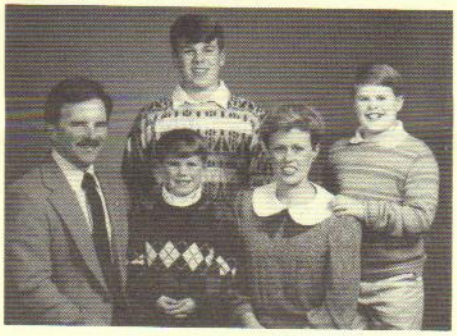
THE CONTENDER

January 1988

". . . 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 Family in Christ:

In just hours, I will leave for Washington, D.C. to attend some of the most vital meetings I have yet encountered. The nature of these meetings concerns the critical necessity and burden of encouraging and calling for Godly leadership in Corrections. By the time you read this issue of the **Contender**, I trust to have been in very personal dialogue with dear Brothers in Christ from Los Angeles, California to the New England states. The burden upon our hearts is being confirmed every day, and I am anxious to report in coming weeks what an exciting movement God is bringing upon the vital fields of Corrections and Law Enforcement

We need to be in earnest prayer; persistent and unrelenting in our specific request for Heaven to open in mercies upon us! I believe we can still see city-wide and national revival. My desire is that God's people will pray for one another, and that pulpits across our own Commonwealth will unite in vital simultaneous prayer for God to move upon us!

In John's Gospel, the 17th chapter, Jesus prayed:

"And now **I am no more in the world, but these are in the world,** and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, as We . . . **I have given them thy word**; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil . . . Sanctify them** through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. **As thou hast sent Me into the world**, even **so have I sent them into the world...** And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; **that they may be one, even as We are one** . . . that the world may know that Thou has sent me."

When is the last time we prayed for the **organism** of His Church and set aside our often times self-centered prayers for the **organizations** of our churches?

I know there are churches that so desperately want revival. They mirror clearly the heart of Jesus' prayer. They seek restoration and healing for the blood-bought purchased possession — "The Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood."

(Acts 20:28)

The children cry, the cities languish in peril and the fathers seem to be adrift in sin. Never before have we needed such revival fires and quickening of the Holy Spirit. Our generation is ripe for God's fury but perhaps fertile for God's faithful redemption. The Word of God must be preached with divine unction and authority while the saints fall on their knees humbly confessing personal sin and needed personal reformation.

The Scriptures, as well as history in general, have left us with a legacy of revival as in every situation God's people have first identified their own personal sins and then pleaded with tears for God's mercies and national healing! The formula will never change:

II Chronicles 7:14 "If **my people,** which are called by my name, shall **humble themselves** and **pray**, and **seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways**; then will I hear from Heaven, And will **forgive their sin**, and will **heal their land**."

Josiah and Nehemiah both evidence the truths of II Chronicles 7:14 when it was said of Josiah, "Because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou heardest his words against this place and against the inhabitants thereof, and humblest thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the LORD." (II Chronicles 34:27) And likewise of Nehemiah, ". . . I heard these words, that I sat down and wept and mourned certain days and fasted and prayed before the God of Heaven . . . that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night . . . and confess the sins . . . which we have sinned against thee . . . who desire to fear thy name; and prosper . . . !"

(Nehemiah 1:1-11)

Oh that we might reflect a careful apprehension of these clear and much needed exhortations and admonitions of His Holy Word!

We Love You So Much,

Jack, Sue, Jonathan,
Timothy and Joshua

Thought

"One reason historic Christianity spread was because of its effect on real people in dealing with real problems in a real world." (Selected)

A Letter From Linda

More than ever I praise God for His continual moment by moment care of me in this office. This month saw a computer "emergency" which required and will still require much time to re-input information on a new word processing system. I once again praise God for Clair Leaman and the hours he has helped me in designing our software and teaching me this system. Our old system is at my apartment, so I will have the freedom to write material at home. This new system is extremely efficient and has numerous functions. Those of you who support our work financially will soon be receiving a new type of receipt.

I feel that this new word processing system is really going to make my work go much faster, and as a result, I believe I will have more time for personal ministry. We have not had any firm responses to our need for a secretary at this point. Maybe the Lord will send someone along to help with the light office work as I continue to do the bulk of ministry paperwork. God's timing and His ways are always perfect because He is in the business of pouring out His blessings on His children. What a hope!

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, but when the desire cometh, it is a **tree of life**."
— Proverbs 13:12

The Lord gave me this promise as I studied the subject of hope this week. I needed it not only for my ministry, but also personally! It is my deepest hope for a girl like Dara at jail to be able to come and live in Coatesville upon her release, so **her hope** can be fulfilled. Her hope is to experience the abundant Christian life free of drugs and crime, which can only be learned as someone intimately disciples her. We forget that **broken lives want to have hope**! Unfortunately, there's not much around for them.

