THE CONTENDER

Nov. - Dec. 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

Dear Caring One:

Matt. 18:10 "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven."

I intentionally open my letter with a salutation that as clearly as possible expresses my heart's attitude toward you. First, the very motive that causes most to read the Contender is that, like you, they care. Be assured that only God can really know the deepest expressions of our hearts, but at least we can interact a little via my less-than-sufficient writings.

Though I preach often, seldom, if ever, will I have the opportunity of addressing you from a pulpit. Our burden (shared by many) is untimely, often unpopular and certainly avoided by the designated agendas of the average American church. Surely a serious rendering of our national dilemmas would rearrange and tax the most common and more popular agendas of Christendom. It is quite commonplace that the hungry hearts in the pew are often led clear of any disruptive exhortations that might suggest a change of priorities or programs.

Whether it is ever to be faced or not, America needs revival. The fact of our need for both personal and national repentance will not go unanswered. The cry of lost millions entering a Christless eternity from the world's streets will not go unattended. I myself am in the testing fires of God's program. The pains of spiritual growth are sometimes difficult, but most truly there is no better place to be than in God's refinery.

Yes, you care! You probably even struggle with us over many of the unanswered cries of women, children and men. You are "one who holds the ropes" for missionaries, as visualized in the days of William Carey's burden for India: "We saw that there was a gold mine . . . but it was as deep as the center of the earth. Who will venture to explore it? Carey replied: "'I will go down, but remember that you must hold the ropes.'"

Caring One, Hudson Taylor of China said, "we stand in the light of eternity in the presence of the crucified, risen Lord of Glory. His unconditional command, "Go, I am with you always" is sounding on and on, while with it mingles **the low wail of thousands passing hour by hour into Christless graves.** It is profoundly, unutterably real!" You are most valuable to whatever mission field you pledge or lend your heart . . . after all, HE SO LOVED THE WORLD!

Just less than two weeks before Christmas, a young, single mother gave birth to an ailing and dying little girl. The lonely pain of the mother accompanied the handful of family that gathered with me at her frozen, shallow grave. In the context of Christmas, I was lifted to tear-filled praise as we recalled the tender counsel of Jesus which recalled the attendance of angels to the lives of little, broken children. I recalled the little ones that died by Herod's hand in his wicked pursuit of Jesus, and thought of the little boy and girl that now, being incarcerated adults, still yearn for a place on Jesus' lap. I thought, "How precious it is that in a world where the tears of the lost exceed by oceans the tears of the redeemed, that my God and Savior still attends the sometimes soft and unanswered cries of children."

As we labor amidst adult offenders and their keepers, we never forget that each one mirrors a host of young, tender lives (perhaps their own sons and daughters) who secretly, hopelessly appeal to the human heart. Their cry goes up to the throne of God. Who will answer?

I could never withhold the fact uttered in the same context by Jesus (Luke 18:7): "Woe unto the world because of offenses! For it must needs be that offenses come; but woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh!"

May it never be said of any of us, "He stopped his ears at the cry of the poor . . ." (Prov. 21:13)

Thank you, Caring One!

Jack Crans

Dates to Remember

April 20, 21: These dates should be carefully noted for a great 2-day rally concerning America's Christian heritage and the need for revival, led by the son of the late Peter Marshall, former Chaplain of the U.S. Senate. (Kennett Square area)

March 30-April 1: Law Enforcement and Corrections Conference at Word of Life Conference Center, Schroon Lake, NY.

Clarks' Comments

by Alan and Judie Clark

By now all of the neatly wrapped packages have lost their charm. The tinsel glitter of a commercial Christmas will be put on the shelf for the next year. As Christians we can be thankful that the message of the Savior's birth is not a once-a-year celebration. The peace of Christmas comes only from knowing the babe in the manager as the suffering Lord on the cross of Calvary. Completing the joy is the risen Savior seated on the right hand of the Father.

We praise the Lord for the past year in the establishment of Leadership Bible Institute through the ministry of CCGM. We are trusting the Lord and moving forward by faith for an opening day and orientation on January 15, 1990. Full classes will begin on January 18, 1990.

LBI will have four semesters, consisting of 12 weeks each in the one-year curriculum. The first semester, the following courses will be taught in the leadership program: Christian Character, Personal Evangelism, Systematic Theology I, Genesis/Exodus, Life of Christ, Pastoral Epistles, Poetic Books. A Christian service is required as the 8th course.

