THE CONTENDER

March 1989

". . . 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

By Jack Crans

DEAD ZONES

Whole sections of urban America are being written off as anarchic badlands, places where cops fear to go and acknowledge: "This is Beirut, U.S.A."

"Twenty years after nightly news programs spilled the carnage of Vietnam into our living rooms, television and daily newspapers are bringing us, live, another escalating war that we are losing. But this time the firefights are taking place on our own territory, within the hearts of our major cities. Every day, there are haunting pictures of the dead being carried off in body bags, of angry, grieving families, of commandos breaking down doors of dilapidated buildings, of armed gangs and wounded children, of burned-out cars and the flash of gunfire. As if to underline this grim message of civil dissolution, these scenes of guerrilla drug battles are often juxtaposed with similar visuals from Beirut, Lebanon, a place that has become a metaphor for institutionalized disorder.

"The image that overrides all others is that of urban war zone. However complex the causes and dynamics, however remote any chance of soon resolving this new civil war, one truth is inescapable: From Gangland Los Angeles to Murder Capital Washington, D.C., city after city now tolerates its own Beirut, a no man's land where drug dealers shoot it out to command street corners, where children grow up under a reign of 'narcoterror' and civil authority has basically broken down." (U.S. News and World Report, April 10, 1989)

"Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all of the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD, Alas, for the day! For the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come." Joel 1:14,15

Dear Faithful in Christ:

It took a plague of locusts and famine to drive the children of Israel to a solemn assembly. "Blow ye the trumpet" was the command of the Almighty. "Sound an alarm" was the appeal of the LORD God. In a day of "darkness and gloominess" in our own land we need to hear the sounding of trumpets! **We are the ones needing the alarming cry to gather at the footstool of the Almighty!** The clamor of this world has taken away our tenderness to those things that break the heart of God. The news of violence is so common we do not weep and agonize over much anymore. The bombardment of exhausting media headlines fills our minds to the point where there is no room for the appeal of heaven to our hearts.

God calls us to "rend our hearts" and turn with fasting and with weeping and with "mourning!" Through the prophet Isaiah God appealed, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet. . .!" (58:1) He goes on to describe what He calls a fast and challenges us to do the following: (1) Loose the bands of wickedness; (2) undo the heavy burdens; (3) let the oppressed go free; (4) break ye every yoke; (5) deal thy bread to the hungry; (6) bring the poor that are cast out to thy house; (7) cover the naked; (8) minister to your own family's needs; (9) satisfy the afflicted soul, etc.

In the midst of days that should be breaking our hearts, we need again the movement of the Holy Spirit like unto the days of great missionary campaigns. Do we hear the trumpets calling us to solemn assembly? Do we hear the alarms beckoning us to our altars? Oh, that we would again have the love of Calvary that spends all for sinners. If God's people would "blow the trumpet" we could yet see the accomplishment of three powerful ends: (1) spiritual awakening in the repentance of God's people; (2) restored fellowship in the remembrance of our covenant relationship made possible through Calvary's cross; and (3) defeat of the enemy and confounding of his present work in this world. (I John 3:8)

If we would again hear the trumpet in the midst of "DEAD ZONES", we would be called "the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in". (Isaiah 58:12) If we would again sound an alarm, we by His sovereign grace might yet see our "drought as a watered garden" and "our darkness as the noon day". (c.f. 58:10,11)

Pray, dear ones, pray! **Your ears may be the most attentive to these cries of my heart!** You, and perhaps few others will really weigh these critical issues.

In closing, would you join me in agreeing to pray earnestly for the healing of our ravaged cities? Would you openly bring this burden of missions to your church and loved ones?

I rejoice in your evidence of much love toward us! We are triumphing in Him by you!

Break the Missions Wineskin!

By Jack Crans

I exhort my missions minded Brethren to never minimize the legitimacy of the missionary task at home! I see no Biblical evidence that in any way excuses Bible-believing churches from the marketplace of their own backyards.

The most pressing missions concern, Biblically speaking, is that concerning "the Jew first". Beyond this, we must then move faithfully forward with tears and truth to the Gentile. Acts 1:8 speaks clearly of Jewish evangelism as a priority and should never be wrongfully applied to reaching "our own Jerusalem". I am quite shocked at present Biblical scholarship that continues to gloss over this primary text on missions. Missions involves the proclamation of Christ to lost men. When did we ever have the right Biblically to forget our own cities?

