

Evangelistic Missions At Hastings - Andrew Johnston - 1937

The year 1937 will always be linked in the history of the Hastings Church with the names of Mr and Mrs Andrew Johnston. We have enjoyed a "tide of the Spirit." The mission which took place from September 5 to 19 is set indelibly in the memory of all who were able to participate.

The fortnight passed like a day, so joyous were the Christians in the experience of this uplifting campaign. The blind servant of God immediately established himself in the hearts of the people, and Mr and Mrs Johnston, both by their gracious genial personalities and devoted ministry, won the entire confidence of all who heard and met them. The challenge to Christians and the message to the unconverted were proclaimed fearlessly, forcefully, and feelingly; every word carried weight; and every address was used by God's Spirit. The beautiful solos by Mrs Johnston made strong appeal. The singing was stirring, and the choruses made a great impression, as persistent "requests" indicated.

During the first week, believers were brought face to face with the need of a more God-honouring and Christ-like life, and there was encouraging response to the appeals for reconsecration and renewal. The evangelistic addresses which occupied the second week were powerful and convincing, and there was a real work of conviction wrought in the hearts of many. We had the joy of seeing some taking their stand for Christ for the first time and confessing Him with earnestness and spontaneity. Every appeal was most carefully and wisely directed, and the missionary was manifestly guided of God in this important matter.

The attendances for the week-night meetings were most gratifying, and during the second week numbers increased, until we were reaching "full capacity." The concluding service on Sunday evening, September 19, was one long to be remembered and, as many have testified, was "one of the greatest services held in the church for very many years." A loudspeaker was installed in the school hall by some of the young men, and this provided for an overflow (of our own people) to hear the entire service, and proved very necessary. It was a wonderful service, and hearts were deeply moved.

There was no small regret as we approached the closing day that the mission time could not be extended; but we believe that the work will go on. The church has enjoyed a rich experience, and gives thanks for the goodness of God in it.