



THE CONTENDER

Summer 1990

"... 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

"Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I might know how frail I am."

- Psalm 39:4

The text of Psalm 39 surely is a confession of David concerning the frailty of man. Man "at his best state is altogether vanity." Unless the Lord intervene and own us, there is nothing to hope for in life.

Although these brief thoughts sound forth despair, they actually convey the key which unlocks meaning in any man's life. David asks: "Lord, what wait I for?" What can I anticipate in life? Have I any hope against the awesome darkness of this age? Can I stand in the face of so many personal enemies? With expectant and confident surrender David answers, "My hope is in Thee!"

Paul the Apostle brings forth this same hope when he says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

The longer we've labored against the darkness, the more we've come to know that our hope and confidence rest only in Him. Perhaps no scripture could target our future hope and confidence better

than Hebrews 13:20,21: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, **working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight**, through Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

Angelo Masi:

Servant and Friend of the Broken-Hearted

by Jack Crans



'Help!'

This is the cry of sixty-year-old Angelo Masi, who says that he feels like 30. Observers would agree that this man, who eagerly walks all over Okeechobee County conducting eight ministries for the Lord, does not "act his age".

Masi, better known as Mr. Angelo, was never able to get a driver's license because of poor eyesight. He feels this is God's will; therefore, he walks almost everywhere he goes. He considers it a great opportunity to share the Gospel with the people he meets while walking from one ministry to another.

The focus of his ministry is to help hurting people. This is an understandable mission for him, because he spent the

first ten years of his life in a Salvation Army orphanage. From the age of 10-18, he lived with his natural mother, but suffered much heartbreak. His reply to the question of his having to deal with bitterness is that he does not because "love covers a multitude of sin".

The reason for his attention-getting cry for help is that he realizes that without the Lord he would not have the strength to meet the needs of the hurting or to overcome the frustrations of his ministry. He is sometimes cursed and ridiculed.

Masi's eight ministries include the Eckerd Youth Center, Okeechobee County Jail, Christian Service Center, Rehabilitation Center, Dunklin Memorial Rest Home, Mexican Migrant Mission and hospital visitation. In addition to these, he regularly visits O.K. Skateway on Friday nights to share God's love with the youth there, conducts two Bible studies in private homes and travels to various churches on speaking engagements.

Write and encourage this much-needed example:

Mr. Angelo Masi
River-Bend M.H. Park Lot 25
1307 S. Parrott Ave.
Okeechobee, FL 34974

Governor Names New Corrections Commissioner

Gov. Robert P. Casey has selected Joseph D. Lehman, deputy secretary of the Washington State Department of Corrections, to be the new Pennsylvania commissioner of corrections. Lehman was designated acting commissioner on April 16 pending his confirmation. He succeeds David S. Owens, who resigned from the post on Feb. 20.

Kids Bible Club Summer 1990

by Sue Crans

"Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee."
- Psalm 63:3

We have truly had a wonderful summer with Kids Club. We decided to try a different format during the summer months and found the willing ministry assistance of the youth from Hephzibah Baptist Church. "Success" best describes this summer's program.



The programs were held Tuesday evenings following the dinner hour and varied in substance from week to week. Christian clowns, films, special guests, and a one-week Vacation Bible School describes some of the agendas.

As many as 72 children would attend some evenings. We ran the activities outdoors near the Kids Club building and saw frequently the attentiveness and participation of mothers and dads. This really afforded me the privilege of getting to know family members much better and more personally. We've been praying such a thing would happen since the beginning of Kids Club in August, 1988. One mother would bring her two little girls to the project Bible Club weekly just so she could hear the program. So many of the parents were just as enthused as they encouraged the weekly participation of their family. A real closeness with the mothers particularly is something we want to cultivate.

The finale of our summer was a trip to Sandy Cove Bible Conference at North East, Maryland. Children who had been most faithful to the program all summer attended. What a wonderful day it turned out to be! I'm not sure if Jack is yet recovered from 22 little children jumping all over him in the beautiful pool.