Due to my computer emergency, my meeting concerning follow-up had to be postponed until February 24.

Thank you so much for your support . . . may you daily live in and experience the riches of His grace!

Linda Ingham

Thought

"Any nation with God as an authority has a point of reference for morality."
(Zacharius)

Revival Doesn't Happen In A Corner

By Jack Crans

It has been said, "The oldest problem of the Christian church and the latest problem of democracy is how to reach the great masses of people. Frequently, the charge is made that the Church merely skims the surface of society, and that the great uncaring masses of the people lie untouched beneath it. Commonly, a revival reaches only a short distance outside the circumference of Church circles. The wonder and greatness of Billy Sunday's campaigns consisted in the fact that they reached to the uttermost rim of a community; to its greatest height and its lowest depth. There is no question that he stirred a city as not even the fiercest political campaign did. Sunday touched life on all levels, bringing his message to bear upon the society-woman in her parlor and the humblest day-laborer in his trench.

Oh, Lord! Bring Back The Day!

By Jack Crans

Evangelist Billy Sunday Addresses the University of Pennsylvania (March 13, 1914)

Over 3,000 students jammed the auditorium and hundreds came to the personal knowledge of Christ as Savior. "Say, boys" Sunday demanded, leaning far over the platform, "are you fellows willing to slap Jesus Christ in the face in order to have someone come up and slap you on the back and say you are a good fellow and a dead-game sport? That is the surest way to lose out in life. I am giving you the experience of a life that knows. **Pilate had his chance and he missed it. His name rings through the ages in scorn and contempt because he had not the courage to stand up for his convictions and for Jesus Christ.** Aren't you boys doing the same thing? You are convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, but you are afraid of the horselaugh the boys will give you."

In closing, the evangelist told the story of a man who recklessly tossed a pearl high into the air, reaching over the side of a ship to catch it as it fell. Time and again he was successful, but finally the ship swerved to one side and the gem disappeared beneath the waves.

"Boys, that man lost everything just to gain the plaudits of the crowd. Are you doing the same thing? That is the condition of thousands of people beneath the stars and stripes today — **losing everything just to hear the clamor of the people, and get a little pat on the back for doing something the mob likes.**"

Dr. and Mrs. Joe Eckman (Ellen Ann) CCGM Board Members - They continue to be a wonderful testimony of encouragement and love to us - words cannot explain the vital impact they make upon our daily ministry.

Law Enforcement Without God . . . Impossible!

By Jack Crans

Law and order rest upon a very necessary value called authority. Authority is not a meaningless term but rather a powerfully critical element in enforcement areas of Corrections. If Law Enforcement and Correctional personnel rely only on strength or power, they will continue to find frustration and defeat amidst the hostile, growing subcultures in America. In fact, the base problem in those very subcultures is Godlessness. Where Godlessness abounds, so shall crime and wickedness. I am convinced that Law Enforcement agencies and Corrections personnel cannot afford to forget the primary source of their strength and authority — that being God! He gave them the right to rule as His ministers. God delegated their role. He, above all, deserves their acknowledgement to the carrying out of their task and service to society.

Show me a Godless Law Enforcer, and I will show you a public servant lacking authority and its mutual companion of righteousness and mercy!

Why The Need For Urban Ministries?

By Stu Tripler

Because of my involvement in an urban ministry, I can visualize the needs that are present within our cities. However, I am often asked about the validity of our work by those who are unfamiliar with the city. Recently, I reviewed several articles which I believe demonstrate the need for urban ministries. Please consider the following statements and think how you as part of the body of Christ may be able to meet some of the growing needs in urban ministries

"At the beginning of this century, 15% of our world lived in cities. By 1950, that figure had risen to 28%. By 1975, it was 41%. By 2000, if the Lord tarries, it will reach at least 55%. At that time, at least 3.2 billion people will be living in cities, a total equal to the entire population in 1965." (Taken from *A Clarified Vision for Urban Mission* by Harvie M. Conn.)

A study by James D. Hunter found that in 1983 the "evangelicals were grossly unrepresented in the large cities." He found that urban missionaries in cities with over one million people only make up 8.6% of the total missionary force in the entire world.

Another author, Truman B. Douglass, states that three areas remain for the churches to penetrate: Hinduism, Islam and the culture of our modern cities.

One observer has written, "If you had a map showing where the needs of this nation are shaded in blue, and where the church is shaded in gray, you would discover that the areas rarely overlap." (Taken from Great Commission Handbook, 1988.)

