

THE CHALLENGE BEFORE US

You may not have thought about it, but our meeting with Curtis Pope in just two weeks is indeed a challenge for us to meet. Consider, if you will, that *this meeting is a challenge...*

...To our faith in the gospel. We hear a great deal about changing methods today and I am one who thinks that this is a definite consideration for us, nevertheless, do we have faith that gospel preaching can reach men's hearts? Really? Because that is exactly what this special series is – just pure gospel preaching. If you believe that the power is in the gospel (Rom. 1:16) then let's not throw down our weapons and quit the fight because we think "methods will do the job alone." Whatever our hand finds to do, let's do it with all our might.

...To our effort. Do we really believe that an ad in the newspaper and on the radio is going to change lives and bring success to an effort like this? We are going to have to "speak" to our friends, co-workers, and contacts and personally "invite" them. There are some great hand-outs to make that task easier.

...To our interest. Our plans to be present, our re-scheduling and prioritizing in order to attend will show where our heart is. Most of us recognize that we generally do what we want to do. What is it that you want to do next week?

...To our fellowship. These meetings are opportunities for us to share together in the Lord's work. You share in the work of encouragement when you are present every night. The speaker is uplifted and so are your brothers and sisters. You share in mutual worship in giving your heart to singing praise to our God and approaching His holy throne in prayer. You share in the labor of evangelism when you come early and leave a little later because you are looking for and warmly welcoming the visitors from outside the body of Christ that are looking for salvation in Jesus. When you are present and participating in the above you are participating in the fellowship and plan that the God of heaven set in motion two thousand years ago to touch men's hearts with His glorious message.

And just a note here. This writer finds it difficult to comprehend the parents who compare the above activities to schoolwork and getting children to bed by a certain hour and determine that the latter is MORE IMPORTANT than the former. I've heard it, I've considered it, and I still don't understand it. How little will we teach our children to sacrifice on God's behalf?

...To error. With a week's worth of Bible preaching, there **is** going to be some area(s) of error taught on. It may be in outsiders, the church, you, or in me. The challenge will be for whoever is confronted – to repent, cleanse themselves, and become one with the Lord. It's easily said and easily expected of others, but not so easily done in ourselves. Will you be able to meet this challenge?

...To the Devil. Efforts like this say we are **not** giving in. We're **not** quitting and we're **not** slowing down. We're **not** becoming lukewarm and we're **not** forgetting about Satan's efforts to deceive us and lead men into hell. We are in a battle and every time a proclaimer of God is encouraged to speak openly we are taking the battle to Satan. We are saying that we will not be held in the bondage of sin. As James says, we will resist and send Him to flight.

Let me encourage you to see this effort as a challenge and let us join spiritual hands to meet the challenge. Let us demonstrate to the Devil, to our Lord, to each other, and to ourselves that we are truly the people of God. God bless all your efforts on His behalf.

Carl McMurray