
THE PLEASURE AND TRIALS OF MISSIONARY LABORS—
IMPROVEMENT IN THE SOUTH—EVERY GOSPEL PRINCIPLE
RIGHTEOUS AND ESSENTIAL

REMARKS BY ELDER WILFORD WOODRUFF, DELIVERED IN THE TABERNACLE,
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Reported by David W. Evans

I also am a missionary, and I always considered it a great honor to be one. I received a mission when I embraced this work; it has never been taken from me yet. In company with a number of the brethren I have just returned, as br. Taylor has said, from visiting our brethren in the south. We have had an excellent time. We have been over a great many rough roads, traveled hard, and have preached from once to three times every day. We have been taught, instructed, and edified; at least I have a great deal. We have had a good time in visiting the Saints, and as President B. Young remarked in some of his discourses, we have been able to draw the contrast between preaching to the Saints and preaching to the world. My own experience enabled me to bring that subject home very readily, and I presume it is so with most of the Elders who have been on missions preaching the gospel. I have traveled a great many thousands of miles to preach the gospel without purse or scrip, with my knapsack on my back, and begging my bread from door to door. I have done many things that all the gold in California would not have hired me to do except for the gospel. My natural feelings would forbid me traveling through the world asking for my bread from door to door; I would much sooner labor for it.

We have been called to preach the gospel; the Lord Almighty has required it at our hands; we would have been under condemnation as Elders if we had not done it. We have done it, and our garments, in a great measure, are clear of the blood of this generation. For over thirty years we have labored to preach the gospel; and we have gathered together a people to these valleys of the mountains, with whom I rejoice to meet. I once asked the Lord to let me go and preach the gospel. I had a desire to preach the gospel in its beauty, plainness, and glory, and to show the worth of the principles it contained. I felt that they were of as much value to my fellow men as to me. The Lord gave me the privilege I asked for, and I believe that I have preached to the nations of the earth as much as I desire; if duty should not require it, I never wish to go and preach to the world again. I have had my day and time at it; still, if called to go, I presume I should go as I have always done. But I do enjoy the society of the Saints, I love home, and I love to travel through these settlements, and to see the boys, the girls, the men, and the women parading the streets to welcome the President and his brethren; and, on our return here, to meet with greetings from ten thousand Saints brought peculiar meditations to my mind. It brought