

# A CHALLENGE TO THE LOCAL CHURCH AT THIS LOCALITY

Donald Townsley

## INTRODUCTION

1. CHALLENGE means: a call, an invitation, a summons.
2. Paul challenged Corinth to be *“steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the LORD”* – I Cor. 15:58.
3. Paul told Titus to affirm constantly to brethren *“to be careful to maintain good works”*—Titus 3:8.
4. We all need to be CHALLENGED to do better – Heb. 10:24 *“to call into action”*.

### I. I CHALLENGE US TO BRING OUR BIBLE STUDY ON SUNDAY MORNING, SUNDAY NIGHT AND WEDNESDAY NIGHT UP IN NUMBER.

- a. This is not an unreasonable CHALLENGE.
- b. To meet this challenge, every member is going to have to determine to do better.
- c. This demands personal examination of self – 2 Cor. 13:5.
  - i. What is keeping me from attending the Bible Study periods?
  - ii. Is it indifference?
    1. Am I indifferent to my spiritual growth? – I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5: 12 – 14.
    2. Am I indifferent to the growth of the church here?
    3. Am I indifferent to my spiritual needs?
    4. Am I indifferent to what God has commanded? He has commanded me to study – 2 Tim. 2:15; Heb. 5: 12 – 14.

### II. I CHALLENGE THE CHURCH TO BRING UP ATTENDANCE DURING SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

- a. This means every member must determine to be here every time possible.
- b. This means we need to lay aside every excuse for not being here.
  - i. Some absent themselves because of a LACK OF INTEREST.
    1. Too much is at stake for you to lose interest.
    2. Your soul – Matt. 16:26.
  - ii. Some do not attend because of a LACK OF LOVE for the LORD – John 14: 15; Heb. 10:25.
  - iii. Some do not attend because of NEGLECT – Heb. 2:3.
    1. They neglect to prepare to come to the services.
  - iv. Some do not attend because they think more of friends and relatives, and will let them hinder them – Matt. 10:34 – 37.
  - v. Some do not attend because they deliberately refuse the LORD and the doing of His will – Heb. 10: 25 – 26.
- c. This means we are going to have to put forth greater effort to get people here.
  - i. We need to get our friends and kinfolk here because they are in Sin – Rom. 3:23; Eph. 2:1 *“dead in trespasses and sins”*.
  - ii. They have no Hope – Eph. 2:12; John 8:21.
  - iii. They are without Christ – Rom. 8:1; Eph. 1:7; Eph. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:10.
- d. When we care for the LOST what will we do?
  - i. We will seek opportunities to reach them.
  - ii. We will teach them from house to house – Acts 5: 42; 20:20.
  - iii. We will pray for doors to be opened – Col. 4: 3; I Cor. 16:9; 2 Thess. 3:1.
  - iv. We will be willing to do more than talk, we will WORK . . .

**III. I CHALLENGE EACH FAMILY TO BRING AT LEAST ONE VISITOR EACH MONTH TO HEAR THE SOUL SAVING GOSPEL.**

- a. We all need tender hearts that CARE for the LOST.
  - i. God cares – John 3:16; Rom. 5:8.
  - ii. Christ cares – Eph. 5: 25; Lk. 19:10; Matt. 23:37.
  - iii. The Apostles cared – Acts 5:42; Mk. 16:15 – 16.
  - iv. The early Christians cared – Acts 8: 4.
  - v. Philip cared – Acts 8:4.
  - vi. Priscilla and Aquila cared – Acts 18: 24 – 26.
  - vii. Paul cared – Acts 20:20; Rom. 10:1.
- b. Your and I MUST CARE for the LOST – Matt. 28:19 – 20; Mk. 16:15 – 16.

**IV. I CHALLENGE THE CHURCH HERE TO STAND UP FOR THE TRUTH**

- a. The truth of God is under attack in the church and out of the church.
- b. We must not compromise with Satan on any issue – Gal. 2:3.
- c. We must have *“no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness”* – Eph. 5:11.
  - i. We must reprove them.
- d. We must reject those who do not bring the doctrine of Christ – 2 John 9 – 11.
- e. We must defend the truth – Phil. 1:17; Jude 3; I Pet. 3:15.
- f. We must buy the truth and sell it not – Prov. 23:23.

**V. I CHALLENGE THE CHURCH HERE TO BRING OUR CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT UP.**

- a. This is not a goal we cannot reach.
- b. We need to in order to meet our Bills.
- c. Principles governing acceptable giving: I Chron. 29:14; Luke 16:12
  - i. Give bountifully – 2 Cor. 8:9
    - 1. First Fruits – Deut. 18:4.
  - ii. Give according to what we have – 2 Cor. 8:12.
  - iii. Give from a willing mind – 2 Cor. 8:12.
  - iv. Give from a motive of love – I Cor. 13:3; 2 Cor. 8: 24.
  - v. Give regularly –every first day of the week – I Cor. 16:1 – 2; I Tim. 6:17.
  - vi. Not grudgingly – 2 Cor. 9:7; Matt. 6:33; 2 Cor. 8:2
  - vii. Purposefully – 2 Cor. 9:7.
  - viii. One’s self is to be given first – 2 Cor. 8:5.
  - ix. Gift of Faith – Mark 12: 41 – 44

**VI. CONCLUSION**

- a. I CHALLENGE you to be loyal to the work at this local congregation.
- b. This is where God expects you to work and worship when you possibly can.
- c. You must help hold up the work in this community – if you don’t, who will?
- d. This congregation needs your:
  - i. Talent
  - ii. Attendance
  - iii. Money

- iv. Time
- v. Loyalty
- vi. Prayers
- e. What will keep you from meeting this CHALLENGE?
  - i. Indifference?
  - ii. Spiritual Indolence?
  - iii. A lack of Faith? – Gal. 5:6

*Preached at River Bend 1996*