THE CONTENDER

February 1986

". . . it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith . . . " – Jude 3

Published for the faithful supporters of County Corrections Gospel Mission

In Honor and Memory of Our Most Loved Friend:

Mrs. Lynne Schaap

"Everywhere she went and to all she touched, she gave a piece of herself . . . until all that was left was the glory and praise of her Savior . . . whom she knew had spent everything for her."

Called home to glory at age 39, we extend our love, support and labor to her dearest Bob and children, Brandon (14), Shannon (13) and David (2). She was a faithful friend for 12 years!

A Message From The Director

Our February and March Newsletters will concern themselves with the issue of "PARACHURCH" organizations. We hope you will wrestle together with us in this vital theme.

" . . . but this ONE THING I do, . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

-- Phil. 3:13, 14

Here, as in other Scriptures, we hear proclaimed the singlemindedness marking the quality of spiritual maturity. This wholeheartedness and submission to God's perfect will, clearly evidence themselves in the visible witness of a mature believer.

Job, in chapter one and verse one, was described in this same submissiveness as one: "perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and shunned evil." It is this wholeheartedness and death to self-will which mark maturity and begins visible witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

I want to submit to you the probable factors which led to the LORD's testimony of Job, which said: "There is none like him in the earth." (Job 1:8) It is of tremendous importance that we see and understand **the evidence of Job's public witness** and reflect carefully upon his testimony to the exercise of God's will in his life. How graphically Job displays for us the meaning of Jesus' words: ". . . If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23)

In Job 29:3, he recalls how "by His light, I walked through darkness." Again, I must repeat the terrible absence of God's people in the marketplace of men. Abraham pleaded for Sodom's deliverance from judgment, but the absence of the righteous eventually proved eternally fatal. Jesus said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your **good works**, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven". (Matthew 5:16) Peter reminds us that "ye should show forth the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light . . . having your behavior honest among the Gentiles . . . that they by your **good works**, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." (I Peter 2:9, 12) And finally, Paul exhorts Titus of God's purifying unto himself a people of his own, zealous of **good works**." (Titus 2:14)

A great tension exists today in fundamental Bible fellowships concerning the issue of parachurch organizations. One reason I believe a growing trend in this direction is occurring, is due to the reality of an isolationist doctrine which dangerously works like a leaven in those most committed to God's Word. I praise God for those organizations which have stood in the gap: International Union of Gospel Missions, Keswick Colony for Alcoholics, Youth for Christ and others who effectively meet people in the marketplace with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, I am concerned that the criticism and fear of parachurch efforts has only caused greater retreat of the local church and individual believers from personal responsibility in the marketplace of lost men.

What we need today are more Job's who declare by life, not organization, the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Notice with me the impact of this one life!

He was so committed to the will and purpose of God that youth hid themselves at his presence. (29:8) In other

words, behaviors changed and took notice of his obvious consecration. I wonder if this generation of youth knows of such a testimony in their lives?

When he spoke, people listened and longed for his words. (29:11, 22, 23) When Job was present, "eyes gave witness" to his obedient life. (29:11) Whether by ear or eye, those in darkness experienced the testimony of God's man.

He delivered the crying poor and had place in his work for the fatherless and helpless. (29:12) He caused widows to rejoice and rescued the perishing. (29:13) Instead of noticing his clothing, you would only remember his garment of righteousness and justice. (29:14) He was eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, father to the poor and a searcher out of truth. (29:15, 16) He would not tolerate oppressors but rather broke their jaws and delivered the victim. (29:17) He was an encourager and comforter, a leader and savior. (29:25) Job was a walking, talking evidence of the God he knew. He incorporated in his life the entire responsibility of what we now have so critically entitled, "Parachurch".

At CCGM we praise God for the many organizations that stand in the gap and we continue to benefit by their existence. Keswick, International Union of Gospel Missions to name two, have helped us all. But, the more exciting challenge rests upon the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why was Job so hated by the devil? He was making a visible, tangible and powerful impact in a world of darkness.

I am excited about the local church. I believe it is God's effective instrument in world evangelism **and** ministry to the broken lives of a Christless society.

Rather than stand in judgment of the "parachurch" organizations, wouldn't we be more in line with obedience if we recognized the mandates so clearly expressed in Job's life?

