

Chapter One

NEW YORK, 2005

The Press Conference

It is shortly before noon on Tuesday, June 21, 2005. His once golden—and now white—mane reaching almost to his collar and combed back to accentuate his etched-in-granite profile, Billy Graham enters a crowded suite adjacent to Rockefeller Center's fabled Rainbow Room on this hot and sunny morning, to a barrage of whirring cameras and deferential murmurs from New York's usually blasé press corps.

The Reverend Robert J. Johannson, senior pastor, Evangelical Church, Long Island City, New York; pastoral chairman, member, 2005 New York Crusade Committee Dr. Graham said to us, "We will get a good press in New York." That's the genius of the Graham people; there is not a person in New York City who did not know he was there. No one else has that kind of clout. We, who have been marginalized in the media, have been put on their radar because of the Graham meeting. For that, it was worth all the effort. The Graham crusade took us who were marginalized and said: "Hey, we are here all the time. Come see what we are doing."

Rev. David Epstein, senior pastor, Calvary Baptist Church, New York City; member, Executive Committee, 2005 Billy Graham New York Crusade I was so amazed and appreciative of the way the press treated him. The Gospel got such positive reception. As I told my congregation, even the *New York Times* preached the Gospel that week!

Using a walker, Graham haltingly makes his way to a dais set up in the center of the large rectangular room and eases his massive, but now weary, body into a chair. He appears tired, his face betraying the strains of his numerous illnesses and recent accidents.

Arthur Bailey, crusade associate, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA); director, New York Crusade, Corona Park, Queens, 2005 A group in New York City wanted Mr. Graham to conduct a crusade closely following September 11. Mr. Graham felt that this might appear too opportunistic and declined. There was an open invitation to come to New York, but Billy couldn't commit since he was not certain he could fulfill such an obligation. The group began meeting in December 2003, and by the fall of 2004 a formal invitation was extended. Mr. Graham gave the go-ahead, and we opened an office in Manhattan with the goal of holding a crusade in Central Park in June 2005. In April, I arranged for a group of pastors on the crusade committee to meet with Mr. Graham at his office in Black Mountain, North Carolina. The very morning they were to fly down—they were at the airport—I received a call from Mr. Graham's assistant, David Bruce, saying that Billy had fallen for the second time that year and fractured his pelvis. So the meeting was cancelled.

Robert J. Johansson We wanted to do something special to honor him because New York might be his last crusade. Those of us from a charismatic background believe that a pastor could pass on a blessing, like Elijah's mantle. We thought, Let's have a special meeting in Madison Square Garden and then a mass meeting in Central Park. We will make the Garden meeting like George Washington's Farewell Address to the troops. He will come; he will pray for us; he will ask God to use us in evangelism. There were people scheduled to attend from the West Coast, from London, and from Africa for this final blessing of Dr. Graham's

ministry. But Dr. Graham is an old Southern Baptist, and I don't think he understood our charismatic aspect. So I think his response to our plan was, "I'm an evangelist, I want to preach the Gospel." So the whole idea was put off. I was amazed at his marvelous focus.

The Graham people came to us a long time ago. I was at the first meeting held at the Marriott Hotel, in Manhattan. In almost every instance where Dr. Graham has gone in his ministry, he was very seriously sought after and invited. As Dr. Graham saw the curtain coming down (so to speak), he recalled some of his greatest crusades—New York City, Kansas City, Los Angeles—and, as it was told to me, he wanted to go to those three cities. So his people came to us and asked if we would consider inviting him. And we replied, "Of course." So this Crusade came out of the heart of Billy Graham.

The room quiets. The cameras cease their annoying whir. Mr. Graham, as he prefers to be called, eschewing the more formal "Reverend Graham," is introduced by Larry Ross, his communications officer. Suddenly, the eighty-seven-year-old legend is transformed. His color rising, he quips, "I've never seen so many cameras except for when I got back from a peace conference in Moscow because they wanted to criticize me."

Ben Armstrong, former executive vice president, National Religious Broadcasters; friend to Graham since the 1940s I moderated the press conference he held in New York upon his return from Moscow in 1982. He was embattled because of reports that he had gone into forbidden territory. Our government was not too happy about it; people from the right were not too happy. He had to face up to all of this in the press conference.

