

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

Preached at Lexington, AL 1970 meeting; Judio meeting 1970; Underwood Hts. Jan. 1971