Local pastors and other full time Christian workers will be sacrificing their time to teach and also to minister in the daily chapel services.

Pray for us, especially that the Lord will bind the work of the Enemy. We are asking for the Lord's wisdom in bringing glory and honor to His name through the lives of each person involved in LBI.

May the Lord bless each of you in this New Year as you serve Him with us through your prayers and support.

Juvenile Corrections

by Jack Crans

At South East Secure Treatment Unit on the grounds of the Embreeville State Hospital is a 35 bed security facility that houses young repeat offenders. As many as 20 arrests may accompany a 14 year old boy. He more than likely has been convicted on at least 5 felony charges and he suffers with a borderline IQ.

He also has been found to enjoy love from Christian volunteers. He will memorize Bible verses and - believe it or not - he likes peanut scrambles, water balloon tosses, and sack races! He can say "thank you!" and he can pray. He can respond to the love of a grandmother or other volunteer adult who enters weekly to mirror the love of Christ.

The average boy there has historically grown into an adult offender and has great odds of committing new and violent crimes. The same boy, however, is now being confronted with a new and challenging option, and that is to surrender an old, broken life for a new one.

SESTU affords us the widest door of opportunity to declare through tangible services the character of our Savior. Sunday School classes, whole congregations or families can make a difference in many boys' lives.

If ever we needed to know your willingness to sacrifice your time and means for such a privilege it is now.

Take my word for it: God's people make the difference, one way or the other!

Thoughts On God's Word

"The living God still lives, and the living Word is a living word, and we may depend upon it. We may hang upon any word God ever spoke or caused by His Holy Spirit to be written."

- Hudson Taylor

"It is exhilarating to live our faith unflinchingly and defend the truth fearlessly, avoiding the traps of passing fads. Grace to do this is likened unto the one who gracefully and accurately drives a team of madly rushing horses: 'one whirling adventure; and in my vision the heavenly chariot flies thundering through the ages, the dull heresies sprawling and prostate, the wild truth reeling but erect.' "

— G.K. Chesterton

Commentary: "Preaching" A Popular Sport

by Jack Crans

The Holy Spirit accompanies the written or spoken word of God. The privilege of reading, whispering or proclaiming its contents shall always be to all believers the highest of stewardships.

As I labor presently away from the pastorate, I even more earnestly hunger for Spirit-led, sensitive and humble teachers whose hearts are tendered and broken both by the Spirit and by the Word. In a day when preaching has become an "art" or position of self-glory, I wanted to personally let you know my own joy in the knowing and hearing of two Spirit-led preachers who continue to faithfully break forth the Bread of Life.

I trust you might write and request a message or two from either of these Spirit-filled men. One is a Pastor with an evangelist's heart, the other an Evangelist with a heart for pastors.

Pastor Richard Krueger
Faith Community Church
1200 Easton Road
Roslyn, PA 19001

Evangelist Ravi Zacharias
4725 Peachtree Corners Circle
Suite 250
Norcross, GA 30092

"Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God . . . for we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus's sake. (I Cor. 4:1,2,5)

Warden's Corner

Seven Bibles were sent to new wardens in Pennsylvania and other states during the months of November and December, 1989.

Man Sentenced To 41 Years: No Plea But Christ

From a letter dated Nov. 27, 1989:

Dear Brother Crans:

J.T. wanted you to have a copy of this statement. . . This was the statement he read to Judge F.L. and the Court of San Diego. This was read on his sentencing date, 9-7-89. J.T. was sentenced to 41 years in prison.

"I stand before this Honorable Court shamefully guilty. I accept full and complete responsibility for my actions. It was not my mistakes, it was not my environment, it was not my upbringing, nor lack of education. Neither was it the many tough breaks in life that have brought me to this sad and grave judgment seat. Justice demands that my crime be paid for in full - I accept and even bless such a reality - for true justice and law and order are holy gifts from God.

"By the grace of God I have been able to stand before this Court, never seeking to manipulate the truth or this respected Court in any way whatsoever.

By the grace of God, I do not now, even for one moment, regret having surrendered myself. I am in prison, but Jesus Christ has set me free. I am truly sorry for all that I have done - and God, the Almighty, the Judge of all judges, knows my heart is true. And now I have perfect, eternal peace with God.

