

MAY 15, 1957 AT MADISON SQ.
PRAY
FOR THE

Billy Graham

BEGINS **NEW YORK** GARDEN
CRUSADE



BEGINS 7:30 PM

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 1957

MADISON SQ GARDEN



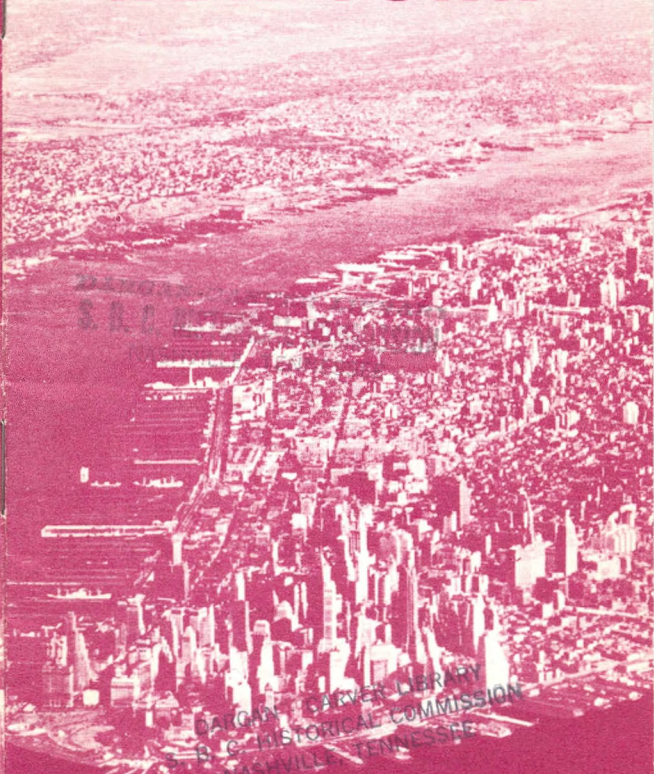
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WHY

WE MUST GO TO

NEW YORK



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Billy Graham

Several years ago when the Team announced plans for crusades in London, England and Glasgow, Scotland, The Hour of Decision listeners became prayerfully concerned. As questions came then, so questions have come now. These we have tried to compile, and Mr. Graham has taken time from his busy schedule to answer them just as they have come.

Geo. W. Wilson

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WHY

WE MUST GO TO

NEW YORK

by Billy Graham

1. Why are you going to New York?

There are many reasons. Humanly speaking, New York is the most unlikely city in the western hemisphere for successful evangelism—not that its sins are any more scarlet than any other city, not that its corruption is any more odious than most other cities, but due largely to its heterogenous make-up.

New York is a natural juncture between the Old World and the New. Five million New Yorkers are immigrants or the children of immigrants. There are more Italians than in Rome, more Irish than in Dublin, more Germans than in Berlin, more Puerto Ricans than in San Juan, more than a tenth of the Jewish population in the world. Every thirty minutes a boat arrives in New York, carrying its human cargo to the gateway of the New World.

With its sixty different nationalities; New York is one of the most unique cities in the world and presents many problems to the Church that are probably not faced by any other city in the world. To millions of New Yorkers the words *revival* or *evangelism* or *Gospel* have no specific meaning; yet deep within their hearts are the same yearnings, the same longings, and the same hunger for fellowship with God that exist in the hearts of people everywhere. In spite of the problems, we are going by faith, because we are convinced of the great spiritual need.

Secondly, we are going because there are many New York Christians greatly concerned for their city. Although Christians comprise a small minority, they are tremendously burdened for a revival in their community. Only 7½ per cent of the population is Protestant, and many of this number have only a remote relationship with the Church. Fifty-eight per cent of the people of New York have no religious identity whatsoever. Protestants are referred to in some groups as "the submerged minority."

The *New York Times* recently said: "The Protestants in effect, if not in intention, compete rather than cooperate with one another and are a divisive rather than a unifying influence."

