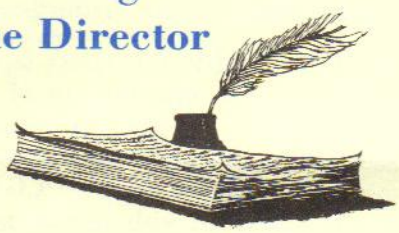
# THE CONTENDER

May 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**


## A Message From The Director



Dear Companions in Ministry:

**". . .Call unto me, and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not!" – – Jeremiah 33:3**

As Jeremiah sat imprisoned, God beckoned his dear servant with the above encouragement! To the faithful, weeping prophet, God revealed the joy and outworking of a future day of triumph!.

My dear, beloved friends – **Oh, for the urgent need of divine intervention.** I write again to you who would listen. I am certainly no Jeremiah, but I can most definitely sense the dramatic pain of his heart. The temptation is so quick to come that causes us to wallow in self-pity and yet how wonderful to realize our greater need for divine deliverance and presence.

As one reads about and examines the crescendoing issues of both world and national news, it is easy to become hard-pressed! Opportunities are certainly not lacking, for if anything, CCGM needs careful targeting and prioritization of the many open doors.

The summer months look busy, and the recent forces of busyness and burdens are issuing in a deepened desire for personal and corporate refreshing in Christ.

**This work is the Lord's – it is impossible without Him and certainly will continue only because of Him!** As Jeremiah was so long ago beckoned to call on the Lord, so must we! I know He has great and mighty things for us and do know we seek Him now with all our hearts!

Pray for us, and know that we sense your love as we are privileged to see God using you towards our further labors in Christ.

May the Lord be exalted by us together,

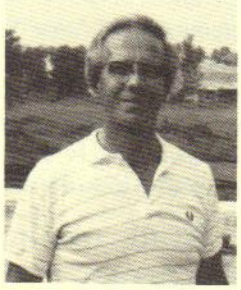
Jack Crans
I Samuel 12:24

## A Father's Day Tribute

*". . .For I know him, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment. . ."..... – Genesis 18:19*

*My Grandfather– Henry Walker*

*My Grandfather– Pastor Ray Fredericks*



*My dad–RayCrans*

A few weeks ago I was minded to call my father in Snellville, Georgia. I just wanted to say something to him which I knew was long overdue. As we prayed together and talked, we both tearfully said our goodbye with "I love you!"

**We grow up so fast and spin off into our "important" agendas, all too seldom stopping to appreciate and care for those so dear to us!** Certainly what I am saying could be applied to so many relationships, but in this particular instance, let's keep it with fathers.

As I look back on my training years, I affirm without reservation that I was impacted by the lives and testimonies of my father and grandfathers. I am sure much was spoken to me from the Scriptures but **nothing could have been more impressionable than the watching of their lives!** The tears, prayers, provisions and burdens I experienced in them continue a living testimony to their vital and unending impact on my life.

My one dear grandfather ails with cancer, my father busily labors toward retirement and my other grandfather, a preacher, labors in prayer and study through his 80's.

I stop and thank God for these most precious lives! Where would I be today without their prayers and faithful counsels? **Just watching them live has been mightier than words!**

How many young men and women have fallen into the seeming endless grip of sin maybe only for the absence of such a precious heritage? On this occasion of Father's Day, may I say from my deepest heart and emotion: "Thank-you, Lord Jesus, for fathers who turned our eyes towards Calvary!"

Jack Crans

## A Few Practical Suggestions For Impacting Your World

*"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world..."* – *Phil. 2:15*

**1. Who's who! Find out who your Wardens, Sheriffs and Police are and also your Judges.** Perhaps one reason the state and local government has become so secular is because we have withdrawn. We have many mandates in Scripture to pray for and obey government. Your prayerful encouragement and interest will enhance their sense of accountability as well.

**2. Keep informed of critical agendas** through various ministries such as Pennsylvania Facts, P.O. Box 185, Elverson, Pennsylvania 19520 (215) 286-0009.

**3. Read your local newspaper and react.** Make current events a part of your prayer meetings and agonize over what is happening in your back yard. Perhaps areas of greatest spiritual hunger and opportunity are waiting for your immediate response (victim's families, etc.)

**4. Encourage your Pastor to fellowship with other local believing Pastors for city-wide concerns and mutual burdens.** The church is seen individually and certainly corporately by the Lord Jesus Christ.

**5. Pray for revival. Ask God to work mightily in your city and village.** Isn't He able to do great and mighty things? Imagine if God brought revival to your city – bars would close, Wednesday evening prayer meeting would be packed, crime would decrease and outreach would quadruple.

**6. Ask the Lord for a particular burden.** Contend against "spiritual adversaries" to the winning of territory for Christ.

