I received the following article from a website. Here are some important points on how God uses street-preaching for His glory. Who said that street-preaching is not proper for a Christian? It is a necessity in every church! R.A. Torrey strongly believed in street-preaching. While our church always preached out on the streets, several times we came across students from Biola University criticizing and condemning our street-preaching. Those people do not even realize that their founder R.A. Torrey taught street-preaching in his lectures. How shocking it is to see that apostasy quickly arose in Biola University less than 100 years! They should have at least taken a look at R.A. Torrey's lectures, like this one:

OPEN-AIR MEETINGS

I. Their importance and advantages.

1. They are Scriptural. Jesus said, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." Every great preacher of the Bible was an open-air preacher. Peter was an open-air preacher, Paul was an open-air preacher, and so were Elijah, Moses and Ezra. More important than all, Jesus Christ Himself was an open-air preacher, and preached for the most part out of doors. Every great sermon recorded in the Bible was preached in the open air; the sermon on the Day of Pentecost, the Sermon on the Mount, the sermon on Mars Hill, etc. In this country we have an idea that open-air preaching is for those who cannot get any other place to speak, but across the water they look at it quite differently. Some of the most eminent preachers of Great Britain preach in the open air.

2. Open-air meetings are portable, you can carry them around. It would be very difficult to carry a church or mission building with you, but there is no difficulty about carrying an openair meeting with you. You can get an open-air meeting where you could by no possibility get a church, mission hall or even a room. You can have open-air meetings in all parts of the city and all parts of the country.

3. Open-air meetings are more attractive in the summer than hot, sweltering halls or churches. When on my vacations, I used to attend a country church. It was one of the hottest, most stifling and sleepy places I ever entered. It was all but impossible to keep awake while the minister attempted to preach. The church was located in a beautiful grove where it was always cool and shady, but it seemed never to enter the minds of the people to go out of the church into the grove. Of course only a few people attended the church services. One day a visiting minister suggested that they have an open-air meeting on the front lawn of a Christian man having a summer residence near at hand. The farmers came to that meeting from miles around, in wagons, on foot and every other way. There was a splendid crowd in attendance. The country churches would do well in the summer to get out of their church building into some attractive

grove near at hand.

4. Open-air meetings will accommodate vast crowds. There are few church buildings, especially in the country, that will accommodate more than one thousand people; but people by the thousands can be accommodated by an open-air meeting. It has been my privilege to speak for several summers in a small country town with less than a thousand inhabitants. Of course the largest church building in the town would not accommodate more than five hundred people. The meetings, however, were held in the open air, and people drove to them from forty miles around, and at a single meeting we had an attendance of 15,000 people. Whitefield was driven to the fields by the action of church authorities. It was well that he was. Some of his audiences at Moorfields were said to number 60,000 people.

5. Open-air meetings are economical. You neither have to pay rent nor hire a janitor. They do not cost anything at all. God Himself furnishes the building and takes care of it. I remember that at a Christian Workers' Convention a man was continually complaining that no one would hire for him a mission hall in which to hold meetings. At last I suggested to him that he had all outdoors, and could go there and preach until some one hired him a hall. He took the suggestion and was greatly used of God. You do not need to have a cent in your pocket to hold an open-air meeting. The whole outdoors is free.

6. You can reach men in an open-air meeting that you can reach in no other way. I can tell of instance after instance where men who have not been at church or a mission hall for years have been reached by open-air meetings. The persons I have known to be reached and converted through open- air meetings have included thieves, drunkards, gamblers, saloon-keepers, abandoned women, murderers, lawyers, doctors, theatrical people, society people, in fact pretty much every class.

7. You can reach backsliders and people who have drifted away from the church. One day when we were holding a meeting on a street comer in a city, a man in the crowd became interested, and one of our workers dealt with him. He said, "I am a backslider, and so is my wife, but I have made up my mind to come back to Christ." He was saved and so was his brother-in-law.

8. Open-air meetings impress People by their earnestness. How often I have heard people say, "There is something in it. See those people talking out there on the street. They do not have any collection, and they come here just because they believe what they are preaching." Remarks like this are made over and over again. Men who are utterly careless about the Gospel and Christianity have been impressed by the earnestness of men and women who go out on to the street and win souls for Christ.

9. Open-air meetings bring recruits to churches and missions. One of the best ways to fill up an empty church is to send your workers out on the street to hold meetings before the church service is held, or better still, go yourself. When the meeting is over, you can invite people to the church (or mission). This is the divinely appointed means for reaching men that cannot be reached in any other way (Luke 14:21). All Christians should hear the words of Christ constantly

ringing in their ears, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor," etc.

