

What Do You Think of Gospel Meetings?

Last week there was a gospel meeting held at Lancaster, California. They had six different preachers, with a total of 13 separate lessons from God's Word on home and family responsibilities. Do you think that such an effort is worth while? Do you think that only Christians attend such meetings anymore? If only Christians attend, why should brethren spend that much time and effort?

For those of us who enjoy sporting events, live theater, camping, and the great outdoors, we are truly blessed. Why? Because, within sixty miles south of us is Los Angeles, where there is professional baseball, the Performing Arts, Museums, Universities, and just another 40 miles is Disney Land and Knox Berry Farm. Isn't it wonderful to have such attractions so close?

To some, social events are highly important. While others are very enthusiastic about sporting events. There are individuals that spend many years acquiring academic degrees. There are still others that have set their sights on the top run of the corporate business ladder. Yet, there are still others that spend enormous amount of time, energy and money on entertainment. We have some that are very fashion conscious, they like to be the trend setters. Some individuals like to travel extensively.

My beloved brother Olen Holderby, was talking with a young man one day and this is the jest of the conversation: What do you plan to do when you graduate from high school? The young man replied, go to college. After college what are you going to do? The young man looked a little puzzled, but replied, get a job. While that's good, but what else are you going to do? He thought for just a moment, and said; get married, and have kids(he thought he would beat Olen to the next logical question). Olen then asked again, then what? Oh, I guess I will retire. OK, but then what? Well, I guess I will die. Yes, I understand that, but what will you do after that?

When you and I stand before the Lord in judgment day, as each one of us must, the things that loom before us now as having such an all consuming interest will not matter at all. In that great and glorious day it will not matter how many degrees an individual has, nor what kind of house we lived in, nor if we drove an expensive automobile or an old clunker, or if we dressed in the latest fashions or

wore plain clothes, whether we were the janitor or the CEO, nor that team we rooted for, these will have no more fascination.

The things that will really matter then are the things that ought to matter now! Faith in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, Cheerful obedience to God's Word, Righteous Living according to the divine pattern, Total Submission to Christ's Authority, Love not only to Almighty God of heaven, but His children too. Loyalty in Worship Service to God the Father and an eternal Hope based on the Grace of God.

The question we introduced at the beginning was "What Do You Think Of Gospel Meetings" let us examine what happens at a Gospel Meeting. 1) God's Word is taught. Ax.5:42--And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus [as] the Christ. Rom.10:17--So belief [cometh] of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. Therefore, we would increase our belief (faith). 2) Brethren Pray to God. 1 Thes. 5:17-18--pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward. Ax.2:42--And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. Ax.12:5--Peter therefore was kept in the prison: but prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him. It gives us the opportunity to join brethren of like precious faith in praying to God and thanking Him for His love towards us and our love for His children. 3) Praising God and His Son Jesus Christ in songs and teaching and admonishing one another. Col.3:16--Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms [and] hymns [and] spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God.

Now, it seems apparent to me there is nothing to lose by a "Gospel Meeting" and **VERY MUCH TO GAIN.**

Living as a Christian is a continual growing process. We should always be growing in grace and in knowledge of the Lord (2 Peter 3:17-18--Ye therefore, beloved, knowing [these things] beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own stedfastness. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him [be] the glory both now and for ever. Amen.)

Look at Hebrews 5:13-14--For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. 14 But solid food is for

fullgrown men, [even] those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.

This last week was extremely uplifting to me, being in the company of beloved brethren from Ohio, Las Vegas, Apple Valley, Hemet, Bellflower, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Santa Paula, and all the fine brethren of Lancaster. All these voices blending together in praise to God was so awe-inspiring. Listening to outstanding lessons and hearing non-Christians making positive statements of the reverent way brethren were handling God's Word.

When in the presence of so many energetic Christians one tends to forget of self. It has been said; "Deny self" means "to forget oneself, lose sight of oneself and one's own interest." GOD said in Isa.55:10-11--For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater; 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.

I thank God for mature Christians that seek to please God and count it a privilege to exert time, effort, and money to share in praising God in this life and in the preparation for the life to come. Help us God to set our priorities in this life.