

Crossroad

NETWORK NEWS

MAY 2005

FAITH-BASED MONEY for CRO\$\$ROAD?



■ Faith-Based Money for Crossroad? p. 2

■ Incarcerated Illegal Immigrants p. 3 ■ Instructor wants more time to Correct Lesson p. 4

■ God Never Gave up on Me p. 5 ■ Criminal Justice in the News p. 6

Faith-Based Cash for Crossroad?

By Dr. David Schuringa, President



Crossroad Network News is decidedly not a fund-raising piece, so we rarely write articles on money issues. However, since I so frequently get asked whether CBI is able to get any of the faith-based dollars from the government, I thought the subject might warrant some attention here.

The idea of receiving some faith-based support certainly looks attractive at first. Most non-profits have 80% or more of their budget covered by tuition, fees, denominational quotas and/or government grants. Local churches get to ask for money by way of offerings two, three or more times every week. We at CBI, however, have to raise all of our support with prayer, a short note included with the monthly newsletter, and an occasional (ordinarily once a year) fund-raising letter. Sometimes it gets tiring. And with the tsunami disaster, this is turning out to be a tough year for us financially, something like after 9/11 when everyone seemed to be sending their money to New York City. I'm praying folks won't forget the prisoners (Heb. 13:3).

So when President Bush ordered that government grant opportunities be opened to faith-based organizations, he had my attention. Last fall I even attended a conference sponsored by the White House designed to educate leaders of faith-based organizations about possibilities for government funding.



"It can become a trap as the tail begins to wag the dog."

What I learned there was that government money may never be used to teach theology (whether from the Bible, the Koran or the Book of Mormon). Additionally, these grants could only be for "secular" activities that non faith-based organizations can also do, such as running a soup kitchen.

The problem is that all we do at Crossroad is teach the Bible. It's what we're all about.

Then I started thinking, what "secular" things could we do to get some of that faith-based money? Well, one thing we could do is to take Jesus out of our curriculum. You know, we could offer a kind of common grace-based reentry curriculum. We'd teach solid principles for successful living, but we just won't make any exclusive claims about the truth of Christianity. But then, I thought, is that really what we want to be about? I could be wrong, but I'm pretty sure that's not what our Instructors signed on for.

So then I got thinking about other kinds of "secular" things we could do to get our hands on those government grants. What about our new reentry program? Could

we at least get that funded? It helps our released students with things like finding a job, securing housing and searching for a church (oops, maybe we'd have to scratch that last one). And then, one day, I discovered the Acton Institute.

The Acton Institute, headed by Rev. Robert Sirico, is a conservative, Grand Rapids-based think tank. Acton is a strong proponent of Republican values, and certainly no critic of our President. But I came across an article on their web site that voices some concerns about the effect the faith-based initiative might have on some Christian organizations. The author was concerned that the program may lead some good faith-based agencies down the wrong path. How? They could be tempted to dream of increasingly "secular" things to do to get the money, and end up losing sight of their core vision.

They must have been reading my mind over there at the Acton Institute! Of course it could distort the vision! Who wouldn't rather fill out some paper work and get big fat government grants instead of begging you folks for money? OK, we don't beg, but you get the idea. You can see that it's all very seductive. And it can become a trap as the tail begins to wag the dog.

We're going to make sure we stay the course at Crossroad. If there's ever money out there for what we naturally do, we'll look into it. But we're not going to make up "secular" things for CBI to do in order to scoop up some easy cash. We're a Bible-believing and Bible-teaching ministry. It's what we are all about. Unless you give me a good reason to change course, we are going to stay that way. And I'll just have to keep trusting that God will move enough hearts to keep up with the financial demands of continuing to do what He called us to do.

Incarcerated Illegal Immigrants

by Jonathan Shaw



Immigration, illegal and otherwise, is a hot-button issue in the United States these days. Recently, the Supreme Court has heard a spate of immigration law cases, and renewed concerns over homeland security are causing some politicians to push hard for strict immigration reform.

It's also an issue that won't go away any time soon, as an estimated 11 million foreign nationals are currently living illegally within the borders of the United States, and many more enter and live in this country legally every year. While some activists would suggest that immigrants respect the law less than US citizens, recent studies have shown that illegal immigrants are actually *less likely* than native citizens to commit a crime. Despite this fact, some do end up in prison, and a number of these become CBI students.

Like so many of those whom CBI seeks to reach, immigrants tend to be among the least and the last of our society. Many speak little or no English when they arrive in the United States. This barrier to integration alone can be insurmountable. Unable to find consistent work without English skills, and unable to have the time to study English as they work the long hours required by the difficult jobs they can get, few hope for more than a better life for those who they are supporting. When their desperate situations grow even worse, some turn to crime. This path frequently lands them in prison.