The evangelist notes his long relationship with the American Jewish community—and particularly his friendship with the late Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee—and says, "I look forward to meeting with some of them."

Then, shifting gears, Graham deals with the issue of his own mortality with both gravity and humor, in the first instance recalling that following brain surgery several years earlier "I thought I was dying and all my sins came in front of me" and that he would "welcome death"; and then, addressing the media once again, and particularly the still photographers and television crews, quipping amid much laughter, "I hope I meet all of you there [in heaven], and bring your camera."

Before taking questions, Graham says: "I've loved New York for years, and when I see those signs 'I ♥ NY,' I pray for New York. Thank you for your participation, and God bless you all."

Now Graham, who on entering the room appeared tired and frail, is animated and welcomes questions on a variety of subjects. Reminding the media that he ministered to a congregation for three years early in his career, he says, "I'd love to be a pastor again because I consider myself a pastor." As to whether he would accept an invitation to hold a crusade in London (which he would eventually decline), he leaves the door open, saying, "We're praying about that. This [the New York Crusade] will be our last in America, I'm sure, and we're praying about that." As to the greatest challenges confronting humankind, he opines that "the greatest problem we have is poverty." Asked what his favorite prayer is, he at first ripostes, "I don't have a favorite prayer" but then contradicts himself, saying, "'Lord Help Me' is my favorite prayer."

Arthur Bailey In a sense, we had been holding the "last" crusade for several years. We thought Jacksonville, in 2000, would be the last. Then there came a number of other crusades, including Fresno, Oklahoma City, Cincinnati, and Dallas. In 2004, Mr. Graham held crusades in Kansas City and Los Angeles. As his health seemed to improve, or at least stabilize, New York came more and more into the picture.

Helen Stam Fesmire, housemate of Ruth Bell Graham, Wheaton College; wife of Rev. Lloyd Fesmire, a friend and colleague of Billy Graham's My husband had Alzheimer's. Our daughter, who lives in Chicago, read an article to him that said that New York would probably be Billy's last crusade and "Bev" (George Beverly) Shea's last time to sing "How Great Thou Art." In some of the last words he said to us that made sense, my husband responded, "Who *says* it's their last?"

Maurice Rowlandson, former director of BGEA Office, London Two of us from England—Prebendary Richard Bews, formerly of All Souls Church, Langham Place, and I—were invited to attend the New York Crusade. Unbeknownst to us, Billy wanted to consult us on the possibility of coming back to London. I have to say it was our united advice that it was not the right time to come. First, he was to come in November, and there wasn't enough time to do the proper organization. Second, there wasn't any suitable venue available. But perhaps most important, the London BGEA office was closed in 1987

and since then no records had been maintained, so we had no database to work on.

Arthur Bailey That decision was made by Mr. Graham and his family. I know that he was very concerned about being away from Mrs. Graham. It was one thing to be in New York, where he could be home in a matter of a few hours, but another thing to be in London. My own thought is that this [the New York Crusade] turned out so well—he did so well—that anything you would do after this would not be as effective. This left him at a level of going out in an appropriate way. So why take the risk of doing anything else that could take the luster away from his success in New York?

Millie Dienert, prayer coordinator, Billy Graham crusades; wife of the late Fred Dienert, partner, Walter Bennett Agency It was very difficult for him to realize that this was the last time he would preach to a large audience. There was a pull in his heart as he realized it. Also, his was a very grateful heart for the many years the Lord had given him, for the way that God had blessed his ministry. It was a combination: a heart full of gratitude and a heart full of sadness at the same time.

Planning for the 2005 Crusade: Why Not Madison Square Garden?

Arthur Bailey When we first discussed coming back to New York, Madison Square Garden seemed to be a sentimental choice, but it was just too small a venue. Its capacity of twenty-four thousand could not accommodate the anticipated audience. The committee thought that our mission could best be accomplished by holding a two-day crusade in Central Park, as we had in 1991. In February 2005, when Mr. Graham realized we were getting a huge response from the local churches, he decided that we should look for an outdoor venue. We soon discovered that the city was in the process of rewriting rules for use of the park, and that we would have to hold the Crusade in a fenced-in area within the Sheep Meadow with attendance limited to fifty thousand ticket holders. We concluded that this would not be sufficient, and so we began to look at other possible venues. We found that Yankee Stadium was not available on the dates we wanted. We then met with officials of the New York Mets concerning Shea Stadium. Here the problem involved our need to use the

infield to accommodate an expected overflow. The Mets had a game scheduled for two days after the Crusade and their groundskeepers did not believe that they could get the field in shape in such a short period of time.

