A COMMENDABLE AUDIENCE

By Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION
1. The ATTITUDE of an audience has as much to do with the success of a gospel meeting as does the preaching -- Acts 17: 11 - 12
2. Many a meeting has been a failure because the audience had the wrong attitude toward the gospel -- John 6: 60, 66; Acts 7:54
3. There are two things essential to a successful meeting:
   (1) An audience with a proper attitude of mind.
   (2) A preacher who has enough courage to speak "as the oracles of God".
4. The tenth chapter of Acts gives us an example of a most commendable audience.

I. WE ARE ALL HERE -- Acts 10:33
1. There is a lot said in this statement.
2. Since it is said he "feared God with all his house"-- Acts 10:2
   (1) It is necessarily implied that he had his entire household present.
   (2) Think of the families today that are partially represented at services.
   (3) Wouldn’t it be fine if the entire family would attend this meeting?
3. "We are all here" included Cornelius' KINSMEN -- Acts 10:24
   (1) Too many times we are not successful in encouraging our "kinsmen".
   (2) His kinsmen seemed to have come at a mere invitation.
   (3) Could the fault many times be with us in the way we have conducted ourselves before them?
     -- I Pet. 3: 1 - 3
   (4) Many times we don't have the desire for their salvation that Paul and Cornelius did -- Rom. 10: 1 - 3; 9:3
4. "We are all here" included Cornelius' "NEAR FRIENDS" -- Acts 10:24
   (1) Today few even invite their "near friends".
   (2) And they don't especially when they think they might hear something that would "wound" their feelings.
   (3) We need more Cornelius's today.

II. PRESENT BEFORE GOD -- Acts 10:33
1. Here we have a fine sense of divine presence.
2. The Lord's promise -- Matt. 18:20
3. We need more God-consciousness in our services today -- Heb. 4:13

III. TO HEAR -- Acts 10:33
1. This is a compliment to the entire audience -- they came to hear.
2. I am sure that it would be alarming if we knew how few people have this mind when they attend services.
   (1) Some attend because of custom.
   (2) Some go to see and be seen.
   (3) Some go to criticize.
(4) Some go because of business.
(5) Some go to please a friend.
(6) Some go to bring the family.

3. The Bible places great emphasis on the importance of proper hearing.
   (1) Rom. 10:17
   (2) God said, "Hear ye Him" -- Matt. 17:5
   (3) Jesus said, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear" -- Matt. 13:9
   (4) Jesus said, "Take heed WHAT ye hear" -- Mark 4:24
   (5) Jesus said, "Take heed therefore HOW ye hear" -- Luke 8:18

IV. ALL THINGS COMMANDED OF GOD -- Acts 10:33
   1. What an opportunity for a gospel preacher.
   2. Think of the sentiment of heart.
      (1) Think how few like this today.
      (2) Men attend services today with their minds made up as to what they will or will not hear.
      (3) It takes the whole truth to save -- John 8:32
      (4) These people wanted only that "commanded thee of God".
   3. Gospel preachers can neither be hired nor bribed to speak other than the "things commanded thee of God".

V. PETER OPENED HIS MOUTH -- Acts 10:34
   1. This was a display of courage on Peter's part.
      (1) A gospel preacher had never before ventured to preach to a Gentile -- Acts 10:28
   2. It is interesting to note what the apostles told these anxious souls.
      (1) Peter told these people to Believe -- Acts 10:43
      (2) Repent -- Acts 11:18
      (3) He commanded them to be baptized -- Acts 10:48
   3. Preachers who open their mouths for God today must say the SAME THINGS Peter did!

CONCLUSION