I recently read a short book by Charles Colson entitled, "The Role of the Church in Society". He best summarizes my expressions in this: "Whenever a repressive regime has tried to destroy the Church, it has tried to prevent Christians from reaching out to people. Go to Communist China today, go to the Soviet Union and you'll find churches. But in 1929, when the Soviet government wanted to wipe out the church, what did they do? They passed a law, not to prevent the church from meeting on Sunday morning, but to make it a crime to conduct church school, to help the poor, to go into neighborhoods and reach out to people. Believers had to stay within their church on Sunday morning and what the Soviet Communists did by decree in 1929, we are allowing to be done to us today by default."

I have desired to cause us to wrestle with the tangible evidence of our faith. Rather than be critical of the dear beloved penetrating our world for Christ, let's seek God for wisdom in being more present in the hungry, perishing world of lost men ourselves.

– Jack Crans

County Corrections Gospel Mission

A Mission to encourage and support the **effectiv** tangible witness of the local church.

A Field of lost lives who exist within easy access of our very pulpits.

A Burden to herald God's Word within the desperate and deserving field of Corrections and high crime neighborhoods.

"The **unoccupied fields** of the world must first have their Calvary before they can have their Pentecost. We have to be willing to present ourselves as the ambassadors of Christ. Jim Elliott, martyr to the Auca Indians, lay his life down before revival broke forth.

"Our willingness to sacrifice for an enterprise is always in proportion to our faith in that enterprise. Faith has the genius of transforming the barely possible into actuality. **Once men are dominated by the conviction that a thing must be done, they will stop at nothing until it is accomplished.**"

-- Zwemer

Something to Think About: "Darkness", defined, is "the absence of light!" No matter how you say it, either expression to describe our world ought to break our heart an create responsible obedience and partici pation.

Prayer Concerns

That Wardens might know His love.

That God will give wisdom regarding our vehicles.

That God will protect our family unit.

That souls be won and local churches grow.

That time will allow us to develop needed literature to Wardens, Corrections Officers, Police, etc.

Our participation in Word of Life's summer programs of: Basketball Camp and Correction's Week.

February's Overview

Growing rapport with Coatesville Police Department through meaningful visits.

Preached in Drexel Hill, Lansdale, North Philadelphia, Bridgeport, Phoenixville, Aldan, Yeadon and Rockville, Maryland churches.

Addressed: Practical Bible Training School in Binghamton, New York
Biblical School of Theology in Hatfield, Pennsylvania
Businessman's Fellowship Breakfast at Lancaster Bible College
City Gate in Coatesville
Youth Retreat in Rockville, Maryland

Conducted weekly Bible studies in Chester County Prison – Maximum Security Unit and Women's Division

Attended an Inner-City Dinner in Washington, D.C. on evening prior to National Prayer Breakfast.

Continued growing in-home ministry with youth and gathered basketball team each Monday evening at local high school gym. These games always end with refreshment and the teaching of God's Word.

Gathered fellowship meeting of Chaplains representing York, Lancaster and Blair counties.

Wrote weekly to Wardens in Pennsylvania.

Growing rapport with SESTU (South East Secure Treatment Unit) at Embreeville.

Warden Highlight

Below are some excerpts taken from my personally hand-written letters to Wardens:

"I've buried too many young drug addicts, seen the rise of substance and sexual abuse and been convinced of a concerted effort to aggressively combat 'the old ways' once understood by those who feared God and honored the Scriptures . . ."

"I weep and long for the day when God's people are concerned as much for America's plight as they are for overseas outreach. You (Warden) daily sit amongst a difficult set of lives and tasks. Your experience and concern would most probably stagger the average church member."

"The moral and spiritual fabric of America is spilling into one institution or another, and I am at least blessed to be involved in some small way towards heralding hope and answers amidst the rising tides of this narcissistic age."

"I realize that sometimes I am not fully understood in my interest of Wardens. First, I find them to be leaders in authority and this requires prayer of my life. Second, I find Wardens to be in touch with failing Justice systems and this creates atmosphere and reason for my study of the Scripture pertaining to this theme. Third, Wardens see daily, the broken results of sin and lawbreaking . . . this causes me to more fully understand grace. Finally, Wardens witness recidivism and sometimes human ruin so as to cause my heart to cry to the Bible-believing church, the need for compassion and obedience."