Immigration is continuing as a rapid flood. One title that expresses perhaps a trend of the future in the area of missions is "Foreign Missions: Next Door and Down the Street."

I am not trying to say that all of the body of Christ needs to be involved in urban ministries, but perhaps the Lord has given you the desire to be a part of the solution to our cities. The Lord desires that we be daily serving Him. How are you serving Him today?

A sampling above of the special servants who faithfully assist in the monthly preparation and mailing of the "Contender."

Prayer Concerns

That we would commit ourselves to persistent prayer and be personally in fellowship with God.

That a facility would soon be made available for discipleship of men, youth, children and broken families.

That Bible-centered, redeemed churches would bring a concert of prayer before God's throne of grace, crying for revival and the spirit of II Chronicles 7:14.

That each aspect of CCGM would reflect obedience to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The the Crans' would have wisdom in family priorities in the midst of an extremely busy home.

That Jack, Sue, Linda, Stu and Nancy would experience the strength and wisdom necessary for each opportunity.

That our basketball ministry would bear much fruit. (An exciting Bible-study curriculum is being written weekly for this outreach.)

That we would know our limits and always be an encouragment to our Brothers and Sisters in Christ who labor in other fields of ministry.

That we might know Him and make Him known.

That all in authority might come to the reverence and worship of Him who delegates all positions of leadership.

God's Great Working In The Field Of Law Enforcement And Corrections

By Jack Crans

". . . and a three-fold cord is not quickly broken."

— Ecclesiastes 4:12c

All across this nation, God has raised up many precious ministries to both the prisoner and his family. The crisis still exists to mount, however, in reference to the millions of lives now being smothered neath the overwhelming plight of poverty, immorality and neglect of the urban poor. There needs to be a revival in the heart of mission-minded churches for our own back yards and men with vision who will mobilize an army with unmatched zeal for the American Home Mission crisis.

In the meantime, there is a growing network of committed Law Enforcers and Corrections personnel whom God has so strategically raised up to mirror and cry the need of the lost souls now reflected both within and by our penal institutions.

Prison superintendents, wardens, commissioners, correctional officers, sheriffs, law enforcers of federal, state and local jurisdictions are congregating for prayer, fellowship and advancement of the Gospel through the impact of their own lives and that of the Scriptures themselves. The Fellowship of Christian Peace Officers, headquartered in Los Angeles, California, is only one wonderful example of what I am talking about, and with great excitement I look forward to the soon coming days when so critical a profession as criminal justice senses the impact and commitment of these dear Christian professionals who labor in the trenches.

The Holy Spirit is so evidenced in this particular arena, and I can assure you that intercessory prayers are much needed in these critical hours.

I wish I could tell you more, but suffice it to say, "To God be the glory!"

January 1988 Report

P.O. Box 1136 • Coatesville, PA 19320

County Corrections Gospel Mission

"A Ministry Facility. Is It Imminent?"

3rd & Maple Streets

7th & Lincoln Highway

Above, you will observe two pictures. Each represents a building seriously under discussion at this moment. Needs such as emergency shelters, unwed mothers, discipleship of ex-addicts/offenders and youth all cry nationally and surely are pandemic in our own backyards. When carefully weighed, the debits of sin and the assets of the Church are critically becoming a concern. No one would question or even misunderstand the concept of the debit of sin! Unquestionably, our nation faces literal moral bankruptcy. How many times must we rehearse the issues — **the evidence demands its own verdict**. Sin has brought great and sorrowful indebtedness!

The area of Church assets becomes the area of question and debate. When I speak of assets, I in no way imply money or properties, but I speak more precisely to the spiritual wealth and missionary zeal that always accompany revival and great working of the Holy Spirit.

Coatesville is only one malignant area of a national and area-wide epidemic of public and private sin. The quickening of the Holy Spirit revival is so needed — the need for such facilities only mirrors the deeper hurt.

There is a debit of sin. There is also a dynamic asset in His Church! Oh, that we might see heaven open in glory and not judgment!

I am convinced that decisions are pending in the early months of 1988! Could it be that God would facilitate at least the evidencing of spiritual concern?

Thot: "We believe in the balance of Compassion with Truth. We know also that it is possible to have such sympathy for our fellow man as to be guilty of red-handed rebellion against God."

From The Bookshelf

The Holy Bible

I Corinthians 1:17-31 ". . . For the **preaching of the Cross** is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved **it is the power of God** . . . it pleased God by **the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe . . . He that glorieth, let Him glory in the Lord**."

I Corinthians 2:2 "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

Tripler Trivia

Ehud was the left-handed judge. What book of the Old Testament gives us excellent guidelines for God's plan of welfare? (It is not Leviticus!)

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: _____