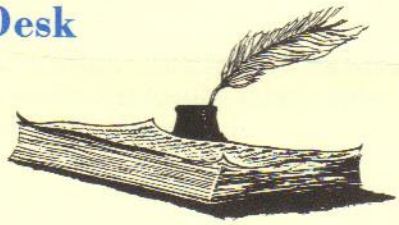
THE CONTENDER

February 1987

". . . 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

From The Director's Desk



Dear Beloved in Christ:

"O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for His mercy endureth forever. LET THE REDEEMED OF THE LORD SAY SO, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." –Ps. 107:1,2

I want to personally express my sincere and humbled appreciation for your faithful love, encouragement and intercessions. The Lord has daily revealed His care toward us through you.

Our Newsletter this month is only the tip of an iceberg. How can I convince you of God's working and leading? John said so well, ". . . there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen." John 21:25

Please read carefully – everything written is important and everything shared needs your faithful prayers and response. I wish I could personally tell you about these written items of praise and concern. We need your input, your counsel and your prayers!

All of us at CCGM are vitally aware of your concern and love for us. Pray that you might be used of God to encourage others to participate with us in these challenging days of harvest.

Now beloved, read, meditate and pray!

In His hands,

Jack Crans

Home Missions: A Brief Biblical Defense

1. **Home Missions calls us to faithfulness WHERE we are . . .** So often we ride on the coattails of another harvest field when ours almost remains fallow. This is one reason Paul warned of boasting in another man's labors. We could be deceived into thinking we are reaching the lost when, in fact, our neighbor perishes. Where's our fruit?

   II Cor. 10:14 & 15 "For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure . . . not boasting of things beyond our measure . . ."

   "Our measure," refers to our stewardship, our commission, or our region of responsibility.

   Principle: In our attempts to gain a large harvest, it would be wise to break up our own fallow ground lest we watch another build fuller barns while ours crumble from emptiness.

2. **Home Missions calls us to faithfulness TO THE LOST where we are . . .** Why fish somewhere else if the net still draws a catch? Home Missions admits that neighboring souls are yet needing saved.

   II Cor. 10:14 ". . . we are come as far as to you also in preaching the Gospel of Christ."

   Principle: Any soul without Christ is eternally lost; therefore, we daily are most accountable for the lives we touch and less for the perishing soul we will never see.

3. **Home Missions faithfully carried on will always give rise to AN EXTENDED OUTREACH to the regions beyond.**

   II Cor. 10:15 & 16 ". . . but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach to the regions beyond you . . . "

   Principle: The burden enlarged by Home Missions opportunities will greater enlarge the desire and resources for extending one's outreach. One cannot experience the hunger of one soul without beginning to see the famine of millions. (Proverbs 29:18)

4. **Home Missions PRESERVES one's nation.** God has set a pattern from which we can faithfully access that He judges nations for sinfulness. One needs not return to the warnings of ancient civilizations to know this truth. As Scripture so clearly pronounces: God looks for someone to stand in the gap – someone to cry on behalf of the wickedness and backslidings. But when there's no one . . . God says:

Leviticus 26:28 "Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins."

Proverbs 14:34 "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

Principle: Home Missions clearly is an indication that someone will still stand in the gap to cry for the lostness of a nation of people, who without repentance, shall surely perish.

5. **Home Missions testifies of our attention to THE WORD OF GOD.**

II Chron. 34:19, 21 ". . . when the King HEARD the words of the law, he rent his clothes . . . For great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, because our fathers **have not kept the Word of the LORD**, to do after all that is written in this book."

Principle: Home Missions is **our urgent and unselfish response** to the sentence of judgment and condemnation already issued against a people without a Savior. To illustrate, one could honestly say that the flood of God's wrath can visibly be evidenced in the marketplace of ungodly men. The Church is an operation committed to the rescue!

6. **Home Missions is a tangible evidence of A SAVIOR who has NOT FINISHED the operation of His availing grace and redemption.**

Romans 10:15 ". . . how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things!"

Ezekiel 2:4,5 ". . . I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, 'Thus saith the Lord GOD'. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear (resist) (for they are a rebellious house), yet shall they know that there has been a prophet among them."

Principle: The rescue of lost men is mandatory and never once has been considered optional by an obedient church. Every marketplace of dying men deserves the cry of a Rescuer.

7. **Home Missions COUNTERS the CORRUPTING INFLUENCES of this world and its prince. (Eph. 2:2)**

Ezekiel 22:2 "Now, thou son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge the bloody (violent) city? Yea, thou shalt show her all her abominations."

Principle: Home missions raises a standard of righteousness and justice that testifies against the corruptness of an evil world.

