



County Corrections Gospel Mission

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September 23, 1987

**"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon
and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou
art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast
crowned him with glory and honour."
Psalms 8:3-5**

Dear

What a beautiful reminder above concerning the worth of man! Astronaut Jim Irwin, who had the privilege of walking on the moon, upon viewing the earth exclaimed, "It is not so great that man could step on the moon, but overwhelmingly wonderful that God would have humbled himself to step on the earth!" This, of course, is exactly what the Scriptures teach concerning the worth of man and his most special love relation with the Eternal God. David, the Psalmist, was in awe of God's special attention to this earth long before man ever knew the depth of this universe.

I witness almost daily a very callous media spewing crime reports, maligning families and from Hollywood see a consistent perverting of values once esteemed! In our technological and academic culture, there has grown large segments of broken lives, more instances of ghettoization and certainly the depersonalization of human life. Some have referred to this tragic slide away from David's perspective as "secularism". The idea of being created in God's image, or mankind being endowed with eternal value has consistently and systematically been eroded away. Secularism means that mankind is timebound, totally a child of his age, a creature of history, with no vision of eternal or personal worth. Secularism debases man and in the end leaves him without a shred of dignity or eternal worth. Secularism attempts to kill God and as a subtle result debases man.

Law Enforcement programing such as Hill Street Blues, Moonlighting and Miami Vice are far cries from the high moral values placed upon "police" in the Scriptures. Sin is glamorized. We find ourselves entertained by what we ought to condemn, and we slowly slide into being almost without conscience and zeal for that which is our calling. On the contrary, however, I have heard more

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Corrections officials lately who are defending and calling for a higher worth and value to be placed on their residents. Wardens and Superintendents are appealing for the worth of their incarcerated populations and are mirroring a very special heart burden for the worth of the individual. Against the common rhetoric of the media, Corrections officials have their hands on the brokenness of man and many as yourself perhaps are crying for the urgent response of caring people to heed the dying pulse of your special residents who hopelessly are drowning in a secular world!

The good news is that many wonderful people who have the same view as that of the Psalmist David are slowly but more often beginning to respond to the heartaches and overwhelming needs reflected by the lives within juvenile and adult facilities. The Corrections leader who values life as created for God's glory and honor will not be content until somehow by God's grace there is manifested a yet greater impact of God's people in the broken people-groups of our institutions and cities.

Just this week, I witnessed a State Corrections Commissioner and his Deputy Commissioner appealing with open arms for the active participation and response of God's people. I was impressed by these high officials who so humbly and courageously echoed the need for the interventions of God.

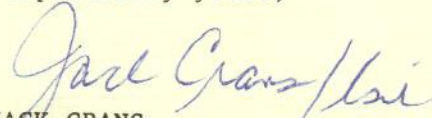
In closing, I hear a lot of talk about professionalism in Corrections and certainly witness many proofs of it. The greatest proof and criteria of a professional must always be the understanding that man and his dilemmas can only be ultimately dealt with in the light and application of the recognition of a personal God. As David said so clearly, "God is mindful of man and has visited him for the purpose and opportunity of all to know glory and honor." What a worthy goal for Corrections: "That all incarcerated persons could know the honor and glory of their lives in the understanding of a personal God who made them in His image."

It is my personal conclusion, proven by our own secular media, that when you want to get rid of God and His truths, you will undoubtedly get rid of man and his value!

Thanks for pondering with me.

I remain,

Respectfully yours,


JACK CRANS
Director

JC/lisi
Enclosure

P.S. I have enclosed "Our Daily Bread" for your devotional reading.