *The Call for Seventy Ministry*, Especial Witness (Independence, Missouri: Council of Presidents of Seventy): 7
5. *The Seventy as Missionary Specialist*, Especial Witness (Independence, Missouri: Council of Presidents of Seventy): 2
6. *The Seventy as Church Planter/Expansion Minister*, Especial Witness (Independence, Missouri: Council of Presidents of Seventy): 2
7. *The Seventy as Setting-in-Order Minister*, Especial Witness (Independence, Missouri: Council of Presidents of Seventy): 2
8. *The Seventy as Congregational Missionary Consultant*, Especial Witness, (Independence, Missouri: Council of Presidents of Seventy): 3 and 7