**7. Be salt!** After the vital necessity and obligation of your local church involvement, penetrate your own secular world for Jesus Christ. Attend high school events, know the youth, care and ask God to work through you!

**8. Organize, pray and target specific opportunities for the effective working of Jesus Christ.**

9. Write to us and tell us what you are already doing. Maybe we can feature your outreach in a "Contender" issue.

## Pastoral Encouragement

In this month, as well as all others, we've always known God to encourage us through His Shepherds. **Pastors are so critical in guiding the hearts and burdens of their people as they have a profound influence on Mission agendas and local church priorities.** Any Mission or missionary can tell you that their **ultimate effectiveness and encouragement rests on God's leadership in His church.**

Recently, during our plans for "America, You're Too Young to Die", I have seen the willing and tender hearts of God's faithful men extending their already taxed schedules to reach out and say, "What can we do?" May all who read know assuredly that **CCGM rises or falls as guided and supported through the local, Bible-believing Pastors.**

I must share one precious example of God's blessed men. The eve of Memorial Day I spent at my sister's church (Faith Community Church) in Roslyn, Pennsylvania. Her Pastor, Richard Krueger, spontaneously allotted me ten minutes for a missions update. I was thrilled and encouraged by that opportunity and then had the privilege of sitting down to listen to him teach. Refreshed, empowered, confirmed and encouraged, I knew the Acts 13 message he preached had been prepared just for me. Four simple points were shared from this living passage. **Pastor Krueger passionately and urgently drove these four lessons to my heart:**

**1. THE WORK OF GOD is specific and he has prepared us to be involved in specific areas of ministry.** This highlighted the necessity of ordination and call to ministry. As I sat there, the Holy Spirit confirmed my call and preparation to this work.

**2. THE WORK OF GOD is always accompanied by Satanic opposition.** Here he instructed in the opposition to the Word of God by Elymas in the life of Sergis Paulus (a Roman) official). Again as I sat there the Holy Spirit confirmed that the adversary was at work, but how encouraging it was to see this opposition as a token proof of God's working.

**3. THE WORK OF GOD is evidenced by the intervention of the Holy Spirit.** "Then Saul, filled with the Holy Ghost. . ." (v. 9). Again, as I sat there I knew that **the work of CCGM is totally bankrupt without the intervention of the Holy Spirit.**

**4. THE WORK OF GOD is evidenced by a soul's regeneration.** Sergis Paulus came to know Christ as Savior! Finally, I rejoice in the many who have come to know Christ. I yearned even more fully for God to work!!

In closing, Pastor Kreuger unknowingly revitalized my heart that night. **The refreshing of God through this Pastor-Servant evidences the Pastoral need in our hearts.**

Jack Crans

## A Letter From Linda

*"And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, He **looked up to heaven** and **blessed** and **brake** the loaves and **gave**. . .and they did all eat and were **filled**."* – *Mark 6:41,42*

I am sure we are all familiar with the story of the feeding of the five thousand as told by Mark the Servant. The above two verses have been a special encouragement to me in my life as the Holy Spirit has taught me deep and rich truths about my Lord and Savior when I meditate beyond the facts of the actual event to an application of my own life.

To put is plain and simple, just like the five **loaves** and two **fishes** were **broken** and thereafter **multiplied** and **given out,** so too our mighty God uses **broken lives** and **hearts** in a powerful

way to **give out, serve** and **bless** those around them.

Everything in a Christian's life comes **down from Heaven** through our Heavenly Father's loving hand of approval, whether it is a blessing or an experience to get our attention. Many times we need to be **broken** and humbled in order for the Lord to draw us closer to Him and teach us what He wants us to learn and/or to accomplish some ministry task for Him. It is so beautiful to have the freedom and joy to be **multiplied,** just like the loaves and fishes, after our brokenness, and used effectively in and of and through the Holy Spirit in ministry. What a blessing it is to see those we minister to **eating** up the Word and **filled** either through salvation or spiritual growth as a result of our brokenness.

God even takes lives totally broken by sin and sanctifies them and makes them whole to be used for His service and glory. I have been so blessed, encouraged and taught by seeing this so beautifully in the lives of the girls we work with at prison and the precious friends He's given me here in Coatesville whose lives are being restored.

It is easy to sit back **broken** by experiences that come into our lives and do nothing about it, either as a Christian or an unbeliever. My prayer is that we will meditate on Matthew 17:14-21 and truly **believe** that God can and will use brokenness in a powerful way as we respond humbly before Him to be used as His vessels!

The highlight of this past month for me was having the opportunity of a much-needed vacation out West with a friend. It was a great and refreshing vacation.