But I happen to know that thousands of consecrated New York Christians of many denominations are not only praying and longing for a revival—they are actively and cooperatively working for it. They believe, along with us, that a few plus God equals victory. They have Gideon, David, Daniel, and Christ's disciples as case proofs that this is so. Sacred history is replete with examples that a minority with God at the helm can cause the Church to triumph over any and all obstacles.

Thirdly, we are going to New York because it is probably the world's most strategic city.

You will recall that the Holy Spirit directed Paul to move his base of operations from Jerusalem to Antioch. Antioch was the crossroads of the world in Paul's day, a melting pot of the then existing nations. People who were won to Christ in that great center carried the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth. Since God is primarily interested in people, He often makes special, Spirit-led attempts to gain the attention of people in the great concentrations of population, such as Nineveh, Sodom, Capernaum, Jerusalem, Antioch, or Rome.

New York is a mecca, a market place, and a museum. It is a clearing house for America's finances; a center of art, culture, and education; a carnival of sports, fashion, and entertainment. It is also the headquarters of the United Nations, which actually makes it a world

capital. A spiritual awakening in New York could have tremendous impact on the entire world.

And then, we are going to New York because a tremendous urgency was placed upon the invitation. We have many invitations which are more appealing, but we never make a decision to go to a city on the basis of favorable circumstances. We believe that the pastors and laymen of New York who have invited us were directed of the Spirit of God, and the same Spirit has given us the disposition to answer their call, "Come over into Macedonia and help us."

2. When do the meetings begin?

They begin Wednesday, May 15, 7:30 p.m. in Madison Square Garden and will continue every night, seven nights a week, for at least six weeks, perhaps longer.

3. Where will they be held?

The evening meetings will be held in Madison Square Garden, seating approximately 20,000 people.

4. How long will the meetings continue?

It is now planned that they will continue for at least six weeks, perhaps longer, depending on the leading of the Lord. One reason we took the Garden for the summer is that it is the only time the Garden is available. We are holding the meetings in probably the worst time of year for New York. It is doubtful if interest can be sustained during the hot months of July and August when millions of New Yorkers are on the beaches and in the mountains. There will be a great deal of prayer about the exact closing date.

5. Do you expect to fill the Garden every night?

I doubt it. Most of our crusades have their off nights.

6. Who is sponsoring the New York Crusade?

The crusade is officially sponsored by a committee of nineteen men, made up of both laymen and ministers. Mr. Roger Hull, the executive vice president of Mutual Life Insurance Company of New York, is the chairman. These men have worked long hours and prayed much over the hundreds of problems and details that go into the preparations of a crusade of this magnitude.

7. What opposition have you met in New York?

Very little in comparison to some cities, though we expect to meet more when the crusade actually gets under way. We expect Satan to attack from every angle.

Most of the opposition thus far has come from one or two small groups within the Church who do not agree with either the sponsorship of the crusade or the message that is to be preached or evangelism in general.

Most of the opposition that Wesley, Whitefield, Edwards, Finney, Moody, and Sunday had come from these same extreme groups. We have faced it in every city and shall continue to ignore their distortions of truth. I used to try to answer them, but I gave up long ago.

Some of them are like the man during the political campaign that had a big sign on his lapel: "My mind is made up. Do not confuse me with facts."

The Psalmist said: "Every day they wrest my words."

God has promised in Isaiah 54:17: "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and the tongue that shall arise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn."

Our position has been that of I Peter 2:15: "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men." The opposition thus far in New York is nothing comparable to the opposition we faced in London three years ago.

8. What do you expect to preach in New York?

My messages will be essentially the same as in other cities. The main thrust of the message will be Christ and Him crucified.

Naturally, I will preach sin and judgment, with great emphasis given to the fact that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. It is my prayer that every message will exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible, which I believe to be the inspired Word of God, will become my sword, and I will quote it repeatedly. As in the past, I believe God will use His Word to break open the hearts of the hearers.

9. Has anyone put any strings on what you are to preach?

Of course not. I would never accept an invitation anywhere that would limit my full liberty of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ as God has revealed it to me through His Word. No one in New York or outside of New York has even suggested as to what the content of my message should be. I will go anywhere, sponsored by anybody, to exalt Christ and preach the Gospel if there are no strings attached.