Robert J. Johannson Not only didn't we know a few weeks before the meeting where it would be located, we didn't even know if Dr. Graham would be there. In the late spring, I had traveled, along with two other pastors, to North Carolina to meet him. When we entered his house, I thought I was visiting a nursing home; I sat across from Dr. Graham and thought I was looking at death warmed over. Yet as we talked and prayed together, I felt he was going to do it. I thought: here I am, praying for this icon, but he is just a man—a man that God can use.

Seeking to Resolve the Issue of Venue: Cliffhangers and Faith

Arthur Bailey We had never been in a situation where sixty days out a venue had not been selected, yet we did not panic. I kept telling Mr. Graham that God was sharing Amos 6:8 with me: "I will deliver up the city with all that is therein." We went back to the Mets and agreed on a date one week earlier than originally planned. But then the police informed us that another event was scheduled for Flushing Meadow—the area adjacent to Shea Stadium—for that weekend and that they could not handle two major events on the same day. It seemed that God kept closing doors, leading us, I believe, to the place where He wanted us to have this meeting.

The Thirty-Day Miracle

Arthur Bailey When we decided to come back to New York, our intention was to make this a crusade to the world. I sent a technical crew out to Flushing Meadow, and as they walked past the Unisphere [a structure that had been erected for the 1964 World's Fair] they came upon a very large open area and someone asked, "Why don't you hold it here?" I went out to look at the site the next day, but I thought it was very rough. I told the crew that we could hold the Crusade there only if we could set up

chairs; I was told that, indeed, the area would accommodate seventy thousand chairs.

As we considered the possibility of Flushing Meadow, we were informed that 130 languages were represented in that area. We could not travel to every place in the world, but at Corona Park Mr. Graham would be speaking to the world. If you hold a meeting in Manhattan, you have a more media-based dynamic. If you hold a meeting in Queens, you have an international, people-oriented dynamic. So about thirty days out, we made the decision to go to Flushing Meadow. We called it “The Thirty Day Miracle.”

Wednesday, June 22

Arthur Bailey We took Billy out to Corona Park and rode around in a golf cart. At one point he spent about thirty minutes with a group of Korean pastors who were involved in the Crusade, and he posed for photos with them and thanked them for their help. He didn’t comment about the venue, which was still not ready—there were no chairs or tents set up. He never complained. He felt it was a wonderful venue because so many kinds of people, representing so many cultures and languages, would attend.

David Epstein Art Bailey had great vision. There was some concern but at the same time the conviction that this was the place to be. The Graham organization’s experience in dealing with these issues really paid off when you think of the attendance of 200,000 over three days. We could never have achieved that in Central Park because of the limits placed on attendance there.

Corona Park: Friday, June 24–Sunday, June 26, 2005

Friday

On most late Friday afternoons in summer, traffic flows away from Manhattan, the hub of finance and industry, the workplace and entertainment center that is a magnet to millions of residents of the tristate area—suburban New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. On this afternoon, however, the traffic pattern is quite

different: all manner of vehicles are converging on Manhattan and then heading across the bridges and the one tunnel that link the fabled borough with its neighbor to the east, Queens. Their destination at the end of this hot and sunny work-week is Corona Park, the site of what has been billed as likely the Reverend Billy Graham's last Crusade in the United States, and possibly in the world.

For many other crusade attendees who do not own cars, or choose not to drive, or do not wish to take the subway, the journey to Corona Park begins at Manhattan's Pennsylvania Station. It is rush hour, yet thousands—many clutching picnic baskets and guiding small children in strollers—wait patiently in line to purchase tickets for specially arranged Long Island Railroad trains that will whisk them to Shea Stadium in less than eighteen minutes. From the stadium, they will walk the half mile or so to Corona Park. Once there, they will run the gauntlet of signs ranging from interpreters' placards offering a multitude of language translation services to virulently anti-Graham messages ("Graham Leads to Hell 800-How-True"; more chillingly, "God Caused 9/11 800-How-True").