Once locked up, immigrants face a more difficult situation than non-immigrant prisoners. Many are linguistically isolated from guards, officials, legal advisors and other inmates. While most prisoners are lonely and separated from their families, immigrant inmates know that they have no hope to hear from or see their distant families. Divided by language and distanced from social support, these prisoners can lose all hope.

"God calls us to reach these immigrants."

God calls us to reach these immigrants. Opportunity to join a study of the Bible in Spanish, with someone who expresses sincere concern for their well-being, can change their lives. As CBI student,



Secundino O. from Wisconsin writes (in Spanish), "I feel very alone because my whole family is in Mexico . . . but I thank God today and always because through you, and the letters that I receive from you, God has shown me that I'm not alone, and that I have a family that loves me and thinks of me – and that family is you."

It is too easy to ignore or feel contempt towards the immigrants in our society. Those in prison are even easier to disregard as the worst elements of a difficult population. However, Christ does not allow us to ignore these brothers and sisters. He reached across linguistic (Acts 2:4) and social (John 4:9) barriers to touch those who most desperately needed His loving power in their lives. He commands us to invite the stranger in (Matt. 25:23). The Bible calls us

to treat "aliens and strangers" in the same way we are to treat others who are in need (Ex. 22:21; Lev. 19:10,33-34; Deut. 10:18; Ps. 146:9; Heb. 13:2).

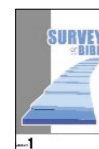
Immigration remains a difficult and hotly-debated subject in America, but whether we should reach out in love to illegal and legal immigrants in our society, and particularly to those in our prisons, is a subject on which Christ has already had the last word.

Jonathan Shaw serves as an Associate Editor at CBI

More and more churches are discovering the Crossroad Curriculum for use in one-on-one and small group Bible studies (Middle School through Adult), as well as in discipling new Christians.

Courses Available:

- Great Truths of the Bible
- Survey of the Bible
- Ten Men You Should Know
- Ten Women You Should Know
- In God We Trust
- Sermon on the Mount
- Biblical Interpretation



Discount Pricing Available for Large Volume Orders

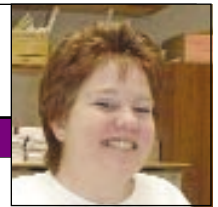
1-800-668-2450

Ask for a Free Catalog



God Never Gave Up on Me

by Maureen O'Leary



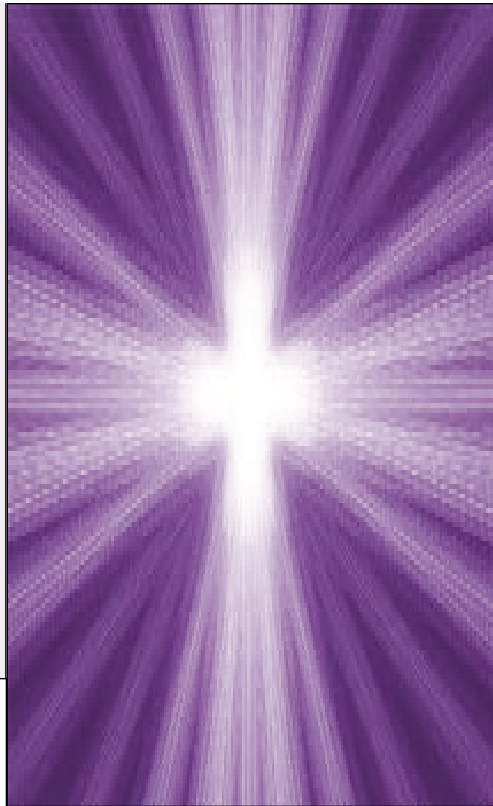
God rescued me from a life of destruction, a living hell of drugs and prostitution. It's been a rough road, but with His help I'm living a new life in Christ.

At age 10 I started using drugs and alcohol, hanging out with the wrong crowd and doing whatever I wanted. As a result, I often ended up in trouble. It was me against the world. Soon, my fast lifestyle pulled me away from everyone who loved me, especially God.

In 1987, my daughter and I were in a terrible car accident. I died three times on the operating table, but God kept bringing me back. My daughter shouldn't have survived, but God protected her from any harm. The seed of faith was planted in my heart through this experience. Still, I resumed my destructive behavior following the recovery.

"Please Lord, *help me,*
I'm lost and I need
you."

Though in 1990 I almost lost my son in childbirth, I was using alcohol and crack on a daily basis and turned to prostitution to support my habit. I was in and out of jail. I would leave my kids with my parents so I could use drugs. I would return home after cleaning up but it was never long before I'd start using again. In eight years I went through 19 drug treatment centers.

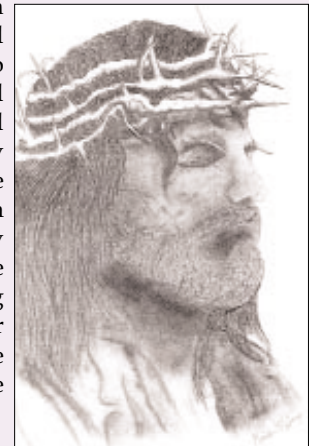


During those years I was raped and beaten several times, and had knives and guns put to my head. My drug addiction raged on. Even after my 20th relapse into drug abuse, I was again out on the street, looking to get high.

One early morning I found myself out of money and out of drugs. I was getting ready to call home when suddenly the desire to pray overwhelmed me. Right there on the street I prayed: "Please Lord,

help me, I'm lost and I need you. I hate drugs, I hate my life. PLEASE help me, if you're there." The moment I finished, lightning struck a nearby transformer, and all the lights around me went dark. The desire for drugs suddenly left my body. I wept. I knew God had rescued me, and I was finally ready to believe in Him.

Despite my new faith, I was still an angry person and needed help. On October 12, 2001 I was in jail again, this time facing prison for a terrible crime I had committed. Behind bars I began attending church. I also became a CBI student and started to get to know the God who had saved me so many times in the past. I was in His Word every day, and He was changing me. The anger that had once consumed me disappeared.



This picture of Jesus was drawn by Maureen's daughter, Kristin

After three years I was released to a half-way house. I called CBI to see if I could be a volunteer in their office to fulfill community service hours. Even after hearing my situation, they invited me to come in, no questions asked. Because of CBI I was able to go home under house arrest. I volunteer at CBI headquarters three days a week. I love it! The staff is wonderful, and the volunteers are so Christ-like—I feel right at home here. And I continue to complete my CBI lessons. I know that Christ won't let me fall back into my old life again.

I don't know what God has in store for me, but I do know that He is working in my life every day. It's been a rough journey, and it's hard to believe that God could love someone like me. But I know that He does, and that I can trust Him with my life. When things are going badly for you, keep the faith, because He loves you, and will never let you go.

The 2005 "Multiply Your Love" promotional video is now available on DVD or VHS. This five-minute overview of CBI's ministry is a great way to help others catch the vision for God's exciting work in the prisons. Show it in a worship service or small group setting, send it to a friend, or view it in your own home. Order your free copy today at www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org or call the toll free number below.

1-800-668-2450

www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org



Order Yours
FREE
TODAY!

Criminal Justice in the News

Note: This column will keep you informed, in a fair and balanced way, of important and interesting criminal justice issues and stories in the news.

Secular Groups Lashing out at Faith-Based Programs

WASHINGTON—The rise in popularity of faith-based programs for prisoners is experiencing a back-lash of criticism from church-state separation advocates and civil libertarians. Rob Boston, spokesman for Americans United for Separation of Church and State is one of them. "The faith-based programs are a bit of a fad in corrections



right now. I think some of it is based on junk science, phony assumptions and simply pie-in-the-sky thinking." Prison officials who favor the programs maintain that the religious programs don't violate inmates' rights because they are voluntary. Apparently, Boston is unaware of independent studies conducted by New York University, The University of Pennsylvania, Barna Research and Prison Fellowship which indicate dramatic drops in the recidivism rates among inmates who participate in faith-based programs. CBI's five-year faith-based reentry education program is even more extensive and in-depth than those tested.

Inmate's Rising I.Q. Scores Could Trigger His Execution

YORKTOWN, VA—In 1998, high school drop-out Daryl R. Atkins went on a four month crime spree. He was arrested for murder and received the death penalty. His case was appealed to the United States Supreme Court because he had scored only 59 on his I.Q. test. The Supreme Court ruled that the death penalty for the mentally retarded is unconstitutional and Virginia law holds that those scoring less than 70 on the test fall into that category. Recently, however, the young man scored 74 and 76 when taking the test, raising questions about his eligibility for execution. A jury will decide his fate. His clinical psychologist, Dr. Evan S. Nelson, maintains that the

rising scores should not be admitted because the improvement was caused by the mental stimulation of the case itself. "Mr. Atkins received more intellectual stimulation in prison than he did during his late adolescence and early adulthood. That included practicing his reading and writing skills, learning about abstract legal concepts and communicating with professionals." To save his life, the defense has to prove that Atkins was retarded before he was 18, which will be difficult to establish since he was never tested as a youth.