Psalm 119:165 -- "Great peace have they who love thy law, and nothing shall offend them."

Board Member Spotlight

Each month, for the next couple of months, you will be introduced to one of our Board members. The following is from Mark Blair.

Dear Friends;

I was first introduced to Jack Crans in 1978 when my wife, Nancy, and I first attended Hephzibah Baptist Church. At that time, Jack was pastor and an instrument to my coming to know Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior that same year. Nancy and I are so thankful we have found ourselves blessed so many times over by His precious love.

Coming from a solid middle class background, I always felt myself somewhat secure in my path of life. Religion had never really entered my life except for a surface like introduction by my parents. I would say the most influential event that made me really begin my search for salvation was the seven month illness and eventual death of my father-in-law, George Marion. In Mr. Marion I found a man solid in his faith. Through all his suffering from terminal cancer, I never once heard this man scorn the Lord; he only praised the Lord for his salvation. I wanted that same peace, and praise the Lord I found it.

In the last eight years God has given Nancy and I the gift of two wonderful children, Aaron (5 years old) and Rachel (4 years old), a new and growing florist shop and nursery and the continuation and strengthening of a 14 year marriage. Along with this God has tested me with critical illness and taught me to grow stronger in my Christian walk. Though I do slip and fall in so many ways, I can only thank Him for His wonderful grace and forgiveness. We also continue our strong fellowship at Hephzibah Baptist Church, and we praise God for what He is accomplishing in and through that church.

I count it a privilege to serve as a Board member in this vital ministry. In a short time we have seen the Lord working through Jack and others to touch lives both in and out of the correctional system, and most importantly, through the furtherance of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, we see changed lives!

I, along with all of you, look forward to such a time that our Lord will come again for His own. Until then, I ask you to continue in your prayers for direction, guidance and, of course, His perfect will for CCGM!

A Letter From Linda Ingham

The month of February has seen the writing of many, many letters, including those that (1) encourage people in the field of Corrections (2) contact people concerning this ministry (3) follow up on people we haven't heard from (4) confirm appointments (5) thank people for the opportunity of sharing our ministry; and (6) encourage and comfort hurting people. In the beginning of each

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A Letter From Linda – *Continued from page 3*

month we send a letter to all the wardens of the county jails and the state correctional institutes (totalling 80) to encourage them in their work and to let them know how much we care about them as individuals and their position. On Fridays, Jack sends a personally hand-written letter to two wardens to once again let them know of our concern for them.

Many people are always asking me about my support level, so I thought I would let you know how the Lord has worked since last April. I only had two months to raise support, and as I look back I see God's hand at work. When I came to CCGM (the beginning of June), enough was raised for my initial months. I now have 80% of my support since I have had some individuals raise their support, some new individual supporters and the addition of three churches as supporters. Even though I am below my needed support, I praise my Lord that He has met every single need, and I am trusting Him for all my future needs. I cannot thank people enough for their faithful financial giving to me!

In addition to your prayers for my work in the office and at prison, I would appreciate your prayers as the Lord has been opening more doors for me to speak for the ministry. I have tremendously enjoyed the times I have represented CCGM, and am looking forward to more times of fellowship with interested people.

As you read earlier, we at CCGM have experienced the loss of a dear friend, Lynne Schaap. My times with Lynne were always one of joy and laughter so I'll really miss her, but it's such a comfort to know that she's the happiest she's ever been now with her Lord and Savior. The loss of Lynne has stirred within me a desire to know my Lord better because my friend is there with Him, and also to work harder to see people know the hope of seeing Jesus Christ one day in Heaven.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you . . ."

-- I Peter 1:3, 4

What a precious promise for us – what a fulfilled promise for Lynne!

Contender is a monthly publication of County Corrections Gospel Mission, P.O. Box 1136, Coatesville, Pennsylvania 19320. County Corrections Gospel Mission is a non-profit organization. All contributions are tax deductible. Director, Jack Crans; Secretary, Linda Ingham; Board of Advisors, Mr. Mark Blair, Dr. Howard Blandau, Dr. Joseph F. Eckman, Dr. Herschel Elliott, Mr. Joseph R. Pitts