The park's vast fields are rapidly filling. Unlike typical seating arrangements for Graham's previous crusades, which were held in arenas or stadiums and where Graham could be seen by all attendees, albeit from afar, there is no central location here. Instead, there are vast areas throughout the park where one can spread a blanket, picnic-style, and view the proceedings on Diamond Vision. These seating arrangements are not a matter of choice for the Crusade's organizers but rather their ingenious solution to what might have been regarded by less intrepid servants of the Lord as a formidable obstacle to their plans: the unavailability of a suitable stadium or a more contained park space with defined lines of sight.

There is actually a much smaller area close to the platform where seats are arranged in rows, many of them reserved for the media, crusade organizers, officials, the many Graham grandchildren and great grandchildren, and a small number available on a first-come basis. Thus, obviously, the earlier one arrives the better one's chance to literally be in Graham's presence. Proximity does not appear to be an issue, however, as many attendees appear to be caught up in the spirit of this historic moment and are content to be participants from afar.

There is, however, one jarring note, though in the aftermath of September 11 understandable: security is tight, and if one leaves the seating area for a matter of minutes, say to use the porta-john facilities, one must go through security anew. On balance though, the mood of all concerned is positive and helpful.

Arthur Bailey This crusade was different from 1957. This one was more church-led, more pastoral, whereas the Madison Square Garden

crusade was more business-led, in terms of the top people who were involved. The 1957 crusade was more of a Manhattan project, while 2005 was more citywide. This time there was always the doubt that Billy could do it; there were concerns about his health. So my primary responsibility was to keep the community of faith believing that Billy would be there.

David Epstein If Mr. Graham had not been able to come, [his son] Franklin was ready to go, as were other evangelists on the Graham team.

At exactly 7:13 P.M. on this warm evening, the venerable Cliff Barrows, who has been with Graham for sixty years, greets the thousands who have assembled on the lawns of Corona Park, in the shadow of the Unisphere, with a sonorous "Good evening." Following the showing of a video, Dr. A. R. Bernard, pastor of the Christian Cultural Center, Brooklyn, New York, and chairman of the Crusade's executive committee, steps to the rostrum and, in welcoming remarks observing that "tonight we are part of history," conveys the certainty that this Crusade will become the capstone of Graham's sixty years of ministry to spiritually hungry human beings throughout the world, represented here in microcosm. Characterizing Graham as "one of God's generals," Bernard asks rhetorically, "What better place to do it than at the crossroads of the world, New York City?" Scanning the great crowd assembled before him in the heat of this late June evening, he exclaims, "God is alive and well in New York City!"

Graham understands this welcome religious phenomenon and so is confident in the message he will deliver over the next three days; witness his observation just prior to the Crusade's opening, during an interview with MSNBC's Joe Scarborough:

New York is a city of neighborhoods. Everybody here belongs to his own neighborhood, and so you don't have the differences as united as they normally would be in a smaller city. And I found out years ago that you have to speak to New Yorkers within their own setting of where they live; and their ethnic background, their language background, their cultural background. And the Gospel speaks to all of them. And I know that when the Gospel is proclaimed, that people will respond. And they do, *always*.

The Reverend Lane Adams, former associate evangelist, BGEA Billy could get up and quote the telephone book and give an invitation, and people would come to know Christ. Why did God do that, I don't know. And neither does Billy.

Saturday

It is 6:00 P.M. on day two of Billy Graham's last crusade. As the huge crowd gathered throughout Corona Park awaits this evening's opening event, the heat seems to increase, its intensity magnified by the throbbing beat of the musical selections, which obviously have been chosen to attract a younger crowd. In fact, this evening has been designated Youth Night. The city's mayor, Michael Bloomberg, a Republican, and Senator Charles Schumer, a Democrat—who will stay for the entire program—are introduced. In his greetings, the mayor says, "It is a tremendous privilege to welcome Billy Graham to New York City." The mayor goes on to note that among the participants in this Crusade are "visitors from New York and from outside the city who have respect for one another's beliefs and cultures . . . in all our diversity, we appreciate others' faiths. Our city was built on diversity."

Then Graham appears. To great applause, he says, "I was asked by someone in the media if this was our last Crusade. I said, 'It probably is *in New York*. But I also said, 'I never say *never*.'"

The Reverend Henry Holley, director of Asian Affairs, BGEA; accompanied Graham on visits to China and North Korea Some people are dead *before* they're dead. If Billy had the physical energy today, he'd love to get back out there in crusade stadiums. Billy Graham doesn't want to die until he's *dead*.

