SOFTWARE & TECH

Fourth Missionary Lawrence E Corbridge

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Introduction: The Lasting Impact of a Prophetic Message

In the realm of missionary work within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, few addresses have resonated as deeply and enduringly as the talk given by **Elder Lawrence E. Corbridge** of the First Quorum of the Seventy. Delivered originally to new missionaries at the Provo Missionary Training Center, his message—often referred to as "**The Fourth Missionary**"—has become a cornerstone of preparation and dedication. Elder Corbridge outlined four distinct types of missionaries, with the fourth representing the highest level of commitment, faith, and effectiveness. This article explores the profound lessons from **Lawrence E Corbridge's** discourse, examining how the concept of the **Fourth Missionary** applies not only to full-time service but also to every member striving to live a life of covenant faithfulness. We will unpack the characteristics, the scriptural foundation, and the transformative power of becoming that **Fourth Missionary**—one who is not just present but fully engaged in the work of salvation.

Who Is Lawrence E. Corbridge?

Before diving into the talk itself, it is helpful to understand the man behind the message. **Lawrence E. Corbridge** served as a General Authority Seventy from 2008 to 2019. A native of Utah, he is a graduate of the University of Utah and Harvard Law School, and he practiced law before his call to Church leadership. His ministry included service in the Europe East Area, the Philippines Area, and as President of the Geneva Switzerland Temple. Yet perhaps his most widely referenced contribution is the devotional known as "The Fourth Missionary," which he presented on multiple occasions, including at Brigham Young University and the Missionary Training Center. **Elder Corbridge's**approach is direct, scripturally anchored, and deeply motivational, calling for a level of consecration that transcends mere compliance.

The Four Types of Missionaries: A Framework for Growth

In his talk, **Elder Corbridge**describes four categories of missionaries. These are not official Church designations but rather a teaching tool to help individuals evaluate their own efforts and aspirations.

The First Missionary: The Uncommitted

The first missionary is one who serves but without real intent. This individual may be present physically but is distracted, halfhearted, or even rebellious. They break rules, neglect study, and fail to focus on the work. **Elder Corbridge**notes that such a missionary misses the purpose of service and may even hinder the work. This category serves as a cautionary starting point—a place from which no one should remain.

The Second Missionary: The Compliant

The second missionary does what is required—no more, no less. They follow the rules, complete their schedules, and meet basic expectations. This is a dutiful missionary, but **Elder Corbridge**explains that mere

compliance is insufficient for the harvest the Lord expects. The second missionary may not be a problem, but they are also not a powerhouse of faith and miracles.

The Third Missionary: The Committed

The third missionary is genuinely dedicated. They work hard, study diligently, and love the people they serve. They sacrifice personal comfort and strive to be obedient. This is a good missionary, often seen as successful by human standards. However, **Elder Corbridge**suggests that even the third missionary can fall short of the full measure of their potential, because their focus may still be on themselves—their own efforts, skills, and stamina.

The Fourth Missionary: The Consecrated

Finally, the **Fourth Missionary**—the central figure of **Elder Corbridge's** message. This missionary has made a complete surrender to the Lord. Their trust is not in their own abilities but in God's power. They pray without ceasing, love without reservation, and are led by the Spirit in every moment. The **Fourth Missionary** experiences miracles, finds joy in tribulation, and brings souls to Christ in ways that exceed natural capacity. **Elder Corbridge** emphasizes that this is not about perfection but about **faithful service**rooted in a covenant relationship with the Savior.

The Scriptural Foundation of the Fourth Missionary

Elder Corbridge anchors his description in scripture, particularly in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. He references the example of the sons of Mosiah—Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni—who were themselves **Fourth Missionaries**before the term was coined. They went among the Lamanites not with a sense of entitlement but with mighty prayer and fasting, suffering afflictions yet rejoicing in the Lord. Their success was not due to their eloquence but to their faith in Christ.

Another key passage **Elder Corbridge** cites is Doctrine and Covenants 4:3: "Therefore, if ye have desires to serve God ye are called to the work." But he notes that desire alone is not enough—it must be coupled with the qualities listed in the same section: faith, hope, charity, love, and an eye single to the glory of God. The **Fourth Missionary** embodies these attributes fully.

