

WHAT CAN I DO?

By Carl McMurray

The family here at Anderson has always been a participatory group. Just notice how many people speak up consistently in our adult classes (I've sat through classes elsewhere in dead silence) or how many stay over for our congregational meetings. Because of that attitude I thought someone might be thinking about our upcoming gospel meeting from the standpoint of the title question. If so, here are a few suggestions for what we might do to help make our meeting even better.

BE PRESENT. Yep, sounds simple doesn't it, but it is the most important thing you can personally do to encourage the speaker, your brothers and sisters, and yourself. Plan your week and your evening schedule to be present and be early.

PRAY HARD. There is a list of the speakers on the front page and every one of them covets your prayer. Pray for the speakers, your own attitude as a listener, brethren who may be trying to invite others to come, open hearts in the community that may get an invitation to be present, and guests who actually do attend.

SING OUT. Is there anything that affects the mood of the worship more than the singing, whether it is poor or GREAT? I don't think so. That means song leaders should practice at home, give us the right pitch, and beat out a time we can follow. The rest of us should be prepared to follow the leader, and sing out from hearts of gratitude, overflowing with praise and worship. Let's lift the roof.

ENCOURAGE THE SPEAKER. We have five different speakers scheduled for this meeting so we should get to hear several styles and types of Bible lessons. One thing that will help all of them to do their best, however, is encouragement. How might this be done? Well first, sign up on the meal list to have one of them in your home. Before the evening study, laugh with him, ask him and his family questions, and share a meal with him, and tell him, "We're glad you're here and we're looking forward to the evening's worship!" Arrive early, usually the preacher will. Meet him BEFORE he speaks and welcome him. Chat with him and his family and learn something about him, as if there was going to be a pop quiz later. :-) Again, let them know that you're glad they had the time to come and guide our study and let him know you're looking forward to it. Then listen closely. Good attention is exciting to a speaker. Take notes, open your Bible and turn some pages, pray silently for him during the lesson. Nod, amen, smile, gasp, or otherwise let him know that you're listening and that he's not speaking to a post. You'll be surprised at how well he does if we prepare OUR hearts with a positive attitude and give him feedback WHILE he speaks. God bless your efforts.