Graham goes on to note: "The United Nations met here, in Flushing Meadow, for the first five years of its existence. It was also here that the UN voted to establish the State of Israel. It was *right here!*"

Although the huge crowd has afforded Graham a standing ovation, there is a sense of anticipation as to whether Bill Clinton and his wife, Hillary (who is also New York's junior senator), will appear.

Earlier in the week, during the question-and-answer portion of his press conference at the Rainbow Room, Graham found himself in an area of controversy that has dogged him since his emergence as an international figure: when asked whether the debt of African nations should be forgiven, he declined to commit himself, saying, "I don't want to get into politics, but I'm in favor of anything we can do to get them out of poverty." Moments later, however, in discussing the coming Crusade, he appeared to be offering a political endorsement of sorts when he announced, "I've invited Bill Clinton. I hope he will come . . . I love them both." Explaining his reason for caution, he said, "If I get

up and talk about some political issue, it divides the audience, and I want to unite." Then, acknowledging that he had erred in the past, he confided "I went too far."

The Clintons have accepted Graham's invitation, and now, on this Saturday evening, they suddenly appear, unannounced, on the platform. They receive a standing ovation—greater even than the one afforded Graham—and are seated. The huge crowd's ovation is hardly lost on Billy Graham. He is a great evangelical leader but also a consummate showman: he knows that the tens of thousands of people gathered here want the Clintons *now* and so he interrupts his own remarks to introduce them, saying, "It's been a great privilege for me to know President Clinton and Senator Clinton. It's hard for me to call them president and senator because I've known them as Bill and Hillary for so long, and I admire both of them. President and Mrs. Clinton have been wonderful friends for many years. I've been very close to both of them. They're a great couple."

Then Graham concludes his introduction by saying, "Many years ago, President Clinton had just addressed an audience that I was going to speak to. I told him, before the audience, that when he left the presidency he should become an evangelist because he has all the gifts and he could leave his wife to run the country." The audience, loving this prospect, erupts in an enormous burst of cheers.

Bill Clinton responds: "I want to tell you all what an honor it is for me to be here as a person of faith. He [Billy Graham] is about the only person I have ever known who has never failed to live his faith. When I was a young man and he came to Little Rock, we had just had a terrible crisis over school integration and the schools were closed. Some powerful white people tried to get Billy Graham to speak to a segregated audience, and he said that he wouldn't come unless everyone could sit together."

A highlight of any Billy Graham Crusade is the evangelist's many humor-filled, often self-deprecating anecdotes. Corona Park is no exception. Among his favorites:

Many years ago, I was on an elevator in a Philadelphia hotel when a man boarded and said, "I hear Billy Graham is on here." Dr. John Sutherland Bonnell, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, pointed in my direction and said, "Yes, there he is." The man looked me up and down for about ten seconds and said, "My, what an anticlimax."

At the Garden in 1957, I would preach for almost an hour. But here in Corona Park, my sermons will be considerably shorter. I haven't preached or given a talk since last September. I'm reminded of the man who was supposed to preach for twenty minutes but after forty minutes he was still speaking. Then someone threw a gavel at him and hit a lady seated in the front row in the head, knocking her almost unconscious. She said, "Hit me again; I can still hear him."

Here's a story I told at the Garden in 1957, before most of you here were born. A man from Texas went to a race track. Being a Baptist, he couldn't place a bet. As he stood around the area where the horses were being readied to go out on the track, he saw a Catholic priest talking to a horse. When the race began, the horse broke out ahead and easily won. The man from Texas observed the priest three more times talking to horses and each time the horse won. So the man thought: this is not betting; it's a sure thing. When he saw the priest talking to a horse before the next race, he went out and wagered all the money he had in his pocket. The race began and the horse started out beautifully. But midway down the track it fell and dropped dead. The man went over to the priest and said, "I've watched you talk to four horses and each one won their race. But just now the horse you talked to died." The priest looked at the man and said, "You're not a Catholic, are you?" The man said, "How did you know that? I'm a Baptist." "Well," said the priest, "It's obvious that you don't know the difference between a blessing and the last rites."

