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MORE MEDIA UPDATES

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Introduction

There have been some interesting media developments within the period covered in this report: October 1986 through mid-March, 1987. During this time, approximately 450 news clippings have been published on our movement. In addition, we've participated in dozens of radio interviews and have also received some television coverage.

I will reiterate certain categories I mentioned in my report in April of 1986, for the sake of continuity. I will however, offer additional principles and procedures for you to consider in projecting the media image you want representing your organization, congregation, program, and most important, the overall movement of Jewish people to the person of Y'shua.

I. The occasional feature article

Most major newspapers print such an article about Jewish believers every few years. It gives a little of the history of the movement and features a local individual, mission or congregation. Usually a rabbi or Jewish community leader is asked to respond (actually react) to the statements of the believers quoted.

Addendum A, *"Messianic Jews meld Christian and Jewish beliefs"* in the BIRMINGHAM NEWS on October 10, 1986, is a good example. Greg Garrison, the religion writer for the paper, decided to feature the local messianic congregation, Beth-El Chai and its pastor, Sammy Rubin.

Garrison uses the High Holidays as a lead in and then gives a profile of Rubin, who grew up in that locale. He continues with statistics on the movement provided by the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations.

One wonders if the reporter is a believer inasmuch as he gives very specific information on when and where the group meets so that those who might be interested in attending can easily find their way to Beth-El Chai.

The standard objections are articulated by a local rabbi and the reporter concludes with quotes from Eliezer Urbach, who is depicted as Rubin's mentor.

It should be noted that the newspaper used its own photographer to take pictures of the congregation. Whenever a paper is willing to send a photographer, you can be sure you are talking about a feature article and not a mere blurb.

II. Articles that are triggered by events

Addendum B, Assorted clippings and materials. The recent oral arguments heard by the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners vs Jews for Jesus prompted media exposure for the entire movement.

There are several ways to take a newsworthy event and get your message amplified through the media.

1. BACKGROUNDER. The Jewish community has been using them for years to tell the press that Jewish Christians are deceptive cultists or mindless followers of messianic gurus. Each organization or congregation should do up a backgrounder to state in common language what they are all about.

2. PHOTOS WITH CAPTIONS. Sometimes a newspaper or magazine does not have room for an entire article but can fit in a captioned photo if it is good enough. Invest the time and money in good photos of your events and send them to the papers. They should be at least 5 X 7 in size and done on high contrast paper.

3. PRESS RELEASE. Events should be announced to the press through press releases. The main information should all be stated in the first paragraph. Leave wide margins for the editors' notes. Follow up your releases with a phone call.

4. **PRESS CONFERENCE.** This is a risky thing. If a bigger news story is breaking, you may have a very embarrassing turnout, or lack thereof.

III. Media that begets media

An opportunity for a television interview was offered to us at Jews for Jesus. It was in Detroit and since we felt there were qualified Jewish believers there who could handle the program, we declined and recommended them instead. I'd like to run part of that interview which was aired on a morning talk show called Kelly & Company.

The opening question really made the whole program worthwhile: "What convinced you that Jesus was the Messiah?" Local Jewish believers, Haskell Stone and Loren Jacobs answered, complementing one another very well.

The rabbi comes off as very pompous. This is just the sort of rabbi with whom you want to do an interview. When asked who he thinks Jesus is, he gives an answer that would offend most gentiles.

Next, Loren almost gets himself into trouble. But watch how he masterfully gets out of it!

The television interview gave birth to several articles in the DETROIT JEWISH NEWS. While the subsequent articles are hardly positive, they do provide Jewish readers with some good information. Namely, that there are Jews who believe in Y'shua and they live right in the Detroit area.

IV. Letters to the Editor

Addendum C, "Protected Pests," LOS ANGELES TIMES. It's important to recognize that hundreds of letters are submitted for every one that is printed. Notice the type of letters that a given media prints. Most editors prefer to publish a variety of short letters rather than one or two lengthy ones. Letters with humor are also welcome. The sample I've distributed is both short and a bit humorous, yet to the point.

Conclusion

Perhaps the best we can expect from the secular media is to be called "nuisances" instead of "pests." The exposure is still worth it, because we are able to get our message before people, Jewish and gentile,,who might not otherwise be confronted with the fact that there are Jews who believe in Y'shua.

I'm not as concerned about the "name calling" we are subjected to as much as I am about the "respectability" to which we tend to cling. The desire for respectability can be deadly when we are speaking to the media. I'm convinced that the Apostle Paul, were he operating in our twentieth century situation, would not be the "darling" of the press. He would come across as a man who passionately wanted to make his Messiah known to a dying world. He wouldn't hem or haw over the issue of who's going to hell. He wouldn't have all the tactful words to say about the Jewish leaders of our day. Paul would preach the gospel and perhaps say something like, "You want news? I'll give you the best news that tops any front page headline you can come up with--Jesus is risen from the dead!"