February 23, 1990

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"Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

Dear ^F2^:

You continue to be very heavy on my heart as I continue to daily see the lives of the incarcerated. As much as I respect you and greatly stand in support of you, I still must emphasize that yours is a task and calling that requires unusual strength of character. Prisons and jails fall under constant attack for representing "failing justice systems", while at the same time mirror a mushrooming industry that promises no end to its growth.

One could argue that the Corrections industry is a "broken cistern that can hold no water", yet still the public cries for more incarceration. The most unpopular direction we could go is toward "true corrections"; to seriously return to "the fountain of living waters" would aggravate the calloused public. To be redemptive toward the offender would be scorned...to see the broken as God sees them would be scandalous...to ache for the young and tragically ruined offender would be costly...to weep with the incarcerated mother would be condemned!

Somehow I must solicit your pains in this world called Corrections. The wealth of wisdom you bring to bear upon the deep and vital issues confronting the public must be enlisted. You and I both know that there is far more to this system than security and punishment. We both know the distressing odds of healing the offender...we both see their children...we both sense the reality of "broken cisterns"!

How has the family, the church and the community been a "fountain of living water" to our incarcerated friends? When growing as children, did the incarcerated know the special blessings of a godly home, a caring church and a

loving community? Please don't misunderstand me. I don't believe all crime can be blamed on environment. Man in his best state is sinful; but in most cases the clear indicator for all human dilemmas shall be found in the "forsaking of the fountain of living waters"! Corrections' only real hope will be found in the flow of living water within our institutions and community. I choose to believe that this factor cannot be met apart from continued efforts to see all present challenges and dilemmas through the eyes of God. What is needed today are courageous leaders with godly wisdom and discernment who engage themselves in a return to "living waters".

I constantly address your public. Please know that we are waiting for your leadership and counsel. You are loved and prayed for daily. I welcome your letters, your comments, your frustrations and your invitations to visit your institutions.

May the "living water" suggested herein be your experience!

Hoping for you a great refreshing,

Jack Crans
Director

JC:al

P.S. Please read Isaiah 55:6-11 and John 4:10 and 14.