Seven Campus Tour

When the New England Billy Graham Crusade is held this spring, it will not be limited to one city or one week of meetings. Instead, it will involve many cities and universities throughout the New England States. Beginning in April, Billy Graham will give evangelistic lectures at seven new England colleges and universities; and, during April and May, seven major New England cities will hold Crusade meetings before the Crusade in Boston, Massachusetts, May 30 through June 6 at Boston University's Nickerson Field.

After the original Planning Committee made clear to Dr. Graham that the invitation to New England included a unique sweep of college campuses, 12 formal invitations were received from colleges and universities across New England. While the number of lectures had to be limited to a few campuses, eight actual lectures have been scheduled with Billy Graham speaking at Northeastern University in Boston on April 15; University of Massachusetts in Amherst on April 16; Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, on April 19; at the Harvard-Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge on April 20; Harvard University in Cambridge on April 21; Boston College in Boston on April 22; Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) in Cambridge on April 28; and at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, on May 26.

The lectures are the result of invitations by student groups on the campuses. The foremost criteria was the commitment and coalition of the Christian community on campuses that issued the invitation. Dr. Graham desires for his ministry to complement what is happening on campus already, where it will be a constructive part of an ongoing ministry.

When Dr. Graham addresses the seven major new England college campuses, his approach will reflect the milieu and mindset of these potential future leaders of our country, Crusade officials explained. Because of the climate in the academic institutions, the evangelistic message will be tailored to reach the students.

"It's more the idea of free inquiry, where Dr. Graham presents what we know and believe to be the truth, and invites students to consider it and respond to it. So, it is just a free exchange of ideas. That's what we're shooting for. Dr. Graham and the General Committee felt that students need a direct approach, a one-on-one encounter with him," according to Greg Strand, Collegiate Coordinator for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

In this evangelistic lecture format, Dr. Graham will not be offering the conventional invitation to come forward that he does for the city Crusades; rather, he will present a challenge for students and faculty to seriously consider the message especially in view of current world situations and nuclear tension.

Thomas Hawkes, Assistant Collegiate Coordinator, stated about the collegiate campus, "It's a different place. There are different people who have different ways of responding. Students are much more critical and cynical, and less church-oriented than people who attend the city Crusade. They won't respond as well to those things in a typical Crusade setting, that are geared to people who are familiar with the church."

Strand added, "What Dr. Graham wants to do is make sure that people understand what the Gospel really says and that they have an opportunity to respond in a way that is not threatening. His purpose in coming to the New England campuses is to serve and help students and faculty by clearly communicating the Gospel of Christ, of hope, and of peace."

Photos:

Billy Graham at Canterbury, England