County Corrections Gospel Mission

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August 27, 1991

Dear Warden:

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind..." -Paul the Apostle

The day was very special to millions. Colonel James Irwin, Apollo 15 Astronaut, had just completed a journey to the surface of the moon. From July 26 to August 7, 1971 he had logged 295 hours, 11 minutes in space, of which 46 minutes were spent outside the spacecraft. During the mission, thousands of people on earth were praying for the Apollo 15 astronauts. "I was aware of that on the moon," Jim remembered. "The hours that I spent on the moon were the most thrilling of my life. Not because I was there, but because I could feel the presence of God. There were times when I was faced with new challenges, and help from God was immediate."

As Jim explained it, "I returned determined to share with others that profound experience with God on the moon, and to lift man to his highest flight through life." Soon after the Apollo 15 mission, Jim began receiving invitations to share his testimony, ranging from tiny groups at mission churches to massive crowds at the Astrodome. He often showed crowds the Apollo 15 medallion which he and his fellow astronauts wore, reading to them the inscription: "Man's flight through life is sustained by the power of his knowledge." By simply changing a lower-case "h" to an upper case "H", Jim modified the declaration to emphasize his personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ: "Man's flight through life is sustained by the power of His knowledge."

Although his talks were individually prepared to meet the particular needs and interests of his audience, Jim's universal emphasis was to inspire and motivate individuals to achieve their highest personal, social and spiritual potential.

On Thursday, April 18, 1991, a small gathering of varied professionals sat to eat with this exceptional man. A prison warden, a juvenile detention administrator, a legislator and varied educational leaders sat spellbound as Mr. Irwin shared his remarkable view of the world as shaped by his journey to the moon. Make no mistake about it: he spoke much of exploration...the moon,

Noah's ark, the Ark of the Covenant, etc. We were listening intently. He often spoke of his love for Christ and his wonder at the love of God revealed at the cross. You might say that a man came all the way from the moon to speak of his love for his Savior.

What has all this to do with a Warden's letter? Well, the luncheon was held in place of an earlier scheduled event. My desire was to present this gifted and gracious man to troubled boys in a large juvenile detention facility. After realizing Mr. Irwin's convictions regarding God, he was quickly rejected as an assembly speaker. Hence, eight varied professionals had the privilege of Mr. Irwin's company and testimony for Christ...hundred of needy boys did not!

Jim Irwin died just days ago. I believe he has already surpassed the experience of touching the moon: he has met his Savior, Jesus Christ!

It's too bad, isn't it, that hurting boys would miss such an opportunity? Oh, well, what's CORRECTIONS anyway?

Thanks for listening!

Jack Crans
A Friend

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