One of the key words in the Book of Acts is *boldness*. When a man is humble before God and filled with the Holy Spirit, he has a supernatural boldness that is God-given to declare the "whole counsel of God." In answer to the prayers of millions that have been praying all over the world, I believe God will give to us this supernatural gift of boldness.

10. What about the counselors: how many do you have? how long have they been training? who is training them?

Training classes began in March for 4,000 to 5,000 counselors. They will have had a nine-

weeks' intensive course in how to lead a soul to Christ. Our same Team members have done the teaching in our crusades. Lorne Sanny, Charles Riggs, and Don Rosenberger, all Navigator-trained men, are conducting the counseling classes prior to the Crusade. The inquiry room, as in other cities, will be handled by our own Team members, Rev. Grady Wilson, Rev. Joe Blinco, Mr. Sanny, Mr. Riggs, Mr. Rosenberger and other trained team members.

**11. What happens to your converts?
What is your follow-up procedure?
Do you send them back to a church?**

We never call them "converts." We much prefer to call them "inquirers." Only God knows when or if a man is truly converted.

Many come forward in our meetings who are seekers but not finders. We have abundant evidence that the majority of those who respond to the invitation lead a transformed life from that moment on, but there are hundreds during the course of a crusade who are in various stages of spiritual development. Some even come forward out of curiosity, or perhaps because a friend has come and they want to accompany them; therefore it would be presumptuous for us to call them "converts." The word *converts* is used by newspaper and magazine writers, not by us.

Naturally, it is impossible for us to control what happens to an inquirer. If the Book of Acts teaches us anything, it teaches us that the Holy Spirit is the great follow-up agent. We do not *send* them to any church. We encourage them to go to a church. It is impossible for us to choose a church for them. It would be impossible in any city to get a group of ministers to agree as to what constitutes the exact type of church an inquirer should be encouraged to go to; therefore we have left this matter in the hands of the Holy Spirit.

However, we do have an extensive follow-up program. The inquirer is contacted a number of times, sent various types of Christian liter-

ature and encouraged in many ways to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

12. Will there be other meetings besides those in Madison Square Garden?

Yes, scores of meetings will be held daily by other members of the Team in various parts of New York City. In fact, the number attending these meetings will be larger than the Garden meetings themselves. For example, we hope to have a noon-day meeting every day on Wall Street.

13. Does this mean that you will have other ministers with you to help you in the preaching?

Though I will probably bring all the evening messages at the Garden, yet a number of ministers are going to be helping us in the outside meetings. For example, Howard Butt, a young business man evangelist of Texas; the Rev. Stephen Olford, whom God has greatly used in Britain; the Rev. Joe Blinco, the outstanding Methodist evangelist of Great Britain; Dr. Paul S. Rees, of Minneapolis, who was with us in both London and Glasgow; the Rev. Grady Wilson, who has been my associate evangelist for many years; the Rev. Leighton Ford, who is one of the younger outstanding evangelists of Canada; and others who will be associated with us in the hundreds of outside meetings that will be held all over the New York area constantly. The ministry of these men will in itself be tremendous.

14. To what extent are you going to use television and radio?

All we can. Radio and television have opened up wonderfully to us in the New York area. In fact, far beyond our original expectations. At the moment, we have scores of invitations to appear on various radio and television network programs. We intend to accept as many invitations as possible, regardless of the program or its sponsor, in order that we might witness for Christ to millions of people across America.

In addition, we have daily television and radio programs already scheduled which will be conducted by various members of our Team.

If our finances permit, and Christians across the country get the burden and will support us, we will have a coast-to-coast television program directly from Madison Square Garden at least once a week. This will be a full hour, live, right from the Garden, so that millions of Americans can participate in the services from Madison Square Garden. If you would like to know more about this project, you may write to me here in Minneapolis.

15. How many are on your Team?

There will be approximately thirty-five of us in the New York Crusade. This will be the largest Team we have ever had with us.