Upon return to the office, I was rejoicing in the beginning of the renovation of the basement for a larger office for me. Our present office is extremely cramped, so I am anxiously looking forward to being downstairs by July! Praise the Lord!

Our Bible study at prison has been going extremely well. We praise God so much for the salvation of three girls this month and the consistent spiritual growth with a few of them. This past week, we spent some time in the book of Revelation and I encouraged them not to be afraid to study it as the Lord promises a blessing to those who read it. (Rev. 1:3) A couple of the girls there are at a point in their spiritual growth where I know the Holy Spirit will give them the understanding!

Please continue in fervent prayer for God's work through CCGM. Many exciting things are happening in Coatesville for which only He can accomplish through available servants!

In His Love,

Linda S. Ingham

## CCGM Update

**Office and ministry area renovation** is moving progressively forward. Most electrical, plumbing and carpentry is moving towards completion. Furnishings, carpet and lighting still awaits completion. Estimated costs: $6,500.00

**"America, You're Too Young to Die"** Rally has just ended by the time you receive this Newsletter. We will look forward to sharing the entire outcome with you in June's report.

**CCGM** is sponsoring a **basketball marathon team for Word of Life** the week of June 21st. Thank you for the financial contributions we have received for this. Pray for the impacting of these young lives.

An upcoming **D.V.B.S. project** will help us acquire a needed camera (remember CCGM's was stolen) and attachments for better communication of our burden.

Jack will be representing CCGM at the **American Correctional Association Conference in New Orleans August 2 - 5.**

**Stu and Nancy Tripler** continue in prayer for God's will and provision for their full-time ministry in discipleship and youth opportunities.

**Discipleship facilities** are still seen as a great and growing concern. A recent trip to the Bowery Mission at least encourages us to know that two Coatesville men continue there in discipleship.

**Ministry in** Claymont, Delaware and Berwick, Pennsylvania encouraged us in the midst of **caring, burdened churches.**

**Networking within Law Enforcement and Corrections** continues as well as an on-going correspondence with Correctional personnel. We praise the Lord for wonderful Christian leaders in the State Police, FBI and Secret Service.

Our youngest son, **Joshua,** will be undergoing hernia **surgery** on June 22. Please remember to pray for him!

**Plans** are being made **for several prison visits** this summer – hopefully in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Ministry at **SESTU** (Southeast Secure Treatment Unit) and **Chester County's prison** occurs weekly.

## Tripler Trivia

While I was preparing to speak at church a few weeks ago, I came across a passage in Nehemiah which exemplifies the relationship of CCGM to the local church. In Nehemiah 1:4-11, Nehemiah's burden for the condition of the city of Jerusalem is demonstrated. Although he is far removed from the situation, Nehemiah is burdened for the city and desires to address needs. We are far removed from many of your cities, but we know of some of the needs that can be found within them. Like Nehemiah, we are burdened to help meet some of the needs.

We realize, as did Nehemiah, the importance of utilizing local leadership. Nehemiah 2:11-18 explains how he took some of the leaders whom he knew would be concerned about the situation and showed them the conditions. Once these men saw the seriousness of the need, they were committed to the work. One of the goals of CCGM is to introduce the local church to many areas within their community where they can minister to those with needs.

According to Nehemiah 7:1-3, with the completion of the walls, Nehemiah left the local leadership in charge and

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May 1987 Report

**Tripler Trivia** – *Continued*

returned to his position with King Artaxerxes. Our desire is to model programs for the local church which they can emulate. Realizing that we are limited and sensing the burdens in so many areas, we yearn to draw upon the vast reserves that can be mined from the local church.

Are you burdened for those who have needs around you? If so, what are you doing to meet those needs? If not, ask the Lord to allow you to see the true condition of the walls and give you a mind to mend them. Remember, "to whom much is given, much is required."

Because He lives,

Stu, Nancy & Johanna

P.S. The answer to last month's trivia question in regards to the location of Solomon's temple was meant to trick you. It is the same place as yours and mine – the side of his head! This month we are taking a serious approach and wonder how many of you know what the name Nehemiah means in Hebrew.

## Areas Of Prayer Concern

**Financial support** for Stu and Nancy Tripler.

**Discipleship facility.**

**Revival** in the local church – Pastoral wisdom and strength.

American Correctional Association Conference August 2 - 5.

**Word of Life Marathon** June 21 - 27.

**Praise** for God's unfailing provisions.

**Joshie's surgery** June 22.

**CCGM's Board of Directors,** Staff and families.

## Warden's Corner

Although the state map is not in last month's or this month's Newsletter, do know that we have not forgotten about the continuing distribution of Bibles. The company we normally buy them from has been out of stock for awhile. Next month we should (Lord willing) have an updated report!

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**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:** _____