8. **Home Missions COUNTERS THE CORRUPTING LEADERSHIP of the world and its prince.**

Ezekiel 22:23-28 ". . . her prophets in the midst thereof . . . have devoured souls . . . her priests have violated my law . . . they have put no difference between the holy and the profane . . . her princes in the midst are like wolves ravening the prey . . ."

Principle: Home missions raises a standard for leadership which exposes and refines those who would rule and lead the people.

"All that evil needs to thrive is for good men to do nothing!"

9. **Home Missions COUNTERS THE CORRUPTED CITIZENS of this world and its prince.**

Ezekiel 22:29 "The people of the land have used oppression and exercised robbery and vexed the poor and needy; yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully."

Principle: Men are critically in need of a righteous standard exercised under obedient and Godly leadership. Home missions ought to inherently possess both of these qualities.

10. **Home Missions strategies and agendas are evidence that both PASTORS and PEOPLE have HEEDED BIBLICAL PRIORITIES.**

THE SHEPHERD: Paul's pastoral letters to Pastor Timothy and Pastor Titus are filled with strong exhortations for modeling spiritual leadership. As goes the Teacher (shepherd), so goes his pupil (flock).

I Timothy 4:16 "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

Titus 2:14 "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Principle: Missionary endeavor is always an outgrowth of a Pastor's training in the Scriptures. Those Pastors most broken are likewise those Pastors best taught.

THE SHEEP: Peter's address to the scattered Church was an exhortation to the people of the Church.

I Peter 2:9-15, II Peter 3:1 "But ye are a chosen generation . . . a peculiar people . . . I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims . . . Have your (life-styles) honest among the heathen: that . . . they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation . . . for so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye put to silence the ignorance of foolish men . . . what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

Principle: Those people best taught in the Scriptures will be broken for their own lost generation! Home Missions is reflected in well-taught Church fellowships. A burdened and tender flock reflect a burdened and tender shepherd.

February Report

"And when they were come together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the heathen . . ." – Acts 14:27

We would have to talk in person to rehearse all that fills my mind and heart. So many doors are open that we can **rejoice, yet weep** in our inabilities to meet the challenges. First, the average life we touch has such **extreme needs** – men and women, boys and girls – hopeless without Christ!

We have been busy daily with Coatesville's needs, Chester County Prison, SESTU (Southeast Secure Treatment Unit), State Correctional Institute prisoners, Wardens, Superintendents, discipleship facilities, the Bowery Mission, church support, preaching, basketball games, Bible studies, drug and alcohol abusers, police, Christian teens and benevolence to the afflicted. An in-prison seminar was conducted at Clarion County Prison.

Although church support and hearing of this burden has far to go, we are glad to report increasing interest in the Bible-believing community!

The greatest praise of this month is the salvation of a county prison warden!

Without exaggeration, one day's burden and opportunities confronts us way beyond **our** resources and strength!

All things are possible to God,
To Christ the power of God in man,
To me when I am all renewed,
In Christ am fully formed again,
And from the reign of sin set free,
All things are possible to me.
– Hudson Taylor

From The Prisoner Mailbag

Dear Jack:

This place is surely the devil's playground. Drugs, wine and everything you can think of and some things you can never think of . . . But I feel real good because God took my desire for all of that stuff away. And if He can do that for me, He can do that for anyone. I really believe that. So, while I am here, I am going to do just what the Bible study book you gave me said, I'm going to continue to "Grow in Christ".

Here's something I read in the Bible. It says how I feel:

"I will praise the LORD no matter what happens. I will constantly speak of His glories and grace. I will boast of all His kindness to me. Let all who are discouraged take heart. Let us praise the LORD together, and exalt His name. For I cried unto Him and He answered me. He freed me from all of my fears."

God bless you, C.N.

Discipleship Facility Update

As you read this update, please know that we pray for discernment and God's perfect will!

March will be the month in which we make a final decision regarding an 11-acre retreat center for Biblical discipleship of broken lives. Our desire is to serve the local church in the meeting of this long-needed facility. The cost is $150,000 and our goal calls for 30% down and a six-year payoff. Please know that I have carried this burden for years, and now that its hour has come, we need your most faithful prayers. (As of this date we have $225 towards this financial goal.) The facility under consideration is the Old Mill Bible Conference grounds now owned by the Philadelphia College of Bible.

Pray, pray, pray!!! We know that God will supply **only** as we obey His will!

