

February 23, 1989

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Dear ^F2^:

Ecclesiastes 1:17,18 "I gave my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly; I perceived also that this is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much sorrow of heart; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth mental anguish."

- Spoken by King Solomon

Lamentations 3:55-57 "Out of the lowest part of the prison, I called upon thy name, O LORD. Thou hast heard my voice; hide not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry. **Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee;** Thou saidst, Fear not."

- Spoken by Jeremiah the Prophet

In just less than one year, the director of a large city's juvenile detention center resigned. A city newspaper reported that "Throughout his brief tenure at the center, he has come to believe more strongly than ever that adults must take more responsibility for children; responsibility for nurturing them, not locking them up...During his tenure at the Center, he supervised an experimental, intensive-treatment program for fifty children. The program began with extensive assessments of the children's psychological needs. He said that all but one were in need of psychiatric help. 'Why? What happened to put them at risk?' he asked. 'Life is different for children. Teenagers are faced with so many options today they weren't faced with before. They learn things from television that my generation never knew until they were adults. Secrets - there are no more secrets any more. A kid can come in at 3 o'clock in the afternoon and turn on the television and learn everything. A change of attitude is needed now!' he said."

I applaud this administrator's heart. I'm saddened that he stepped down, but encouraged at his burden...his tenderness and his questions. Constantly, I'm encouraged to find more of this type of leader who has not grown comfortable but always sensitive, always burdened, and always taking great pains to reflect upon his experience.

Would you take time to notice and reflect upon the heart cries of Solomon and Jeremiah? Can you identify with their feelings?

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Please know that we so much want to represent God's clear concerns on your behalf. I know to only a small extent the issues and pressing agendas you face daily. Oh, that God will continue to stir your hearts with deep questions and the need for deeper prayers! Remember, He draws near when we call upon Him.

I trust these closing verses by Mrs. Carl P. Holm will encourage you:

God laid upon my back a grievous load,
A heavy cross to bear along the road.
I staggered on until one day
An angry lion leaped across my way.
I prayed to God, and swift at His command
The cross became a weapon in my hand.
I slew my raging enemy and then...
It leaped upon my back, a cross again.

I faltered many a league until at length,
Groaning, I fell and found no other strength.
I cried out: I'm so weak and lame!
And swift the cross a winged staff became.
It swept me on till I retrieved my loss...
Then leaped back upon my back, again a cross.

I reached a desert and in its burning track
I still preserved the cross upon my back.
The sun was there and in its burning heat
I sank me down and thought my day was done,
But God's eternal grace works many a sweet surprise:
The cross became a tree before my eyes.
I slept, awoke and had the strength of ten,
But felt the cross upon my back again.

And thus through all my days from that to this,
The cross, my burden, has become my bliss.
Nor shall I ever lay my burden down,
For God shall one day make my cross a crown.

With prayers and
thanksgivings for you,

Jack Crans
Director

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