The day ended with a special opportunity when a little girl, Ashley, opened her heart and life to Jesus Christ as her

Savior. Pray for her as she had never heard about Jesus and His special love for her. What a blessing it was to hear her pray in her humble, sweet way as she asked the Lord's forgiveness for sins. Please pray for her, as she was just visiting that particular day and we might never see her again.

Please pray for the fall program. We want to be as effective as we can in reaching the children for Christ. Pray also that more doors may continue to open with parents.

A special thanks is due to Hephzibah's Youth and Carol McAdams for their selfless commitment to this summer's Children's Project.

County Corrections Gospel Mission Thank You Banquet

Friday, November 30, 1990
7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

Good 'n Plenty Restaurant
Route 896, Smoketown, PA

Write soon for information!
Limited space available

Christmas Projects are Underway

Thirty-five young men at South East Secure Treatment Unit could be in store for a special Christmas. Too many years have passed as these young men have been virtually ignored by the Christian community. Sunday School classes, churches and individuals are needed to assist in this vital project.

If hearts would really become available to needs, we could sponsor a gift for the children of the incarcerated men and women of the Chester County Prison as well.

Now is the finest time to write to us to volunteer your family, church or fellowship group to the challenging task before us. We will trust God for your response!

Write to us at CCGM, P.O. Box 1136, Coatesville, PA 19320 and let us know that you are ready to join in the joyful privilege of this Christmas project.

Quotes from the Mailbag

"... Sheriff M ___ is in a real battle for his job. Election is on September 11 and it may give us a new Sheriff... There has been so much bad press and negative campaign against him, but he believes God is in control..."

- From a County Prison Chaplain

"... you are to be commended for your diligence on behalf of criminal justice professionals..."

- State Prison Warden

"... My Dad is going to come up for a visit during the first part of September. That'll be great. It's been a while since I saw him last. I talked to him on the phone yesterday. By going to school and working and then getting a good job after school I'll show him that he did instill in me values that are respectable. He's done a lot for me and I hurt and disappointed him by coming here..."

- State Correctional Prison
Inmate, Dallas, PA

"... In regards to your question about if I find myself with a lot of time to study; yes I do and that is exactly what I do. I play softball occasionally but most of my nights are spent in reading and studying God's Word. I enjoy studying and growing in God's Word."

- State Correctional Inst. Inmate
Watertown, NY

"... I miss my children so, and I know they are scared of the people they are having to deal with under these circumstances of their father's and my arrest. I request for my children's sake and peace of mind that you would see them and let them know that God loves them and mommy and daddy are alright and will be doing all we can so they can come home..."

- Female Prisoner, Pa

Are You a Contender?

Submitted by Mr. Paul Fredericks
of Liberty University

Have you ever considered the meaning of the title of this newsletter: *The Contender*? If you are like me, you probably pole vault over the meaning of

words in letters, books, articles, etc. We usually do this because we have so much information hurled at us. However, if we understand that words are a product of our thoughts and that these thoughts reveal our true character (Proverbs 23:7), then we would seek to understand word meanings more often.

In this case, *The Contender* receives its name from Jude 3, which states: "...that you contend earnestly for the faith..." Now what does "contend" mean, and how are we to do it?

First, the meaning of "contend" is defined in this way by Wuest: "It was used of athletes contending in athletic contests. The word speaks of vigorous, intense, determined struggle to defeat the opposition. Our word 'agony' is the English spelling of the noun form of this word. The Greek athletes exerted themselves to the point of agony in an effort to win the contest."

Another commentator adds: "'Contend' was commonly used in connection with the Greek stadium to denote a strenuous struggle to overcome an opponent, as in a wrestling match...Involved is the thought of the expenditure of all one's energy in order to prevail."

These definitions are what we term the historical, literal meaning of the word. Hence, when we apply it today from these definitions, we must predetermine in our minds that the battle for the faith is an intense effort. It is also one in which we as believers will struggle and wrestle to the point of agony in order to overcome the opponent.

Secondly, how are we to "contend earnestly for the faith"? We will wait until the next issue to answer this question.

