



Funtastic Family Home Evenings
Easy to Prepare! Fun to Share!



I'M PREPARING NOW

(Ages ~8 and older)

PURPOSE

To encourage family members (including adults) to prepare now to serve missions

MATERIALS

- Copies of the chart below

SONG SUGGESTION

- [“I Hope They Call Me on a Mission](#) page 169 in *Children’s Songbook*

LESSON IDEAS

1. Read (or share in your own words) the story below, “How Great Shall Be Your Joy”.
 - a. Explain that we help Heavenly Father find His ‘lost’ children through missionary work. Those who are well-prepared are always more effective missionaries.
2. Share the following quote by President Ezra Taft Benson:

“Yes, prepare well for a mission all your life, not just six months or a year before you go.

“We love all of our missionaries who are serving the Lord full time in the mission field. But there is a difference in missionaries. Some are better prepared to serve the Lord the first month in the mission field than some who are returning home after twenty-four months.

“We want young men entering the mission field who can enter the mission field "on the run," who have the faith born of personal righteousness and clean living that they can have a great and productive mission.

“We want missionaries who have the kind of faith that Wilford Woodruff and Heber C. Kimball had, each bringing hundreds and thousands of souls into the waters of baptism.

“Give me a young man who has kept himself morally clean and has faithfully attended his Church meetings. Give me a young man who has magnified his priesthood and has earned the Duty to God Award and is an Eagle Scout. Give me a young man who is a seminary graduate and has a burning testimony of the Book of Mormon. Give me such a young man, and I will give you a young man who can perform miracles for the Lord in the mission field and throughout his life” (*Ensign*, May 1986).
3. You may want to watch one or more of the videos below:
 - a. [Know Your Purpose](#) (for young women thinking about a mission)
 - b. Video, [“Because I Have Been Given Much”](#)
 - c. [Sedrick's Journey](#) (an African boy sacrifices a great deal to go on a mission)

4. Explain that your family is going to have a contest for the week. During the week family members will have the opportunity to earn points by doing activities that will help them prepare to serve missions.
5. Share with your family the activities they can do to earn points. (Adjust the activities and points according to the age and needs of your family.)
 - a. Read the story of the First Vision – Joseph Smith History 1:1-26 (20 points)
 - b. Open a missionary savings account (50 points)
 - c. Tell the story of the First Vision in your own words (20 points)
 - d. Cook a meal for the family (30 points)
 - e. Iron a shirt (10 points)
 - f. Go to bed by 10 p.m. and get up by 6:30 a.m. (10 points per day)
 - g. Say personal prayers morning and evening (10 points per day)
 - h. Memorize “Called to Serve” in the hymn book (20 points)
 - i. Memorize Doctrine and Covenants 4:1-3 (30 points)
 - j. Memorize Doctrine and Covenants 4:1-7 (50 points)
 - k. Read Alma 17 (10 points)
 - l. Younger children can read a chapter from the [Book of Mormon Stories](#) reader (10 points)
 - m. Read Alma 26 (10 points)
 - n. Exercise for 20 minutes (10 points per day)
 - o. Read [That All May Hear](#) by President Thomas S. Monson (20 points)
 - p. Read chapter 1 from [Preach My Gospel](#) (30 points)
 - q. Share your testimony with a friend or family member (30 points)
6. Give each family member a chart (below) so they can keep track of points.
7. Challenge your family to continue preparing now to be effective missionaries.
8. In the follow-up family home evening you might discuss:
 - a. What they learned
 - b. What their favorite activity was
 - c. Their feelings about serving a mission
 - d. The advantages of preparing now

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HOW GREAT SHALL BE YOUR JOY

By Elder Boyd K. Packer

In the late 1850's many converts from Europe were struggling to reach the Great Salt Lake Valley. Many were too poor to afford the open and the covered wagons and had to walk, pushing their meager belongings in handcarts. Some of the most touching and tragic moments in the history of the Church accompanied these handcart pioneers.

One such company was commanded by a Brother McArthur. Archer Walters, an English convert who was with the company, recorded in his diary under July 2, 1856, this sentence:

"Brother Parker's little boy, age six, was lost, and the father went back to hunt him." (LeRoy R. Hafen and Ann W. Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, Pioneers Ed. Glendale, California, The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1960, p. 61.)

The boy, Arthur, was next youngest of four children of Robert and Ann Parker. Three days earlier the company had hurriedly made camp in the face of a sudden thunderstorm. It was then the boy was missed. The parents had thought him to be playing along the way with the other children.

Someone remembered earlier in the day, when they had stopped, that they had seen the little boy settle down to rest under the shade of some brush.

Now most of you have little children and you know how quickly a tired little six-year-old could fall asleep on a sultry summer day and how soundly he could sleep, so that even the noise of the camp moving on might not awaken him.

For two days the company remained, and all of the men searched for him. Then on July 2, with no alternative, the company was ordered west.

Robert Parker, as the diary records, went back alone to search once more for his little son. As he was leaving camp, his wife pinned a bright shawl about his shoulders with words such as these:

"If you find him dead, wrap him in the shawl to bury him. If you find him alive, you could use this as a flag to signal us."

She, with the other little children, took the handcart and struggled along with the company.

Out on the trail each night Ann Parker kept watch. At sundown on July 5, as they were watching, they saw a figure approaching from the east! Then, in the rays of the setting sun, she saw the glimmer of the bright red shawl.

One of the diaries records: "Ann Parker fell in a pitiful heap upon the sand, and that night, for the first time in six nights, she slept."

Under July 5, Brother Walters recorded:

"Brother Parker came into camp with a little boy that had been lost. Great joy through the camp. The mother's joy I cannot describe." (Hafen and Hafen, *Handcarts to Zion*, p. 61.)

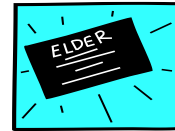
We do not know all of the details. A nameless woodsman--I've often wondered how unlikely it was that a woodsman should be there--found the little boy and described him as being sick with illness and with terror, and he cared for him until his father found him.

So here a story, commonplace in its day, ends--except for a question. How would you, in Ann Parker's place, feel toward the nameless woodsman had he saved your little son? Would there be any end to your gratitude?

To sense this is to feel something of the gratitude our Father must feel toward any of us who saves one of his children. Such gratitude is a prize dearly to be won, for the Lord has said, "If it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!" (D&C 18:15.) Even so, I might add, if that soul should be our own (excerpt from *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, 89-90).



Missionary Prep Points



Name	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat



Missionary Prep Points



Name	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat