County Corrections Gospel Mission

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Dear Warden:

> "With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?... He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." - Micah 6:6,7

Since the beginning of man's record of sin, God has always required the "shedding of blood for the forgiveness of sins". Biblical study reveals that **sin separates all men from the true and living God Who is Holy.** Entrance into His presence comes always through His judicial requirement of a payment for sin. The substitutionary death of a lamb, calf or bird on behalf of the sinner signified two critical factors: (1) Sin requires a penalty; and (2) God's holiness is satisfied through the proper sacrifice when the offerer identifies his sin and admits his need of forgiveness.

Although the above seems to some rather odd, it remains the truth nevertheless. The Old Testament up through the major portion of each Gospel (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) covers the period primarily consisting of "the Law". **From the first sin of Adam and Eve until the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ mankind was required to offer a blood sacrifice for their sins.** The primary symbol was this: God is holy, Man sins; hence, the **innocent** lamb (bird, calf) must suffer the ultimate penalty for the satisfying of God's holiness and the payment for sin. "And he (the sinner) shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering, and it (the substitutionary animal) shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him." (Leviticus 1:4) Atonement implies then that the sacrifice of the law covered the offerer's sin and secured the divine forgiveness.

The vitally important factor of the Biblical revelation is this: "What the law could not do, Christ did!" He, Jesus Christ, offered Himself as the last sacrifice for sin. John 3:16 says: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "In Whom we have redemption through His blood,

the forgiveness of sins..." (Ephesians 1:7) "And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him (Christ) to reconcile all things unto Himself - by Him (Christ), I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Colossians 1:20 "Unto Him that loveth us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood...Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also who pierced Him...I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen, and have the keys of hades and of death." (Revelation 1:5,7,18)

What have these things to do with Corrections? Everything! **What wonderful news it is that the Holy God would make a way for ANY sinner to enter His presence!** How? John the Baptizer said when he saw Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)

Man knows that the law condemns! Guilt, brokenness and hopelessness accompany most who walk in this life. May there be an intimate and vital knowledge of these wonderful truths as we attempt to minister hope and healing in our common field of concern: Criminal Justice.

In closing, please know that you are always welcome to question my communications. I respect you highly and know that you approach your tasks from some point of view which ultimately either incorporates or touches these themes.

Respectfully,

Jack Crans
Director

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Enclosure