Characteristics of the Fourth Missionary According to Lawrence E. Corbridge

Drawing from **Elder Corbridge's** talk, we can identify several defining traits that set the **Fourth Missionary** apart:

- Complete Trust in God: They do not rely on their own wisdom, education, or charm. Instead, they plead for the Lord to work through them.
- Unceasing Prayer: Their communication with heaven is constant, not just at designated times. They pray in their hearts while walking, teaching, and even sleeping.
- Selfless Love: They see every person as a child of God and genuinely care for their welfare, regardless of cultural or personal differences.
- Boldness Without Offense: They speak the truth plainly but with compassion. They are not afraid to invite repentance, yet they do so with pure love.
- Resilience in Trials: When faced with rejection, illness, or discouragement, the Fourth Missionary turns to the Lord and finds strength beyond their own.
- Obedience That Transcends the Rules: They follow mission rules not because they have to, but because they understand that exact obedience invites miracles.

The Fourth Missionary in Everyday Life

Elder Corbridge originally directed his remarks to full-time missionaries, the principles of the **Fourth Missionary** apply to every member of the Church. In a **comprehensive** sense, we are all called to be **missionaries** in our homes, workplaces, and communities. The same four categories can be observed among members: some are uncommitted, some simply comply, many are good and faithful, but few reach the level of consecration that defines the **Fourth Missionary**.

How does one become a **Fourth Missionary** in daily life? **Elder Corbridge** teaches that it begins with a decision—a conscious choice to give everything to the Lord. It continues with daily acts of faith: sincere scripture study, meaningful prayer, worthiness to have the Spirit, and a willingness to serve others before self. The **Fourth Missionary**member looks for opportunities to share the gospel naturally, trusting that the Lord will prepare hearts.

The Challenge of Becoming the Fourth Missionary

Elder Corbridge does not sugarcoat the difficulty. The **Fourth Missionary**path is narrow and requires sacrifice. It means letting go of pride, fear, and the desire for comfort. It means accepting that one's own strength is insufficient and that only through Jesus Christ can lasting impact be made. Yet the promise is great: "I will go before your face. I will be on your right hand and on your left, and my Spirit shall be in your hearts, and mine angels round about you, to bear you up" (Doctrine and Covenants 84:88).

One of the most striking parts of **Elder Corbridge's** talk is his statement that "the **Fourth Missionary**is not a theory—it is a reality that has been lived by thousands." He invites each person to choose to be that missionary, not someday but today. The choice is individual, and the Lord honors it immediately.

Practical Steps to Embrace the Fourth Missionary Spirit

For those inspired by **Lawrence E Corbridge's** message, here are actionable steps to move toward becoming a **Fourth Missionary**, whether serving a full-time mission or ministering at home:

1. Start with a covenant renewal: Ponder your baptismal and temple covenants. Determine to live them with greater exactness.
2. Increase your personal worship: Dedicate specific time each day to prayer and scripture study—not as a routine but as a conversation with God.
3. Practice charity intentionally: Each day, look for someone to serve, listen to, or encourage. Let love become an action.
4. Embrace humility: Acknowledge your weaknesses and ask the Lord to make them strengths through His grace.
5. Seek the Spirit continuously: Before speaking, teaching, or making decisions, pause and pray for guidance.
6. Set aside fear: Trust that the Lord will provide the words and the results. Step out of your comfort zone.

Why the Fourth Missionary Message Endures

More than a decade after **Elder Corbridge** first delivered this talk, it continues to be shared among missionaries, returned missionaries, and leaders. Its power lies in its simplicity and its challenge. It calls people to move beyond mediocrity and into a life of **faithful service** that is both demanding and fulfilling. The **Fourth Missionary**is not a model of perfection but a model of direction—a north star for those who want to give their best to the Lord.

In a world that often encourages half-hearted efforts, the **Fourth Missionary** standard stands as a beacon. It reminds us that **missionary work**is not a duty to be endured but a privilege to be embraced. It is the difference between serving a mission and becoming a missionary.

Conclusion: The Call to Be a Fourth Missionary

The message of **Lawrence E. Corbridge** is timeless. Whether you are a full-time missionary, a young person preparing to serve, a parent, a teacher, or a lifelong member of the Church, the invitation is the same: choose to be a **Fourth Missionary**. It is not about perfection in a single day, but about a daily decision to consecrate yourself wholly to the Lord. As **Elder Corbridge** testified, the **Fourth Missionary** experiences joy that surpasses understanding and sees the Lord's hand in remarkable ways. Let that be our aspiration—to live, love, and serve as true disciples of Jesus Christ, becoming the **Fourth Missionary** that He deserves.

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