

LESSON 15

Becoming Instruments in the Hands of God

Introduction

The gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of peace for a troubled world. Those who become instruments in God's hands can share the gospel and help others to become converted. In this lesson, students will study and apply

principles from Book of Mormon accounts of missionaries who became instruments in God's hands and helped others receive eternal life.

Background Reading

- M. Russell Ballard, "Put Your Trust in the Lord," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 43–45.
- Don R. Clarke, "Becoming Instruments in the Hands of God," *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2006, 97–99.

Suggestions for Teaching

1 Nephi 13:37; Mosiah 15:14–19, 26–28

Blessings are promised to those who share the gospel

On the board, write the following statement by the Prophet Joseph Smith (1805–44) from *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (2007), 330:

"After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the Gospel." (The Prophet Joseph Smith)

Invite students to silently read the statement. Then ask:

- Why is it our most important duty to share the gospel with others?
- What blessings have you received from accepting and fulfilling this duty?

Explain that Nephi foresaw the Restoration of the gospel and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon (see 1 Nephi 13:34–36). He also described the blessings available to those who would proclaim the gospel and assist others in coming unto Christ.

Invite students to read 1 Nephi 13:37 silently, and encourage them to mark or highlight the blessings promised to those who seek to share the gospel in the last days.

- What blessings come to those who seek to bring forth Zion and publish peace? (Students should understand the following principle: **When we seek to share**

the gospel, we are blessed with the Holy Ghost and can be saved in God's kingdom.)

Tell students that Abinadi quoted Isaiah and explained what it means to publish peace and why we should seek to share the gospel (see Isaiah 52:7). Invite a few students to read aloud from Mosiah 15:14–19, 26–28 while the class looks for what Abinadi taught.

- What does it mean to publish peace and salvation? (see verse 14).
- Why does salvation need to be declared to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people?

To help students better understand Abinadi's words, invite a student to read aloud the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



"Peace and good tidings; good tidings and peace. These are among the ultimate blessings that the gospel of Jesus Christ brings a troubled world and the troubled people who live in it, solutions to personal struggles and human sinfulness, a source of strength for days of weariness and hours of genuine despair. ... It is the Only Begotten Son of God Himself who gives us this help and this hope. ...

"The search for peace is one of the ultimate quests of the human soul. ... There are times in all of our lives when deep sorrow or suffering or fear or loneliness make us cry out for the peace which only God Himself can bring. These are times of piercing spiritual hunger when even the dearest friends cannot fully come to our aid" ("The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom," *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 82).

- In what ways is the gospel of Jesus Christ a message of peace?

To help answer this question, consider discussing the following statement by President Marion G. Romney (1897–1988) of the First Presidency:



"The bringing of peace requires the elimination of Satan's influence. Where he is, peace can never be. Further, peaceful coexistence with him is impossible. ... He promotes nothing but the works of the flesh. ...

"As a prelude to peace, then, the influence of Satan must be completely subjugated. ...

"As the works of the flesh have universal application, so likewise does the gospel of peace. If one man lives it, he has peace within himself. If two men live it, they each have peace within themselves and with each other. If the citizens live it, the nation has domestic peace. When there are enough nations enjoying the fruit of the Spirit to control world affairs, then, and only then, will the war-drums throb no longer" ("The Price of Peace," *Ensign*, Oct. 1983, 4, 6).

- When have you seen the gospel bring peace into someone's life?
- What are some ways in which we can effectively share the gospel?

Encourage students to consider whether they know someone whom they can help to experience the peace that comes from the gospel. Invite them to begin making a

plan to share the gospel with that person, and encourage them to think about how they can apply the principles they learn as the lesson progresses.

Mosiah 28:3; Alma 17:2–3, 6, 9–12, 16, 25; 18:10; 21:16; 22:1, 12–14; 26:11–12, 26–29; 31:30–34

Becoming instruments in God's hands

Consider showing students one or all of the pictures above (violin, shop tools, medical instruments) or pictures like them. Then ask:

- What can these items do in the hands of someone skilled in their use?
- What might it mean to be an instrument in God's hands?