Michigan Experiments with Reentry Initiative

LANSING, MI—Under the leadership of Gov. Jennifer Granholm, the State of Michigan is testing a new reentry initiative. The Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) will network with community initiatives to help inmates transition back into their communities. Securing identification, housing and employment are among their top priorities for ex-offenders. The MPRI will be divided into three phases, "Getting Ready," the institutional phase, "Going Home," a six month period following release and "Staying Home." According to Russ Marlan, spokesman for the corrections department, the MPRI is a definite change in the mentality of the corrections system. If

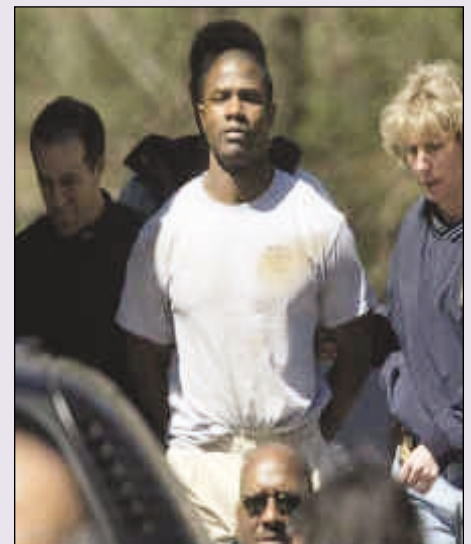


the testing period in key demonstration areas shows positive results, the government hopes to see the program implemented state-wide in 2006.

Gunman Discovers His Purpose

ATLANTA, GA—After murdering a judge and three others in a bloody courtroom shootout, fugitive Brian Nichols forced his way into Ashley Smith's apartment at 2 a.m. and held her hostage at gunpoint. The turning point in the ordeal came when he granted her request to read to him from Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose Driven Life*. She

began with the first paragraph of the 33rd chapter where she happened to be up to that day: "We serve God by serving others. The world defines greatness in terms of power, possessions, prestige and position. If you can demand service from others you've arrived. In our self serving culture with it's me first mentality, acting like a servant is not a popular concept." He stopped her and asked her to read the passage again. Eventually, he surrendered to police, ending the 26 hour escape. For 20 years, CBI has discovered that when inmates find their divine purpose in life, dramatic changes



indeed can and do take place. Dramatic changes also occur in the lives of church members when they discover the same purpose for their lives, "serving God by serving others."

Did you know that when you donate appreciated stock or real estate to CBI you can deduct the full amount and you do not have to pay any taxes on the gain?



Q and A

Questions for Crossroad

Instructor Wants More Time to Correct His Student's Lessons

Q Dear Crossroad,
Could I return my student's lesson to him in six days instead of four? Currently, his lesson arrives on Thursday, a day which is already extremely busy for me. The extra time would help me feel more refreshed as I review his lesson. What difference does a couple of days make anyway?

Instructor in Indiana

A Dear Instructor,
I'm sorry that you have been finding it difficult to correct your student's lesson within four days. It is highly important that the four day rule be kept and there can be no exceptions allowed. As a ministry, CBI has promised our students and referral affiliates that the lessons will be returned in a timely manner. Since a Tier 1 or Tier 2 lesson arriving on Thursday must be corrected, returned and reported by sometime on Monday, you don't have to do it on your busy Thursdays. However, if you feel that you are still unable to make it work out, perhaps you could begin receiving lessons every other week. In extreme cases we

might be able to change the day the lessons are mailed to your church. If you plan ahead, however, you might find that you are able to carve out some time to correct your lessons within that four day period. At the same time, while it is true that Instructors are the essential component of this ministry, we don't want this to become an overwhelming burden for anyone either. So if you discover that you are simply unable to help us keep the four day promise to our students, this may not be the right ministry for you at this time in your life. We'll be praying for you because the inmates need you!

Q Dear Crossroad,
My student answered a question differently than the answer key suggested. I don't think his answer is incorrect, just different. Do I have to mark it wrong?

Instructor in Michigan

A Dear Instructor,
It's great that you want to make a positive impact on your student and that, when his answer is close, you hesitate to mark it wrong. You have the gentleness of spirit we love to see in a CBI Instructor! In such cases, I would suggest that you go ahead and mark the question correct, but add a written comment like,

"Yes, this is true but WHY did Peter weep bitterly?" This will help him rethink the question at a deeper level, so that he can arrive at the intended answer. You seem to understand that CBI is first of all a discipleship program and only second a school, so we're not too concerned with technicalities. It is obvious that your goal is to teach the truth, but also to cultivate a love for studying God's Word. You understand that your student's prison context is an extremely negative one, and that your contact is likely the only positive interchange he ever experiences. Keep up the good work!




Providing
Prisoners with a
Faith-Based Reentry Education

Equipping
the Church to Make Disciples

Guiding
Inmates into
Reentry Agencies upon
Their Release

Educating
the Church on Criminal and
Restorative Justice Issues

CBI
Making A Difference




Crossroad
BIBLE INSTITUTE

P.O. Box 900
Grand Rapids, MI
49509-0900

ph: 616.530.1300
fx: 616.530.1302

www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org
mail@crossroadbible.org