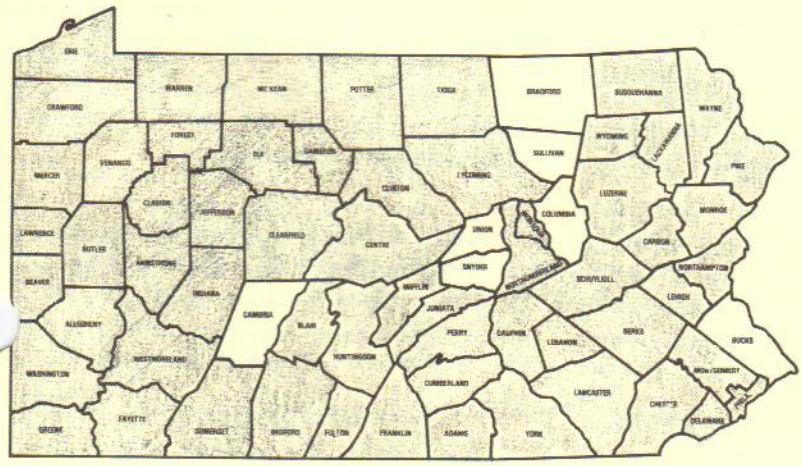
You're Invited . . . June 15th To See "America, You're Too Young To Die"

County Corrections Gospel Mission has a burden to see the Gospel impact Pennsylvania. Realizing the busy agendas of the local church, we have chosen **Monday, June 15** to host Life Action Ministries of Buchanan, Michigan to present their multi-media presentation of "America, You're Too Young to Die". This multi-media program is a dramatic account of how America was founded by men influenced by Biblical principles. It chronicles the resulting blessing which our nation experienced as the United States rose in a relatively few years from infancy to world leadership. Your gratitude for our heritage, our freedoms and "the American Way" will be greatly increased.

We need volunteers to assist us in the outreach of this program, including everything from prayer to follow-up. If you are interested in helping in any way, call Linda at 383-9378.

Warden's Corner

This month 7 Wardens from the counties of Armstrong, Cameron, Clarion, Elk, Forest, Jefferson and Venango, received Bibles, and we thank the Lord for their positive reception of them.



Life Action Singers.

February 1987 Report

P.O. Box 1136 • Coatesville, PA 19320

County Corrections Gospel Mission

A Letter From Linda

Work in the office has been busy, especially in light of trying to learn the word processor and keep up with my daily work. Joshua Crans is always anxious to help me learn the word processor as he is also learning to operate one in his Kindergarten class. He is such a ray of sunshine in the office!

The Tuesday morning Bible study at prison has been such a blessing to me. A friend of ours at CCGM, Paula Harris, also goes with me so please pray for her, too. Each week I trust the Holy Spirit to give me a lesson which would teach and challenge the girls. He is faithful each week as I yield myself to Him in bringing a lesson which He can work through. The lessons have consisted of such topics as salvation, assurance of their salvation, the conflict of the old and new nature, the indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit, truth, peace, Bible characters of whom we can draw out principles of victory in our own personal lives and others. Needless to say and as usual, I have learned more than they in my preparation! We have also seen growth in the girls, especially three who have been coming consistently since last fall.

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." – John 8:31,32

We faithfully encourage the girls to 'continue in the Word' even if it means reading a passage 5, 10 or 20 times, as it is there they will come to a knowledge of the truth (the reality lying at the base of an appearance) and will thereafter be free (from ignorance and the bondage of sin). It's so exciting to see them learn the truths of the Bible which I **know** changes lives! Please continue to pray for their spiritual and emotional growth and for Paula and I as we yield ourselves to the Spirit for His working!

Do know how much we appreciate those of you who are such prayer warriors and financial contributors. God continues to bless us as we remain obedient to His Word!

From The Bookshelf

Bringing in the Sheaves by George Grant (American Vision Press, P.O. Box 720515, Atlanta, Georgia 30328) provides detailed instruction and Biblical instruction for Christians who have a genuine concern for the poor and needy.

Mission Candidates: The Stu Tripler Family

We are more and more excited wi the eventual addition of Stu and Nancy to our labors. I am convinced that they are ready for the tasks laying wait before them. Already they have impressed me with their burden, servant spirit and wisdom in Christ.

Lives and opportunities await their total support and placement in full-time service. Presently, commitments totaling $330 a month have been pledged. Please realize that God is raising up a new missionary team for an alarming national crisis! We cannot expand or meet present opportunities without them! Perhaps this is the hour you will respond to this work!

Tear off and return only as God leads.

Dear Jack:

☐ **I/we have prayed and sense definite leading to support Stu and Nancy Tripler. Here is my/our pledge to encourage them in their ministry at CCGM.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Amount per month: _____