It seems that a survivor of the great Johnstown, Pennsylvania, flood—a man who liked to incessantly describe his experiences—died and went to heaven. Once there, he was asked what he would like to do. The man replied, "I would like to give a lecture on the Johnstown flood." "That's fine," he was told, "but remember, Noah is in the audience."

Sunday

The Reverend Howard O. Jones, associate evangelist, retired, BGEA

Billy called and asked me to come to the Crusade. When my son and I walked in to greet him, he grabbed my hand and said, "Howard, you were with me from the beginning, you remember." I sat in the audience with other team members. When Billy asked the crowd to "Pray for England; that's where we are going next," some of us looked at each other as if to say, We wonder if this will happen.

As Billy Graham stands before the ninety thousand people who braved the oppressive heat and humidity of this late June afternoon to hear what is likely to be his final public message, he surely must be experiencing a sense of satisfaction—that if this is to be his evangelical last hurrah, it will be occurring on a very high note.

Billy's sermon this afternoon is not only considerably longer than those of Friday and Saturday, but more coherent and powerful, and he appears to be gaining strength as the afternoon wears on. The blazing sun, the soaring temperature, the very vastness of the setting notwithstanding, he rises to this unique occasion like a great athlete nearing the end of his career who scores that crucial extra point at the end of the game—Arnold Palmer hitting an eagle during his last

competitive PGA round, or Ted Williams of the Red Sox smacking a home run into Fenway Park's bleachers in his last time at bat.

Maurice Rowlandson I think he was a bit worried whether he had the strength to see the three days through. The first night he was extremely careful; the second he expanded a bit; and the third day he was letting it all go. He has always said that he would like to die at a crusade. But you have to face the fact that there came a time when his own team realized he hadn't the strength to do it anymore. New York was a good finish.

In the final accounting, more than 260,000 attend the three-day Crusade, of whom approximately eight thousand come forward at Billy's invitation, either to register decisions for Christ or to recommit their lives to His service.

Mere statistics hardly reveal the whole story, however. Throughout his ministry, Graham preached to huge crowds, with well over a million people having changed their lives in response. In the two years just prior to his New York Crusade, he broke single-day attendance records at Riverfront Stadium, in Cincinnati, and at Texas Stadium, in Irving; preached to an almost-capacity crowd at the Rose Bowl; and produced an enormous response in Kansas City. Thus huge crowds and bumper crops of inquirers were hardly unheard of, even in the final years of Billy's Crusade ministry.

The Corona Park event of June 2005 would prove to be different, however. From the media's reverence at the pre-Crusade press conference to the choir's last rendition of *Just as I Am*, the erstwhile North Carolina farm boy touched New York City to its core.

Gerald Beavan, professor and registrar, Northwestern Schools, Minneapolis, Minnesota; close associate of Graham's It had to end sometime. You can write scenarios for a dozen different endings and many of them would have been anywhere near as good or nice and wonderful as this. It was a great way to end.

Bill Brown, former president, World Wide Pictures; member, BGEA He wouldn't continue if he felt his effectiveness was not there. I think he realized his age—that people would come out of respect to hear him and to see him. But they would not see the same Billy Graham you saw in Yankee Stadium [in 1957]. I think he realized that something less

effective might mar that. In some ways, he is probably wise living off the respect and the reputation that people have for him rather than doing something that is beyond his strength and his health.

Michael Deaver, longtime associate of Ronald W. Reagan's; deputy chief of staff during the Reagan presidency I don't believe Billy has had his last crusade; I believe there is energy in him. I haven't seen him for a year, but as long as he can speak he will be doing it in some way or another. Maybe not standing up at some large stadium; maybe technology will bring him to us in different ways.

Henry Holley There is great value in the potential of the Internet, but I don't know if it will ever take the place of the simple proclamation to an audience. I hope not; there are certain dynamics that the Holy Spirit can work with in a large stadium where someone stands and proclaims the Gospel. You can use all the technology that God has revealed and use the Internet to have people come to a crusade.

When he left Corona Park, I'm sure he knew it was the end—although there was an invitation to come to England. Billy prayerfully considered that; but upon reflection he decided that he should not accept, so it must have been a very painful experience to know that Corona Park was the last. It would be a thrill if he could come to one of Franklin's festivals. It would also be good for Billy; he is energized when he is with people. I know that Franklin wants him to come anywhere he feels like he can come. I think it would be the best thing in the world for Billy; let's pray that will happen.