The holy blood of the only Lord and Savior Jesus, which was lovingly and freely shed for me, and for all mankind, at Calvary, upon the cruel cross, has washed every one of my sins away forever. Jesus paid in full my sin debt to a holy and righteous God. I have obeyed the voice of my God. I surrendered myself. I have truly sought forgiveness from those dear people I so wickedly damaged in my past sin. In obedience and holy fear, I have stood before my God and this courtroom, and have conducted myself in all truth. I have done justly - I have loved mercy - and I have walked humbly with my God.

I give all the glory, honor and praise to my only Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only righteous Judge of heaven and earth.

By His grace, and in His love and truth, I stand respectfully before this Court.

Your Honor, let it be done unto me, by your decree of judgment, even so as it seems well and pleasing in the sight of my Holy God and King, Jesus Christ, the righteous - for He alone is faithful and true, and by His holy grace I will continue to praise Him.

For 41 years, for all time and eternity, I thank and praise my God for this day, for this situation and for your sentence. Thank you, Sir.

God bless you.

(Signed)

The Ministry of Mourning

Church Bulletin Insert Idea:

The Tragedy of Dry Eyes
by David Mains
Chapel of the Air
Box 30, Wheaton, IL 60189-0030
(3-fold flyer)

"Will everyone who trembles at the words of the Lord join me in mourning over these sins of God's people?

"You haven't noticed my eyes being moist? You're waiting for my first tear to be shed?

"You're quite astute. I confess I'm not an Ezra, or Jeremiah or Paul. For that matter, I don't fit the ranks of those who, at a time of great opportunity, have cried over the deplorable condition of God's people. Rather, I am, with you, dry-eyed, waiting. . . "

Rarely is anything accomplished for the kingdom of God without a very real spiritual battle proportionate to the magnitude of the work being done.

Navajo Peace Officers Need Your Help

We would like to help sponsor an opportunity for 3 Navajo police officers to attend the Law Enforcement Conference at Word of Life. This entails air travel and weekend registration at Word of Life.

These men are facing the greatest incidences of Satanic-related crimes and they would never know such encouragement as we could give them at this time. Pastor Dan Fredericks (UIM) of the Navajo Bible Church in Fort Defiance, AZ is coordinating the Fellowship of Christian Peace Officers on the Navajo Reservation.

We try very hard not to ask you for money; this occasion is a selfless venture on our part to encourage these godly leaders. Please designate your special gifts to "Navajo Peace Officer Fund". Needed: $2,000. Thank you!

NOTE

There is a new CCGM brochure available upon request.

Special Missions Projects

Your church doesn't have to send you far away to get you tangibly involved in a Missions project. The **LEADERSHIP BIBLE INSTITUTE** needs **RENOVATIONS.** Each bedroom needs to be painted or papered and the "Welcome Mat" is out to any individual or group who would invest themselves in this ministry of helps. Please pray carefully about your next MISSION PROJECT.

A **15 PASSENGER VAN** is not an option, but an **immediate and vital need of the Bible Institute.** Once again, here is a tangible Missions Project that can occupy the hearts of God's people!

County Corrections Gospel Mission
P.O. Box 1136 • Coatesville, PA 19320
November-December Report 1989

Mass Murder: The Shocking Truth About America

One need not condemn the horrible acts of Eastern Block regimes when from our own soil cries the death of the innocent!

Abortion is destroying America's future...One life at a time.

The more than 23 million abortions since 1973 equals the population of the 11 states in black above.

"All those who hate me love death" Proverbs 8:36

(Intercessors for America)
Box 2635
Reston, VA 22090

A Resource Every Believer Should Know:

The Rutherford Institute
P.O. Box 519
Manassas, Virginia 22110

John W. Whitehead, a leading constitutional attorney specializing in the defense of religious liberty, founded The Rutherford Institute in 1982.

This is a non-profit legal and educational organization specializing in defense of religious freedom, the sanctity of human life, and family autonomy. The Rutherford Institute is named for Samuel Rutherford, a 17th Century Scottish minister and rector at St. Andrews University. Rutherford resisted the European doctrine of the divine right of kings, graving in his book **Lex, Rex (the Law and the Prince)** that all men are under the law and not above it. This same premise, that even leaders are responsible to a higher law apart from themselves, was central to the early formation of law and government in America.

Areas to Designate Gifts

Christmas
General
Leadership Bible Institute
Memorials
Oak Street Project
Snack Foods
Warden's Fund

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

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