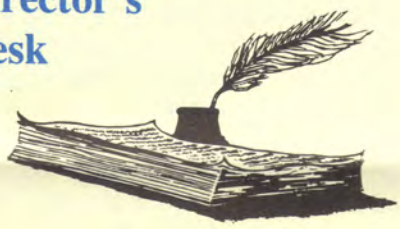
THE CONTENDER

Sept.-Oct. 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

"When principles that run against your deepest convictions begin to win the day, then battle is your calling, and peace has become sin; you must, at the price of dearest peace, lay your convictions bare before friend and enemy, with all the fire of your faith."

- Abraham Kuyper

Dear Beloved:

In just a space of days, three major prisons in our state have suffered unrest, destruction and violence. Disorder, injury and assaultive behavior were the order of the day. Headlines no sooner cooled down from the devastation of Hugo's rage and San Francisco's quake than we were awakened by the anger of men's hearts as seen in Corrections' violence.

I may not win men spiritually to know the right of God to rule, but practically I unashamedly remind any in authority that without spiritual authority there is no real control.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn warns so plainly: "...the fight for our planet, physical and spiritual, a fight of cosmic proportions, is not a vague matter of the future; it has already started. The forces of Evil have begun their offensive. You can feel their pressure, yet your screens and publications are full of prescribed smiles and raised glasses. What is the joy about?"

My dear, precious friend, we need to talk. I know your life is busy and pressed on every side, as is anyone whose heart and mind are set ablaze by Calvary. The work of Christ and His Word are not without enemies! The arena into which we have carefully and prayerfully entered is a dangerous one. I am not referring to physical dangers as much as I am to the conflict of ideas that inevitably occurs when reintroducing biblical truth into the arena of darkness. As Colson states, "In every way that matters, Christianity is an affront to the world; it is counter-cultural."

Moses leaned upon God for his leadership and role of authority. In Deuteronomy 1:12 he asks, "How can I myself alone bear your weight, and your burden and your strife?" When all the foundations of the earth are out of course, who then but the Almighty can deliver our mean dilemma?

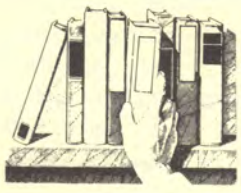
Give us men like Job, who experienced "the days when God preserved him, when **His** lamp shined upon his head, and when by **His** light he walked through darkness!" (29:2-4)

God so clearly defines authority as it relates to His divine rights and the delegation of leadership to man in the discourse of Psalm 82. Herein He reveals man's obligation to rule righteously, and sovereignly warns against those who do otherwise. If I could paraphrase His words and apply them to the disorder of our generation, they would say the following: "I, God, stand in the assembly of all who rule; I, God, judge the authorities. Think about this, saith the Most High: How long will you rule unjustly and continue giving in to the whims of the wicked? Do what I told you to do as a leader: defend the truly poor and children without Dads; meet fairly the needs of the afflicted and needy. Stop allowing evil men to make decisions that destroy lives. The order I asked you to keep in My name you have caused to crumble. Those who lead no longer obey My words. They rule according to their own ideas. They've created darkness and turned out the light. To you who lead (gods) I the Most High speak. You shall die like all other men. You've become so accustomed to the dark that you don't even know the lights are out. I, God, am and shall be the judge of all the earth. I shall reign in My earth.

We at CCGM have the marvelous privilege to continue bringing the light of God's unchanging Word into the darkness of this age. Your support, your prayers and your love have kept us pursuing the proclamation of divine authority in the midst of this world's system. Our comfort and joy are wrapped in the words of Revelation 19:6: "And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of many peals of thunder, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!"

In Calvary's love,

Jack Crans
Director



From The Bookshelf

Counseling for Substance Abuse and Addiction

Gary R. Collins, Ed.
Word Books, Waco, Texas

Clarks' Comments

By Alan and Judie Clark

One of the top news stories of this week (October 26) was the Harrisburg prison riot. It does not take a theologian to know there is something drastically wrong within our prison system and society as a whole. The need is not to build bigger and better prisons (although the prison system is 48% over-crowded). The need is to bring the message of salvation through Jesus Christ into the prisons and inner cities via Christian leadership by men who are willing to be trained in the Word of God and go to the area of need.

Chuck Swindoll says, in his book *Hand Me Another Brick*, "Being a leader is an unenviable calling. It appears glamorous and glorious - but it is more often lonely and thankless. The best leaders are actually servants. Unselfishly, they give of themselves to accomplish the objectives regardless of the sacrifice or cost. The perils are ever present and the toll is great."

We do praise the Lord that LBI will be such a vehicle to train men for the leadership capacity to stand in the gap and go to the area of need; whether it be to the ghetto, prison or street corner; wherever the Lord may lead.

"And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (II Timothy 2:2)

The goal of LBI strives to train faithful men in the Word of God, the victorious Christian life and the fundamental principles of leadership through a one-year curriculum based on the systematic study of God's Word.