Invite a student to read Alma 17:2–3, 9–11 aloud. Ask students to look for what the sons of Mosiah did to become instruments in God's hands.

- What can we learn from the example of the sons of Mosiah about how to become instruments in the hands of God? (As students respond, write the following principle on the board: **As we pray, fast, search the scriptures, and set a good example for others, we can become instruments in God's hands.**)

Explain that the Book of Mormon contains many other examples of what Alma and the sons of Mosiah did to become effective instruments in the hands of God. Write the following scripture references on the board (without the accompanying summaries in parentheses). Assign one or more passages to each student. Ask students to look for what the Lord's servants did that contributed to their success in sharing the gospel.



Mosiah 28:3 (Desired to declare salvation so that no soul should perish.)

Alma 17:6 (Were willing to give up worldly recognition in order to preach the gospel.)

Alma 17:11–12 (Were patient, courageous, and good examples.)

Alma 17:16 (Desired to help others repent and learn of the plan of redemption.)

Alma 17:25; 18:10 (Desired to be a servant.)

Alma 21:16; 22:1 (Were led by the Spirit.)

Alma 22:12–14 (Taught from the scriptures about Christ and the plan of redemption.)

Alma 26:11–12 (Were humble, recognizing God as the source of their strength.)

Alma 26:26–29 (Did not give up when they were discouraged. Were willing to patiently suffer for the cause of Christ. Taught the gospel in various settings.)

Alma 31:30–34 (Prayed for assistance in bringing others to Christ.)

After sufficient time, ask students to share what they learned. Consider summarizing students' responses by writing the passage summaries on the board. You might encourage students to write down these scripture references and later, after class, create a scripture chain labeled "Important elements of sharing the gospel."

- If you have had the opportunity to share the gospel with others, can you share an experience or bear testimony of how these elements contributed to your success?
- How do the principles recorded in these passages apply to other callings or to being a good friend or neighbor?
- When have you had an opportunity to help others as an instrument in God's hands?

Alma 18:33–35; 23:5–6; 26:2–5, 15; 29:9–10

Helping others become converted

Remind the students that besides teaching us that we can become instruments in the hands of God, the Book of Mormon also teaches about the effect we can have on others as these instruments.

Invite a student to read Alma 18:33–35 aloud while the class looks for what Ammon was to accomplish as an instrument in the hands of God. Invite students to summarize what they discover as a statement of principle. (Help students identify the following: **When we become instruments in God's hands, He grants us power to help others come to a knowledge of the truth.**)

To help students see the effect of helping others come to a knowledge of the truth, invite the class to silently read Alma 23:5–6. Ask students to look for what happened to the Lamanites as they came to the knowledge of the truth.

- What words or phrases describe the effect that the preaching of the gospel had on the Lamanites?

- What principle can we learn about what can happen when we bring others to the knowledge of the truth? (Students should identify the following truth: **When we bring others to the knowledge of the truth, we help them become converted to the Lord.**)

Explain that both Ammon and Alma bore testimony of these truths. Ask a few students to take turns reading aloud Alma 26:2–5, 15 and Alma 29:9–10 while the class looks for the influence we can have upon others when we share the gospel as instruments in God’s hands.

- What impressed you about the feelings summarized by Ammon and Alma?

Invite students to share what they have experienced as they have shared the gospel with others.

Encourage students to ponder the opportunities they have to help others learn the gospel and become converted. Invite them to consider how to incorporate the principles and practices they have learned in this lesson into their daily efforts to share the gospel.

Student Readings

- 1 Nephi 13:37; Mosiah 15:14–19, 26–28; 28:3; Alma 17:2–3, 6, 9–12, 16, 25; 18:10, 33–35; 21:16; 22:1, 12–14; 23:5–6; 26:2–5, 11–12, 15, 26–29; 29:9–10; 31:30–34.
- M. Russell Ballard, “Put Your Trust in the Lord,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2013, 43–45.