16. What is the budget for the Crusade, and how is the Crusade financed?

The budget is approximately \$850,000, though it will probably be higher before we are finished. This may seem high to some and rather small to others. This is less than one fighter plane costs the Defense Department. It is less than the gate receipts of some of the one-night prize fights that have been held at Madison Square Garden. This is the smallest budget we have ever had in ratio to the population we are trying to reach.

No member of our team will receive any honorarium, salary, or gift from the New York Crusade. We are giving ourselves completely as a labor of love, so that we will not be a financial burden to the New York committee.

The executive committee has already raised approximately \$300,000. We expect that the offerings that will be taken up each evening will raise another \$300,000. This leaves the committee with a deficit of \$300,000 which must be raised by private subscription. We are certain that God will supply our needs. Our expectancy is from Him. We have a prayerful concern that

this budget will be met fully. We have never been to a city but what the budget has been over-subscribed before the crusade was finished, and we have never had to use any pressure to get people to give. We believe God will lay it upon the hearts of His people to give.

17. Will the newspapers support you in New York as they have in other cities?

Some of the Press have already given indication that they plan to go all-out in their support. The newspapers of a city can do much to arouse the curiosity and interest in spiritual things. A crusade like this gives them an opportunity to say things and do things that normally they could not do. The crusade can become a sounding board for newspapers to express spiritual and moral convictions to the community they serve. We expect this to happen in New York. It is not likely that the newspapers can give daily, systematic coverage, as they have in smaller cities, because their news space is limited.

18. What about the several misquotes attributed to you? How does this happen?

Almost every time I give an address or a sermon, there are reporters present. The amazing miracle to me is that there haven't been more misquotes. We have enjoyed extremely friendly relations with the American Press. We are very grateful for their cooperation. However, once in a while a mistake is made. For example, a text is taken completely out of context. When it gets to another part of the country, the context is missing and only the text stands out. Standing alone, it does not mean exactly what it meant in its contextual setting.

Sometimes a reporter not trained in theological matters does not understand the nature of the discussion or Gospel message. For example, if I were sent out to cover a football game and had never seen one, I am sure that what I would write in the press would be a distortion of what actually took place on the

gridiron. Just so, sometimes a reporter who has never been to an evangelistic service is sent out to cover it. His impressions are distortions of the purpose and meaning of the service.

From the day we began to receive coverage in the Press, I have been concerned that I might say something or do something that would bring dishonor to Christ. I have stayed on my knees about this matter more than any other single thing. In this modern day of communication, press relations are extremely important. Especially as we go to New York do we need to pray that the Holy Spirit will guard the statements in the Press and use the press coverage to glorify Christ.

I would just as soon that my name never appear in print again. I'm sick of seeing it. I rarely read articles written about me; but I do know that God has used this phase of our ministry to arouse the interest of people all over the world. It has given us contact with millions outside the Church. That is the reason that in every audience we address there are scores who would never darken the door of a church. This gives us an unprecedented opportunity for reaching the unconverted.

19. Why and how are statistics kept in a crusade?

Certainly they are not kept by our Team in order to compile a mass of astronomical statistics. This would be a wrong motive that God could never bless. While we do keep records for purposes of efficiency and follow-up, the statistics of a crusade are of little importance. The Press is always concerned with how many came forward, how many in the services, et cetera, and we always try to keep them happy by giving them any figures at hand; but, actually, a compilation of statistics is far from our goal. We used to believe that no statistics should be kept. However, we found that the Press, not having the exact figures, usually exaggerated. Therefore we began to issue exact figures. For example, the attendance at our meetings is carefully counted; in many of our meetings people

come through turnstiles and are counted singly. We believe God has honored this.

We have leaned over backward to see that no statistics are ever exaggerated. We have always made it a policy to underestimate.

20. What are the objectives of your New York Crusade?

First, the winning of the lost to Christ, to point people to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

Secondly, it is the encouraging and strengthening of the body of Christ, the Church. The Church is in need of a revival in New York. It is our prayer that many churches will receive a revival of spiritual interest.