This summer served as a catalyst to show us a greater view and need for LBI and led us to an even greater dependence on the Lord for wisdom and direction as well as material need. Men came to LBI with virtually only the clothes on their backs.

Many of you feel the burden for our inner cities, but cannot be comfortable in ghetto surroundings nor are you able to have access inside prisons. . . but you can be a missionary by support, or a prayer warrior, as these men train to serve the Lord in needed areas of ministry. If the Lord leads you to help out in any of the following areas of ministry, it would be a blessing.

- Toiletries for the men
- School supplies (loose leaf binders, etc.)
- Linens (all kinds of towels)
- Food items: canned goods, eggs, juices, potatoes, rice, macaroni, fruit, vegetables, meat
- Household items: laundry products, paper goods, first aid supplies, aspirin, large skillets, cooking utensils
- Piano for the chapel
- 16-passenger van

We are gearing up to receive men as soon as possible. . . Brochures and applications are at the printers now (Call if you want any). We praise the Lord for Share Your Faith Ministries, who donated a liquid marker board for the classroom. We still need sponsors for the men who may not be connected to a fundamental church. If you are interested and want more information about sponsorship, please contact CCGM or LBI.

The list is long, but we trust the Lord and know that He is able to provide what we ask or think!

In Calvary's Bond,

Alan and Judie Clark

Missions And The U.S. Church Crisis

By Jack Crans

"Men no longer are bound together by ideas, but by interests; and it would seem as if human opinions were reduced to a sort of intellectual dust, scattered on every side, unable to collect, unable to cohere." -Alexis de Tocqueville

I am as traditional as they come when seeing the Biblical mandate for Missions. I enjoy some of my most pleasurable moments and relationships with missionary friends of most continents. The fellowship of CCGM with foreign and home missionary executives is growing and assuredly we understand the hunger of a dying world for the Gospel. Let me quote a few lines from a man I highly respect, Paul Bubar (Executive Director, Overseas Division of Word of Life Fellowship, Inc.), as written to me in his most recent letter:

"Only 9% of the world speaks English, yet 91% of the world's Christians are among the 9%. 94% of all ordained preachers minister to the 9%. 96% of all financial giving is used to carry on the work among the 9%. Somehow to me that doesn't seem fair, and yet that is the way it is. Obviously, most of our work is to the English-speaking world and home missions is a part of that. I find that there is a tremendous onslaught against **foreign** missions. For example, more and more of your Independent Baptist churches in particular consider everything outside of their pastoral salary and local church staff as "missionary". Under the heading of Home Missions, they place bus ministry, Sunday School, visitation and all kinds of things that are no more missionary than the Women's Christian Temperance Union. That is not missions; that is the **responsibility** of every local gospel preaching church."

He goes on to commend us for our work and stands with us as we penetrate a segment of American society in a great crisis.

What of this conflict of foreign and home missions? How can we justify the gross neglect of a dying world in the midst of such "spiritual affluence"?

I believe that Mr. Bubar touched upon a radical issue when he mentions the concept of "responsibility" of the local church to its own back yard. **The truth of the matter is that what should not be a mission field has become one.** No wonder Life Action Ministries calls for revival. No wonder the director of the National Institute of Justice cries out for recognition of a Third World people who have evolved in our "First Class Nation".

The only excuse we could ever have for not being broken to minister abroad would be the occasion of our commitment to the lost at home.

May the eternal plight of lost men grip our hearts! Lord, make us zealous! Seize our hearts by those things that break your heart. As was once said of

zealous lives, "Whether we live, or whether we die; whether having health, or having sickness; whether rich or poor; whether pleasing man or offensive; whether thought wise or foolish; whether blamed or praised; whether honored or shamed; for all this the zealous cares nothing at all, burning for one thing: to please God, to advance God's glory. If consumed in the very burning, care not, but be content. Like a lamp, he's made to burn. Such a one will find a sphere for his zeal. If he cannot preach, work and give money, he will cry, and sigh, and pray. If he cannot fight in the valley with Joshua, he will do the work of Moses, Aaron and Hur, on the hill (Exodus 17:9-13). If he is cut off from working himself, he will give the Lord no rest till help is raised up from another quarter, and the work is done."

Practical Religion, Ryle

Surely our hearts need to be broken for "the uttermost parts of the earth", but our shame is the fact of the unattended at home.

Oak Street Kids Club

By Sue Crans

"Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in Thy truth; unite my heart to fear thy name." - Psalm 86:11

This is our objective in Kids Club each week: to teach the children about the Lord Jesus, and how to have an obedient walk with Him. Some days are very discouraging and you think nothing is sinking in.

Other days are very rewarding... like last week. Betsy was teaching a lesson, very plain and simple, on the reality of hell. One little girl sitting next to me sat listening very intently, then turned to me and exclaimed, "Oh, Miss Sue, I **have** to get my mommy to pray and ask Jesus in her heart. I think she's going down there!" (as she pointed down).