10. Open-air meetings enable you to reach men. One of the great problems of most ministers of the Gospel to-day is how to get hold of the men. The average church audience is composed very largely of women and children. One of the easiest ways to get hold of the men is to go out on the streets, where the men are. Open-air meetings are as a rule composed of an overwhelming majority of men.

11. Open-air meetings are good for the health. An English preacher was told that he must die, that he had consumption. He thought he should make the most of the few months he had allotted to live, so he went out on the streets and began preaching. The open-air preaching cured his consumption, and he lived for many years, and was the founder of a great open-air society.

II. Where to hold open-air meetings.

To put it in a single word, that you wish to reach. But a few suggestions may prove helpful.

1. Where the crowds pass. Find the principal thoroughfare where the crowds throng. You cannot hold your meeting just at that point, as the police will not permit it, but you can hold it just a little to one side of that point, and the crowds as they pass will go to one side and listen to you.

2. Hold them near crowded tenements. In that way you can preach to the people in the tenements as well as on the street. They will throw open their windows and listen. Sometimes the audience that you do not see will be as large as the one you do see. You may be preaching to hundreds of people inside the building that you do not see at all. I knew of a poor sick woman being brought to Christ through the preaching she heard on the street. It was a hot summer night, and her window was open, and the preaching came in through the window and touched her heart and won her to Christ. It is good to have a good strong voice in openair preaching, for then you can preach to all the tenements within three or four blocks. Mr. Sankey once sang a hymn that was carried over a mile away and converted a man that far off. I have a friend who occasionally uses in his open-air meetings a megaphone that carries his voice to an immense distance.

3. Hold meetings near circuses, baseball games, and other places where the people crowd. One of the most interesting meetings I ever held was just outside of a baseball ground on Sunday. The police were trying to break up the game inside by arresting the leaders. We held the meeting outside just back of the grand stand. As there was no game to see inside, the people listened to

the singing and preaching of the Gospel outside. On another Sunday we drove down to Sell's circus and had the most motley audience I ever addressed. There were people present from almost every nation under heaven. The circus had advertised a "Congress of Nations," so I had provided a congress of nations for my openair meeting. On that day I had a Dutchman, a Frenchman, a Scotchman, an Englishman, an Irishman and an American

preach. We took care at the open-air meeting to invite the people to evening meeting at the mission. That night a man came who told us that he was one of the employes of the circus, and was touched that afternoon by the preaching of the Gospel, and had come to learn how to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. He accepted the Saviour that night.

4. Hold meetings in or near parks or other public resorts. Almost every city has its resorts where people go on Sunday. As the people will not go to church, the church ought to go out to the people. Sometimes permission can be secured from the authorities to bold the meetings right in the parks. Wherever this is impossible they can be held near at hand. One who is now a deacon of our church spent his Sundays at Lincoln Park before he was converted; an open-air meeting was held close at band, and here he heard the Gospel and was converted.

5. Hold meetings in groves. It would be well if every country church could be persuaded to try this. Get out of the church into a grove somewhere, and you will be surprised at the number of people who will come who would not go near the church at all.

6. Hold open-air meetings near your missions. If you have a mission, be sure to bold an open-air meeting near it. It is the easiest thing in the world to keep a mission full, even during the summer months, if you hold an open-air meeting in connection with it, but it is almost impossible to do so if you do not.

7. Hold open-air meetings in front of churches. A good many of our empty churches could be filled if we would only hold openair meetings in front of them. Years ago, when in London, I went to hear Newman Hall preach. It looked to me like a very orderly and aristocratic church, but when I left the church after the second service, I was surprised to find an open-air meeting in full blast right in front of the church, and people gathered there in crowds from the thoroughfare.

8. Be careful about the little details in connection with the location. On a hot day, hold the meeting on the shady side of the street On a cool day, on the sunny side. Make it as comfortable for the audience as possible. Never compel the audience to stand with the sun shining in their eyes. Preach with the wind, and not against it. Take your own position a little above the part of the audience nearest you, upon a curbstone, chair, platform, rise in the ground, or anything that will raise your head above others so that your voice will carry.

III. Things to get.

1. Get it thoroughly understood between yourself and God that He wants you to do this work, and that by His grace you are going to do it whatever it costs. This is one of the most important things in starting out to do open-air work. You are bound to make a failure unless you settle this at the start. Open-air work has its discouragements, its difficulties and its almost insurmountable obstacles, and unless you start out knowing that God has called you to the work, and come what will, you will go through with it, you are sure to give it up.