Warden's Corner

In June through August, we sent six Bibles to Wardens.

Pennsylvania Inmate Population Statistics

March 31, 1990

State	21,318
County	18,203
Total	36,521



Shannon Butterfield Assigned as Chaplain's Associate at Chester County Prison

First and foremost, I want to thank all of you who have been praying for City Gate, CCGM and myself. God has truly been pouring out His blessings in our lives. I still marvel at times at the miraculous changes that God has brought about in my life as it causes me to love and praise Him all the more.

During the past couple of years, God has taken me through some tough situations and answered many prayers in my life and in the lives that touch my life. The Lord called me to full time ministry late in 1988 and I've been trying to be available every moment since. As far as ministry for me, the Lord has called me to go back to that which he has saved me from and to be a witness, a light, the aroma of Christ to those who are perishing.

For months now, there's hardly a day goes by when the text of Ezekiel 33 and 34 doesn't surface in my mind and leave the picture left by Ezekiel 33:31: "And they come unto thee as the people come, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."

In reading Acts 1:8, we have grasped and answered the charge to be witnesses of Christ unto the "uttermost part of the earth", but we have forgotten about our "Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria". Let's pray that God will help us to be a brighter light, a more effective witness for Christ in our own backyard.

Thank you, in the love of Christ,
Shannon Butterfield

Leadership Bible Institute Heading for Jail

by Jack Crans

On July 1, we made the necessary and yet painful decision to leave the Lancaster farm. Although we were loaned the buildings for \$1.00 per year, little did we realize that utilities would cost nearly \$1,000.00 per month! To avoid spending all of CCGM's funds, we now seek to implement the same goals within the classrooms, chapel and cells of the Chester County Prison. We still are committed to the training up of indigenous leadership to our broken communities.

Most painful of all is the loss of Alan and Judie Clark, who in their 15 months with CCGM were without adequate financial support to continue. They labored faithfully and soon will be settling near Harrisburg while continuing their teaching and counseling ministry within the local church. Judie has blossomed as a free-lance writer and has just published her first article in the September/October issue of the *Christian Herald* magazine.

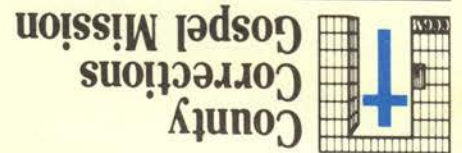
Looking back, we saw the teaching of many men for the claims of Christ. Some have drifted on to continued hurtful lusts, while others move anxiously forward in Christian growth.

Although many will have an opinion on the closing of the farm, be it known that the training of indigenous leadership for our Home Missions field has not yet been taken to heart in the agendas of the local church.

Your questions are welcome at any time.

CCGM to Adminstrate Chaplaincy Program at Chester County Prison

Effective August 1, 1990, County Corrections Gospel Mission was chosen to lead and direct the Chaplaincy Program at the Chester County Prison. The resources of the Bible-believing Church in Chester County are greatly needed. Careful coordination of an effective



Bible-based program is underway. The remainder of 1990 will be devoted to the planning and implementation of a mature, functional ministry for 1991.

The approximately 570 residents reflect great needs, while at the same moment await meaningful programming. The priority of all plans shall be the instruction of God's Word.

The Leadership Bible Institute model will be made available to Chester County Prison inmates. The maturing of men and women in the Scriptures will be paramount in all that we do.

Please pray for this wonderful open door and consider seriously your role in the approaching days of great privilege.



From The Bookshelf

The God of Stone and Spiders

by Charles Colson
Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL

"It is time for the Church to be the Church, to faithfully serve God on the battlefield, rather than to slip quietly into voluntary exile."

Why Are Prayers Unanswered?

by Jack Crans

Zechariah 7:8-14: "And the Word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions, every man to his brother; and oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the sojourner, nor the poor, and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.

"But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

"Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the Law and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in His spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

"Therefore it is come to pass that, as he cried, and they would not hear, so they cried, and I would not hear, sayeth the LORD of hosts.

"But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate."

Areas to Designate Gifts

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

Note:

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

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