Even at that, salvation needs to go a step further, to discipleship. Teaching them to have a daily walk with the Lord is another mountain to climb. You and I have our battles as we try daily to be obedient. Think of these kids, whose lives are filled daily with drugs, alcohol, poverty, single parents, and so on. Pray so very hard for each child, that the Lord will instill a real desire for the "sincere milk of the Word".

Pray for Betsy, Carol and me, that the Lord will give us the wisdom in our teaching to choose lessons that are interesting, appropriate and stirring to the heart. And pray that somehow through this we can reach a mom or dad for the Lord, too.

The Heart Of CCGM Is Missions

By Jack Crans

The historian, Arnold Toynbee, said: "All history, once you strip the rind off the kernel, is really spiritual."

Values and attitudes change when spiritual forces and movements stir the hearts of the people and when fresh winds of reason stir their minds.

All the busy agendas of CCGM, once stripped of their rind, would reveal the cry for Missions. We don't hurry and scurry from one agenda to another without reason or conviction. Binding all parts together is the continual constraining burden of Calvary's Christ for lost and hopeless peoples. Our prayer is that we might be understood in our most central aim: the effective work of the local church in high crime areas. As we have said so often, "May those in darkness be so aware of **the light** that they must either be converted or bear the discomforting **presence** of God's dear people."

As the honest analysis of history would reflect the spiritual, so also an honest analysis of CCGM would reflect Missions. The heartache is that most people understand neither one.

"I charge you, citizens of the United States, afloat on your wild sea of politics, there is another King, one Jesus: the safety of the state can be secured only in the way of humble and whole-souled loyalty to His person and of obedience to His law." -A.A. Hodge (1823-1886)

SESTU Trades Report

By George Welsh

I would like to thank all the tradesmen who are faithfully giving their time and material each Tuesday evening to the boys at SESTU. Also a thank you to the young ladies who are volunteering their time to make birthdays and holidays a special time for them. Only eternity will reveal the results of what you are giving.

We still have openings for many volunteers. The number of boys far exceeds the number of volunteers. Senior citizens and young adults who have time and love to give could get a real blessing by sharing it with the boys.

God has recently opened the door for one-on-one visitation at SESTU. He has also supplied us with a much needed part-time carpenter.

We can thank God for a Bible study on Tuesday evening. Some of the boys have already had some contact with Christians in the past, but have little knowledge of the Bible.

We would love to hear from pastors and other Christian leaders interested in getting involved in a mission field which is right in our own back yard. Think of it this way: what would you do if this happened to be **your** son there? The harvest is ripe and the doors are wide open. Please call at 384-4592!

Particular Needs For Which We Must Believe God:

- 16-passenger van for Leadership Bible Institute
- Volunteers to assist in the SESTU Christmas project
- Financial support for Leadership Bible Institute staff
  - Alan Clark Family
  - Shannon Butterfield
- Prayers of intercession
- Opening of doors to share our heart's burden

County Corrections Gospel Mission
P.O. Box 1136 • Coatesville, PA 19320

September-October Report 1989

Looking Back At Our Itinerary

By Jack Crans

Although weekly ministry occurs at South East Secure Treatment Unit, Chester County Prison, Oak Street Project and the heavy networking and correspondence in the office, continued maturing of the Leadership Bible Institute develops as well. Shannon Butterfield, now traveling with Word of Life, will soon be rejoining our staff.

The last two months placed us in meaningful ministry with so many vital projects; we name a few:

- Project Light literacy program, founder Jim Crawford
- Skyview Ministries, directors Todd Frey and Tim Landis
- SESTU (South East Secure Treatment Unit), Admin. Verne Alford, and the preparation and publication of their brochure
- Delaware Valley Conference on Obscenity
- Bayside Prison, Leesburg, NJ and Chaplain Don Reynolds
- Fellowship of Christian Peace Officers, Baltimore Co., MD
- City Gate Mission, Coatesville, PA
- Missionary Prayer Fellowship, Reading, PA
- American Missionary Fellowship, Villanova, PA
- Transformation Life Center, Albany, NY, Dir. Nevin Alwine; an outreach of Manhattan Bible Church
- Kensington Bible Church and Outreach Center, Dir. Steve Meyers
- Christian Businessmen's Luncheon, Lancaster, PA
- Word of Life Urban Workers Conference, Baltimore, MD; Dir. John Venlet
- Pennsylvania Family Institute/Prison Fellowship/State Representative meeting, Harrisburg, PA
- World Impact, Inc., Dir. Keith Phillips
- CityTeam, Chester, PA
- 24 preaching opportunities in Missions Conferences and/or related functions
- Prison Bible studies

Warden's Corner

In September and October, eight Bibles were mailed to Wardens in Pennsylvania and neighboring states. We praise God, too, for the warden who called recently to tell us how much the warden's letter means to him. An encouraging word is among God's many blessings!

Pray for our first presentation in the vendor area of the American Correctional Association Winter Conference in Nashville, Tennessee, January 14-17, 1990.

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.

The Contender is a bi-monthly publication of County Corrections Gospel Mission,
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