

The mass gatherings were the culmination point to which thousands of believers came together. Even the travel time was very exciting and we all wondered what would happen at the faith rally which awaited us. For what God would say to us. The themes and Bible texts that were to be preached about had been carefully selected and the brethren were well prepared. It was a strange atmosphere, this gathering of so many believers, all of them strictly dressed in accordance with the regulations *thewomananddaughterswithuncuthair andnotinmen'strousersbutdecentasitoughttobethemenwithoutbeards(attheutm ostashortmustache)andwithshorthair* because this was the will of the brethren. The mood was festive and already the introductory words, prayers, and songs guided us right into the presence of God. The speeches were powerful and mighty. Sin was openly addressed and the consequences of misconduct described in drastic measures. Then Christ's work of redemption was pronounced as well as the salvation that lies within him for sinners. But only the repentant and remorseful heart could receive redemption and salvation. Not the rebellious, apostate, unrepentant or those who make a fool out of God and ridicule the name of Christ. God's judgement would come over them quickly and bring them eternal pain. But there is still time to repent and to turn around. But, soon the time of mercy would be over. Maranatha, our Lord comes again. Marvelous songs from the choir enhanced the themes and prepared hearts, moved, convicted and renewed. These were holy, precious hours, gifts from above. Food was served during the breaks, one was engaged in talking about what had been said, acquaintances were made and one waited for the coming hours of preparation. Youth groups handed out pamphlets in the neighboring streets in order to spread the good news. And it was a sight to see, all the neat young men and the so appropriately dressed daughters, how they gave witness so eagerly about what they had experienced. Everyone stayed within the described paths and obeyed the word of lowliness, accepted the directions of the brethren as coming from God, lived their lives in accordance with this gospel. *Obedience is better than sacrifice and to heed is better than understanding*. Also I had become fully absorbed by these meetings. I drew closer to the presence of God and all the worldly and earthly things fell away. And I think I have felt His nearness, love, and holiness and noticed the shortness of the hours. Yes, it was my firm decision to follow Him and to keep myself from being polluted by the world and to consider myself as being dead to sin. *In* the world, but not *of* the world. Separation from darkness, turning away from its sinful deeds. Called to be a follower of Christ. With the purpose to be the salt and light of the world.

Witnesses for God. And then moving forward in the sanctification process, keeping our eyes steadily upon Him. To be receptive to His being. To follow His footsteps, belonging completely to Him. *Sing a new song to the Lord.* Called to preach His word, driven by the Spirit to lead men to Christ, to save sinners from their lost ways. And the time was precious and rare, because the Lord would come soon and take His people with him. Therefore, *be on the alert at all times, be ready, and continue to pray.* It was necessary to give everything, a half-hearted commitment was unacceptable. *Be entirely focused on God, if not, let it go forever.* Through lowliness and obedience toward the final destination, through the valley of tears, toward the light. *And make the most of your time, because the days are evil.*