2. Get permission from the powers that be to hold open-air meetings. Do not get into conflict with the police if you can possibly avoid it. As a rule it is quite easy to get this permission if you go about it in a courteous and intelligent way. Find out what the laws of the city are in this

regard, and then observe them. Go to the captain of the precinct and tell him that you wish to hold an open-air meeting, and let him see that you are not a disturber of the peace or a crank. Many would-be open-air preachers get into trouble from a simple lack of good sense and common decency.

3. Get a good place to hold the meeting. Do not start out at random. Study your ground. You should operate like a general. We are told that the Germans studied France as a battle ground for years before the Franco-Prussian war broke out, and when the war

broke out there were officers in the German army that knew more about France than the officers in the French army did. Lay your plan of campaign, study your battle field, pick out the best places to hold the meetings, look over the territory carefully and study it in all its bearings. There are a good many things to be considered. Do not select what would be a good place for some one to throw a big panful of dishwater upon you. These little details may appear trivial, but they need to be taken into consideration. It is unpleasant, and somewhat disconcerting, when a man is right in the midst of an interesting exhortation, to have a panful of dishwater thrown down the back of his neck.

4. Get as large a number of reliable Christian men and women to go with you as you possibly can. Crowds draw crowds. There is great power in numbers. One man can go out on the street alone and hold a meeting; I have done it myself; but if I can get fifteen or twenty reliable men to go with me, I will get them every time. Please note that I have said reliable Christian men and women. Do not take anybody along with you to an open-air meeting that you do not know. A man that is in the habit of making a fool of himself be sure to leave at home. He may upset your whole meeting. Do not take a man or woman with you who has an unsavory reputation. Probably some one in the crowd will. know it and shout out the fact. Take only people who are of established reputation, and well balanced. Never pick up a stranger out of the crowd and ask him to speak. Some one will come along who appears to be just your sort, but if you ask him to speak you will wish you had not done so.

5. Get the best music you can. Get a baby organ and a comet if you can. Be sure to have good singing if it is possible. If you cannot have good singing, have poor singing, for even poor singing goes a good way in the open air. One of the best open-air meetings I ever attended was where two of us were forced to go out alone. Neither of us was a singer. We started with only one hearer, but a drunken man came along and began to dance to our singing, and a crowd gathered to watch him dance. When the crowd had gathered, I simply put my hand on the drunken man, and said, "Stand still for a few moments." My companion took the drunken man as a text for a temperance sermon, and when he got through I took him for a text. People began to whisper in the crowd, "I would not be in that man's shoes for anything." The man did us good service that night. He first drew the crowd, and then famished us with a text. The Lord turned the devil's instrument right against him that night. If you can, get a good solo singer, or even a poor solo singer will do splendid work in the open air, if he sings in the power of the Spirit. I remember a man who attempted to sing in the open air, who was really no singer at all, but God in His wonderful mercy gave him that night to sing in the power of the Spirit. People began to break down on the street, tears rolled down their cheeks, one woman was converted right there during the singing of that hymn. Although the hymn was sung in such a miserable way from a musical standpoint, the Spirit of God used it for

that woman's conversion.

6. Get the attention of your hearers as soon as possible. When you are preaching in a church, people will oftentimes stay even if they are not interested, but unless you get the attention of your audience at once in the open air, one of two things will happen, either your crowd will leave you or else they will begin to guy you. In the first half dozen sentences you must get the attention of your bearers. I was once holding a meeting in one of the hardest places of a city. There were saloons on three of the four comers, three breweries, and four or five Roman Catholic churches were close at hand. There was scarcely a Protestant in that part of the city. The first words I spoke were these, "You will notice the cross on the spire of yonder church." By this means I secured their attention at once, and then I talked to them about the meaning of that cross. On holding a meeting one labor day, I started out on the subject of labor. I spoke only a few moments on that subject, to lead them around to the subject of the Lord Jesus Christ. Holding a meeting one night in the midst of a hot election, near where an election parade was forming, I started out with the question, "Whom shall we elect?" The people expected a political address, but before long I got them interested in the question whether or not we should elect the Lord Jesus Christ to be the ruler over our lives.

7. Get some good tracts. Always have tracts when you hold an open-air meeting. They assist in making permanent the impressions and fixing the truth. Have the workers pass around through the crowd handing out the tracts at the proper time.

8. Get workers around in the crowd to do personal work. Returning from an open-air meeting years ago in the city of Detroit, I said to a minister who was stopping at the same hotel that we had had several conversions in the meeting. He replied by asking me if a certain man from Cleveland was not in the crowd. I replied that he was. He told me that he thought if I looked into it I would find that the conversions were largely due to that man, that while the services were going on, he had been around in the crowd doing personal work. I found that it was so.