Thirdly, it is hoped that Christians, who are in such a minority in the New York area, can be encouraged. A cooperative Christian effort as exemplified in what is termed *mass evangelism* offers opportunity for an unlimited, aggressive witness for Christ. The impressive scene of hundreds of churches working together in harmony and unity is in itself a strong and convincing witness. Just the sight of thousands of other Christians singing the hymns of the Church, the Gospel being preached, and scores coming forward to surrender their lives to Christ is a tremendous encouragement to Christians who have struggled and prayed sometimes, almost alone, for years.

Fourthly, it is our prayer that this will be the beginning of a great revival that we have longed and prayed for in America. We are seeing unprecedented religious interest on every side, but as yet, genuine revival has been withheld.

Exactly 100 years ago, in 1857, the great New York revival broke out and became the greatest spiritual awakening that New York City has ever experienced. We are praying that history will repeat itself.

Through the Press, radio, television, and other mediums of communication, what happens in New York could spread revival fagots

to the entire nation. Probably at no time in history have so many people prayed for one event as they are the New York Crusade. The Lord may answer their prayers in unexpected ways. He may send great revival blessing to communities all over America as a result of what they hear is happening in New York. A revival is sometimes like an epidemic—it catches. It's like a fire—it spreads.

Fifthly, our main objective, however, is to glorify God. The Scripture says that God will not share His glory with another. If anything happens in New York, it will be the doing of the Lord. We are going with broken hearts, crawling on our knees, realizing that our sufficiency is in Him. All the organization and preparation that has been made will avail nothing unless the Spirit of God comes in mighty power. "It is not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." Our chief objective is to glorify Christ. "I must decrease, and He must increase."

21. What can we do to help?

There are several things you can do.

First, you can pray. You can join millions around the world in daily, systematic prayer. Set aside a few minutes each day to intercede for the New York Crusade. Not only will God answer your prayers in New York, but He will bless your own life. Perhaps you have never done this before. Do it for New York and see what happens!

Secondly, get others to pray. Perhaps you can have a small prayer group at the office, in the shop, in your home. Hundreds of women are calling in neighbors to pray especially for the New York Crusade. Not only does this help us in New York, but it blesses your own community.

Thirdly, come to New York, if possible. Many people across the country are planning to take their vacation in New York this summer so they can attend the meetings. Madison Square Garden could become a great spiritual mecca toward which thousands of Christians from everywhere could come. We already have reservations from

people that are coming from Japan, India, Africa, South America, England, and many parts of the United States. Two thousand are coming on a special train from Louisville, Kentucky; others from Detroit, Grand Rapids and Chicago.

Fourthly, write every friend, relative, or business acquaintance that you have in the New York City area. Urge them to attend the meetings. In this way you can be engaged in evangelism. You can be a genuine partner and collaborator with us. Almost everyone knows someone in the New York area. Write to everybody you know, urging them to attend the meetings.

Fifthly, write the editor of your local newspaper, telling him your interest in the New York Crusade, asking him to carry as much coverage as possible. Your editor will be glad to hear from you and know of your interest. This will assure you of having daily, first-hand reports directly from Madison Square Garden in your newspaper. This will help stimulate interest in your own community and could be used of God to start a revival. Your editor will not know of your interest unless you write him or phone him.

Sixthly, you can give financially. The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has undertaken to raise the money necessary to pay the salaries of the entire Team while in New York. This is a large item. In addition, we are going to maintain The Hour of Decision during the summer months. Our financial burdens are going to be much heavier than any other summer. Usually in the summer months our income drops. Therefore I am going to ask you to pledge that you will stand with us not only by prayer but by sacrificial financial giving.

You could determine to send a gift every week during the summer months. I know this may be hard on some of you, but I believe God will honor your sacrificial giving. In this way you will be giving indirectly to the New York Crusade. It is going to be impossible for us to carry the burden of the New York Crusade and at the same time the burden of The Hour of Decision. I am going to ask you to carry The Hour of Decision, under God, with us.