The Church in the Philippines is in the midst of a revival. Her greatest tears are for their own nation; is this wrong? Are her altars wet with prayers for national repentance wrong? Doesn't Acts 1:8 still call the church in the Philippines to "the Jew first?" Would not the "uttermost" of this text call the Philippine Believers to our continent?

I think it is time that the old semantics on missions be Biblically refined and God's people seek Him again for direction! The greatest commandment calls us to love God and obey Him. The second greatest commandment calls us to our neighbor!

"Biblical missions" ought to be our pursuit! **The Cross in the city needs to be recaptured!** Our prisons reveal people crying for the Biblically consumed missionary church!

Is it unfair to say that our missionary wineskins need to be broken? Can we really stand before the throne of Christ as faithful stewards in the midst of our cities and their present darkness? Your comments are welcome!

Christian Legal Society

By Jack Crans

The Christian Legal Society is a 5,000 member professional society of Christian lawyers, judges, law professors and law students in association with pastors and concerned lay people. It seeks to equip law professionals to integrate their faith with their practice.

County Corrections Gospel Mission is affiliated with CLS because **they represent an excellent testimony of leaders whose lives care about making a difference for Christ.** The professional world of law is only one of many arenas of the marketplace that desperately needs the presence of God's people.

The most striking cause of CLS's success **is its commitment to a working fellowship with specific laid-out purposes.** "In many ways it is similar to the 17th century professional guilds which were **committed to excellence and mutual assistance in pursuing professional goals.** Much more than being committed to good lawyers, we are committed to Jesus Christ as our Lord and all the ramifications that has for 'acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with our God.' (Micah 6:8)"

I ask that you remember to pray for the thousands of Christian professionals who daily labor toward reconciliation of Christ's body and who faithfully research and protect the constitutional right of free exercise of religion guaranteed to every person and to religious institutions.

The Christian Legal Society finds very personal challenge and commitment to at least two major Biblical exhortations:

1. I Corinthians 6:1 "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?"

2. Philippians 2:3,4 "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others."

The "guild" concept of a "society" with fixed purposes and common commitment to one another holds many ideals that would be best adopted in present day "fellowships" and/or "associations". I am so pleased and honored to be in communication with this **special Christian family** of legal professionals **who seek sincerely to "make a difference".**

Purpose of CLS

To proclaim Jesus as Lord through all that we do in the field of law and other disciplines.

To provide a means of society, fellowship and nurture among Christian lawyers.

To encourage Christian lawyers to view law as ministry.

To clarify and promote the concept of the Christian lawyer and to help Christian lawyers integrate their faith with their professional responsibilities.

To mobilize, at the national and local level, the resources needed to promote justice, religious liberty and reconciliation.

To encourage, disciple and aid students preparing for the legal profession.

To provide a forum for discussing problems related to Christianity and the law.

To cooperate with bar associations and other organizations in asserting and maintaining high standards of legal ethics.

To encourage lawyers to furnish legal service to the poor and needy.

For more information, write:
Christian Legal Society
P.O. Box 1492
Merrifield, VA 22116-1492
703-642-1070

A Letter From Linda

By Linda Ingham

A couple of days after my letter to you last month, plans were confirmed for me to have office space (for a 6 month trial period) in a big house owned by and located next to the Coatesville Presbyterian Church, 8 blocks from the CCGM offices. They have allowed me use of two rooms on the second floor. I have set one up for an office and the other I am setting up as a living room area for my Monday night Bible study, counseling and discipleship. So far I have kept expenses to a minimum, but I still have some needs such as a rug and living room chairs (beige, rust or blue colors), end tables, lamps to fit those colors, and a window fan for the summer.

Most of my day is spent here, although I do make a daily run to CCGM to check up on the office and do what work I need to do there. We also have the centrex phone system between the two locations with intercoms.

Please pray concerning my Monday night Bible study. This study is specifically for girls who have been in jail to come to when they get out for the purpose of their continued spiritual growth. Unfortunately, the enemy works in many, many ways to keep a lot of them from coming even though they are saved. I am learning much about prayer as I see the streets as such Satanic strongholds!