9. Get a gospel wagon if you can. Of this we shall have more to say when we speak of Gospel Wagon Work.

IV. Don't.

1. Don't unnecessarily antagonize your audience. I heard of a man addressing a Roman Catholic audience in the open air and pitching into the Roman Catholic Church and the Pope. That man did not have good sense. Another man attempted a prohibition discourse immediately in front of a saloon. He got a brick instead of votes.

2. Don't get scared. Let Psalm 27: 1 be your motto: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" There is not a particle need of being scared. You may be surrounded by a crowd of bowling hoodlums, but you may be absolutely certain that you will not be hurt unless the Lord wants you to be hurt; and if the Lord wants you to be hurt, that is the best thing for you. You may be killed if the Lord sees fit to allow you to be killed, but it is a wonderful privilege to be killed for the Lord Jesus Christ. One night I was holding a meeting in one of the worst parts of Chicago.

Something happened to enrage a part of the crowd that gathered around me. Friends near at hand were in fear lest I be killed, but I kept on speaking and was not even struck.

3. Don't lose your temper. Whatever happens, never lose your temper. You ought never to get angry under any circumstances, but it is especially foolish to do so when you are holding an openair meeting. You will doubtless have many temptations to lose your temper, but never do it. It is very hard to hit a man when he is serene, and if you preserve your serenity, the chances are that you will escape unscathed. Even if a tough strikes you, he cannot do so a second time if you remain calm. Serenity is one of the best safeguards.

4. Don't let your meeting be broken up. No matter what happens, hold your ground if you can, and you generally can. One night I was holding a meeting in a square in one of the most desperate parts of a large city. The steps of an adjacent saloon were crowded with men, many of whom were half drunk. A man came along on a load of hay, went into the saloon and fired himself up with strong drink. Then he attempted to drive right down upon the crowd in the middle of the square, in which there were many women and children. Some man stopped his horses, and the infuriated man came down from the load of hay and the howling mob swept down from the steps of the saloon. Somehow or other the drunken driver got a rough handling in the mob, but not one of our number was struck. Two policemen in citizens' clothes happened to be passing by and stopped the riot. I said a few words more, and then formed our little party into a procession, behind which the crowd fell in, and marched down to the mission singing.

5. Don't fight. Never fight under any circumstances. Even if they almost pound the life out of you, refuse to fight back.

6. Don't be dull. Dullness will kill an open-air meeting at once. Prosiness will drive the whole audience away. In order to avoid being dull, do not preach long sermons. Use a great many striking illustrations. Keep wide awake yourself, and you will keep the audience awake. Be energetic in your manner. Talk so people can bear you. Don't preach, but simply talk to people.

7. Don't be soft. One of these nice, namby-pamby, sentimental sort of fellows in an open-air meeting the crowd cannot and will
not stand. The temptation to throw a brick or a rotten apple at him is perfectly irresistible, and one can hardly blame the crowd.

8. Dont read a sermon. Whatever may be said in defence of reading essays in the pulpit, it will never do in the open air. It is possible to have no notes whatever. If you cannot talk long without notes, so much the better; you can talk as long as you ought to. If you read, you will talk longer than you ought to.

9. Don't use "cant." Use language that people are acquainted with, but do not use vulgar language. Some people think it is necessary to use slang, but slang is never admissible. There is language that is popular and easily understood by the people that is purest Anglo-Saxon.

10. Don't talk too long. You may have a number of talks in an open-air meeting, but do not

have any of them over ten or fifteen minutes long. As a rule do not have them as long as that. Of course there are exceptions to this, when a great crowd is gathered to bear some person in the open air. Under such circumstances I have beard a sermon an hour long that held the interest of the people, but this is not true in the ordinary open-air meeting.

V. Things absolutely necessary to success.

1. Consecrated men and women. None but consecrated men and women will ever succeed in open-air meetings. If you cannot get such, you might as well give up holding open-air meetings.

2. Depend upon God. There is nothing that will teach one his dependence upon God more quickly and more thoroughly than holding open-air meetings. You never know what is going to happen. You cannot lay plans that you can always follow in an openair meeting. You never know what moment some one will come along and ask some troublesome question. You do not know what unforeseen event is going to occur. All you can do is to depend upon God, but that is perfectly sufficient.

3. Loyalty to the Word of God. It is the man who is absolutely loyal to God's Word, and who is familiar with it and constantly uses it, who succeeds in the open air. God often takes a text that is quoted, and uses it for the salvation of some hearer. Arguments and illustrations are forgotten, but the text sticks and converts.

4. Be frequently filled anew with the Holy Spirit. If any man needs to take advantage of the privilege of fresh infillings of the Holy Spirit, it is the open-air worker. Spiritual power is the great secret of success in this, as in all other Christian work.