

The Challenge Of A Gospel Meeting

Intro: The time for our Gospel meeting to begin is now upon us. Bro. XXXXX will do the preaching and thus, we can be assured that the Gospel will be preached. He will do his part well, but what about us? Meetings have their place. In the wisdom of God, a plan was made for preaching the Gospel (1 Cor. 1:21 “²¹ For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”). When it is done as God intended it will succeed. Let us think of our meeting as a challenge.

I. A GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO OUR FAITH IN THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL.

A. The Gospel is God’s power to save.

1. Rom. 1:16-17 “¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
2. 1 Cor. 1:18, 23-24 “¹⁸ For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.... ²³ But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; ²⁴ But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”
3. Jam. 1:21 “²¹ Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

B. Do we really believe it?

1. Do we believe the Gospel will save man?
2. Do we believe it has the power to change the lives of men?
 - a. Paul
 - b. Gal. 1:23 “²³ But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.”
 - c. 1 Tim. 1:13 “¹³ Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief.”
3. Are there people whom we feel that the Gospel will not do any good? If so, then it is an indication that we do not believe in the power of the Gospel.
4. If we do not believe that the Gospel has power enough to change the lives of men; then we might as well not have the meeting and just close the doors of the building.
5. If we do not believe that the Gospel will convert men, then we are defeated before we begin.
6. Let us accept the challenge to believe the Gospel is powerful enough to move men to give up a life of sin and serve the living God. Let us give the Gospel a chance by inviting every sinner we can find to the meeting.

II. A GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH TO WORK.

A. Nothing will succeed without work.

1. 1 Cor. 15:58 “⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
2. This is true of our meeting as well as anything else.

- B. We have drifted into thinking that a meeting can be successful by running an ad in the paper or making a few announcements.**
 - 1. These things should be done and are being done.
 - 2. These things will never take the place of every member working for the meeting.
- C. If the meeting is not worth working for, it is not worth having.**
- D. It is the job of every member of this congregation to work. The one that will not work will be guilty of shirking his responsibility.**

III. A GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO OUR INTEREST.

- A. Our meeting will show where our heart is.**
 - 1. Mat. 6:21 ^{“21} For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”
 - 2. This will separate the sheep from the goats.
 - 3. Mat. 6:33 ^{“33} But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”
- B. To be a Christian is to be interested in the lost.**
 - 1. Luke 19:10 ^{“10} For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
 - 2. To be interested in the lost is to be busy trying to save the lost.
 - 3. We have opportunity during the meeting to do this; let us use our opportunities during this meeting.
- C. There is something wrong with a person’s heart that claims to be a Christian and is not interested in a Gospel meeting.**
 - 1. A real Christian will be interested in every service, in singing, in meeting visitors, in creating a friendly atmosphere, and in seeing sinners obey the Gospel and backsliders return to the fold.
 - 2. If you are not interested in these things, you need the meeting and maybe you can be converted.

IV. A GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO OUR INFLUENCE IN THE COMMUNITY.

- A. What type of influence do we have in XXXX.**
 - 1. 2 Cor. 3:2 ^{“2} Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:”
 - 2. Mat. 5:13-16 ^{“13} Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. ¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
 - 3. 1 Tim. 4:12 ^{“12} Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
- B. What have our lives been?**
 - 1. Have our lives been such that will hinder people from coming to the meeting?
 - 2. Not being able to influence anyone to come is a sad commentary on our life.
 - 3. It is impossible to think of one living like the Bible teaches a Christian should live and not being able to influence someone to come.
 - 4. This will be a good gauge to see how much influence we possess.

V. A GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO THE DEVIL.

A. We are in a fight with the Devil.

1. Eph. 6:11-13 ¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. ¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”
2. 1 Tim. 1:18; 6:12 ¹⁸ This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;... ^{6:12} Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”
3. 2 Tim. 2:4 ⁴ No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”
4. We need to say to the Devil, “You are in a fight and we are not going to give an inch.” Let us press the battle against him.

B. For too long we have allowed the Devil to have his way.

1. Let us meet him on every corner with sword drawn.
2. Let us resolve that if Satan holds anyone in bondage of sin that in will only be after a battle that the person remains in bondage, and that because he is determined to serve Satan and not God.

VI. A GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO ERROR.

A. Error is the tool of the Devil.

1. Eph. 4:14 ¹⁴ That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”
2. 2 Tim. 3:13 ¹³ But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.”
3. 2 Cor. 11:13-15 ¹³ For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

B. The Gospel will be preached and error opposed.

1. John 8:32 ³² And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
2. Jam. 1:25 ²⁵ But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

C. Too many times when error has been shown up, some member of the church will apologize for the truth that has been preached.

1. This kills the effect of the sermon and many times of the truth.
2. Let us never apologize for the truth but stand up for it.

VII. THE GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO SINNERS.

A. A meeting where the Gospel is preached turns the light of the Gospel on the lives of sinners and challenges them to look at their lives.

1. 2 Cor. 13:5 ⁵ Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”
2. Acts 2:14, 23, 37 ¹⁴ But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all *ye* that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:... ²³ Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken,

and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:...³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?"

B. It challenges them to give up their sin and surrender unconditionally to Christ.

C. It will get results.

1. It did on Pentecost, Acts 2:41 ⁴¹ Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
2. 1 Cor. 3:6 ⁶ I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."
3. Isa. 55:11 ¹¹ So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it."

VIII. THE GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO BACKSLIDERS.

A. It is a challenge to the worldly, cold, and careless Christian to return to his first love.

1. Rev. 2:4-5 ⁴ Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."
2. Rev. 3:15-16, 19-21 ¹⁵ I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. ¹⁷ Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: ¹⁸ I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. ²¹ To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

B. Like any other congregation of the Lord's church, we have our share of the careless.

C. Let us work to get them to the meeting and give the Gospel a chance to do its work.

IX. A GOSPEL MEETING IS A CHALLENGE TO SING.

A. One of the greatest contributions to a meeting is good singing.

1. Eph. 5:19 ¹⁹ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"
2. Col. 3:16 ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."
3. Jam. 5:13 ¹³ Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms."

B. Poor singing will kill any meeting.

1. If you want this meeting to fail, then do not sing.
2. Another way to help make the singing poor is to sit at the back or scatter out all over the place. Therefore, let us sit at the front of the building, and sing like you really mean it.

Conclusion: The day of the Gospel meeting is not dead. Churches may be dead but not the Gospel (Heb. 4:12 ¹² For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."), nor Gospel meetings where the Gospel is proclaimed and Christians work to save the lost.