Thank you for your continued prayers and financial support to me as I appreciate it so much and am continually humbled by your sacrifices. Two girls got saved this month, and I can only praise God for what He hath accomplished! I love Hebrews 11:6 "...for he that cometh to God must believe that He is...!" That says it all to me...ponder on it!

Kid's Club

By Sue Crans

Help Wanted

"Immediate positions available for Bible club teachers. We are looking for enthusiastic men and women to teach children of any age you desire, any afternoon during the week. Salary and benefits include the joy you receive in watching children grow to know and love the Lord Jesus."

It is my desire to see a full program up at Parkway and Oak Street this summer. On Valentine's Day I received a letter from one of the girls in club which I would like to share with you.

"Dear Mrs. Crans:
I wish you a Happy Valentine's Day. You do not have to give me anything because you're very nice to me. Valentine's Day is fun to me. I always hope we have club almost every day because it's fun. I love you! From C."

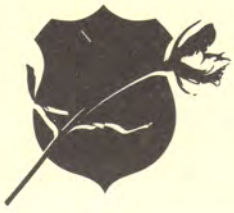
What a joy and blessing these children have been. Every week there is something the Lord uses to bless us. This past week three children accepted the Lord as their Savior. Wouldn't you like to have a part in this blessing? Please prayerfully consider what the Lord would like you to do. John 9:4

Word of Life Conference Speakers

(L) Billy Burns - Law Enforcer testified concerning his being shot during bank robbery chase (R) Bob Vernon - Keynote Speaker, Assistant Chief of Police, Los Angeles. Report in next "Contender"

National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial will be Dedicated May 15, 1990 in Washington, D.C.

By Jack Crans



A crystal blue laser will shine into the sky every evening reminding all visitors of the thin line of blue that often stands in peril between the forces of evil and righteousness in this country. Every 57 hours a law enforcer is killed in America and surely we as Believers are exhorted to pray for these dedicated men and women. (I Timothy 2:1-4)

In 1980, Burlington Bible Institute graduated a young man named David R. Payne. On July 23, 1988, David was called away from his wife, Karen and two children Erika (5) and Evan (2) while serving as a law enforcer in Lewiston, Maine's Police Department. Officer Payne, 26, died as a result of wounds received when he responded to a motorist-in-distress call, Saturday, July 23. The deadly bullets were fired, it is alleged, by an admitted cocaine addict and probation violator who was out on bail. David loved young people and taught Sunday School at the Victory Baptist Church.

I had the joy and humble privilege of hearing his preacher father, Rev. Raymond Payne, share a challenging testimony at the recent Law Enforcement Conference at Word of Life.

March Report 1989

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County Corrections Gospel Mission

Lancaster Farm Update

By Jack Crans

Staff will soon be named to the leadership Bible training school which is located at Christian Herald's "Our Father's House" in Lancaster County. We are receiving exciting encouragements from many related ministries and look forward to placing men in residence in just a few weeks.

Although we have use of the 5-acre facility for $1.00 a year, do know that we have also agreed to handle all utilities and staff needs. The large barn houses a walk-in cooler and freezer which supply much of the food which from the Lancaster bread-basket is stored and transported, along with clothing, to the Bowery Mission in Lower Manhattan, New York. Although the refrigeration costs are high, we again are praising God for being able to personally assist this supply of God's bounty into the broken streets of New York City.

My joy in Christ is beyond expression as we anticipate this growing challenge of the leadership Bible training school. With your faithful prayers we shall see lives which have long been broken made usable to the reaching of lost neighborhoods for Christ.

The challenge is great, the staff is being brought together and the heart of God's people is needed once again!

Dates to Note

National Day of Prayer
Thursday, May 4

National Police Week
May 8 - 14

Corrections Employee Week
May 15 - 21

From The Bookshelf

"America: The Sorcerer's New Apprentice", written by Dave Hunt and T.A. McMahon and published by Harvest House, Eugene, Oregon.

Kid's Club (Pizza Party) Contest Winners

Areas to Designate Gifts

Bible Institute
Christmas
Facility
General
Ingham
Memorials
Oak Street Project
Shakida Tate Gray
Snack Foods
Warden's Fund

Note: All gifts are tax-deductible; a receipt will be sent.

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