

# Crossroad

## NETWORK NEWS

JANUARY 2006

A NEW YEAR'S

# RESOLUTION



a gentleness that has been deepened, tempered, enriched and seasoned by the adversities of life...

# Crossroad NETWORK NEWS

2 A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

3 SEND-A-CARD PROGRAM EXPLODES!

4 WHEN YOUR TIER 2 STUDENT DOESN'T WRITE

5 PRIVATIZATION OF PRISONS: LESS EXPENSIVE BUT NOT PERFECT

6 INMATES MAY LOSE READING PRIVILEGES

7 STUDENT REQUESTS PRAYER FOR ACQUITTAL

# JANUARY 2006

The Mission of *Crossroad Network News* is to promote partnership in the ministry of CBI through communication



By Dr. David Schuringa, President

# A New Year's Resolution

a gentleness that has been deepened, tempered, enriched and seasoned by the adversities of life...



## R esolution

Last month we concluded the year with a meditation on a portion of Philippians 4:5: “The Lord is near.” This month I’d like to begin the new year with the other half of that verse: “Let your gentleness be evident to all.” The experience of the Lord’s nearness, then, should result in a gentleness that is evident to all. What precisely does this mean?

The English word “gentleness” does not do justice to what Paul is saying. The dominant philosophy in the Roman Empire at this time was Stoicism. Its major proponent was a contemporary of Paul named Seneca. Paul knew his audience.

According to John Calvin, the Greek word *epiekes* was a key word in Stoic philosophy that denoted “moderation of spirit—when we are not easily moved by injuries, when we are not easily annoyed by adversity, but retain equanimity of temper.” The word means gentleness, forbearing, consideration, agreeability, moderation, kindness—being seasoned, steadfast and reliable no matter what life’s circumstances may be. It is said you can’t do anything about the hand that is dealt you, but you can do something about how you play your hand.

But Paul’s call to “gentleness” is not the big-boys-don’t-cry type of stoicism. He is meeting his listeners where they are, but also taking them much fur-

ther. He offers his audience something much richer, deeper and longer-lasting in his call to *epiekes*.

Essentially, those who have experienced the Lord's nearness don't panic in life. They are not threatened or upset by life's circumstances. They can go through adversity and are familiar with suffering. Though life can be cruel and it can make you cry, they are grounded in the Lord and therefore cannot be moved. Yes, they have a gentleness, but it is a gentleness that has been deepened, tempered, enriched and seasoned by the adversities of life.

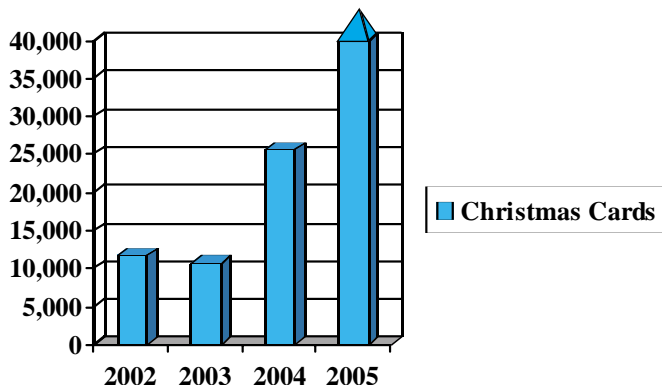
They have a certain something extra, a can't-put-your-finger-on-it quality about them as a result of the Lord's nearness. It's that quality you have as a child of God that shows you are going to make it no mat-

ter how wretched the disease, no matter how tough the finances, no matter how deep the sorrow, no matter how treacherous the road ahead may appear.

And Paul says that we must let this gentleness be evident to all. Literally, Paul is saying, let your gentleness be *experienced* by everyone with whom you come into contact. The people at work, but also at home. People in the church, but also unbelievers in your neighborhood. The rich and the powerful, but also the helpless and homeless.

And, of course, those in prison. The Lord is near to you so that you can bring others near to Him. Together, may God bless our resolution to reach tens of thousands more prisoners this year so that they may experience the nearness of God.

## Send-A-Card Program Explodes!

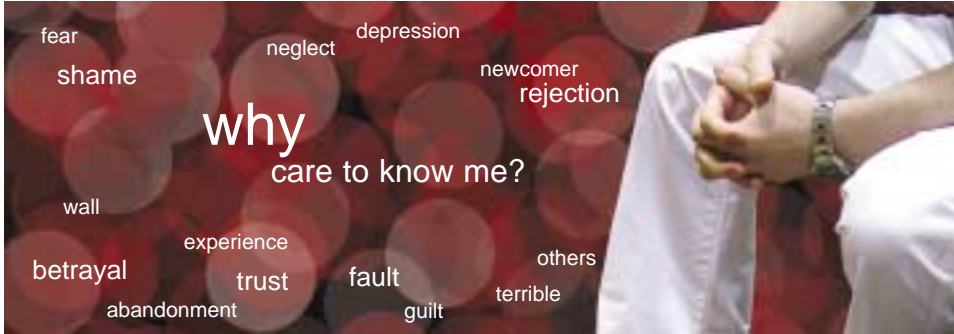


2005 turned out to be the biggest year yet for our Send-A-Card Program. As of this writing, churches, Bible Study groups, Sunday School classes, families and individuals sent over 40,000 cards, easily outpacing the donations of previous years. For the first time, there were enough cards for the entire student body! Thank you to everyone for the enormous response, and thank you for providing this important symbol of light and hope to inmates during the most difficult time of the year for them. Watch future issues of CNN for student responses.



# When Your Tier 2 Student Doesn't Write

By Karen Loyd



**W**hen first assigned a new Tier 2 student, Instructors look forward to getting to know their students through the lessons and letters that the inmates write. However, some Tier 2 mentors face an unforeseen and difficult obstacle: a lack of open communication from their student. Breaking down the walls of communication caused by broken hearts, abandonment, guilt, shame, fear, depression or distrust can be a difficult trial of our patience, as these walls often have surrounded a person's heart for many years.

Some of you facing this trial contact me to express your frustrations. You feel that you must be doing something wrong because your student hasn't written or is extremely distant. The silence causes you to question, "Is this my fault?"

It's important that you realize that the lack of communication from your student is most likely *not* your fault. It more likely stems from your student's fear of rejection and lack of trust caused by past experience of betrayal and neglect. Inmates have feelings like: "Why should anyone care to know me? I've committed a terrible crime, and I'm a terrible person. Can I trust this newcomer?"

Anthony is one such student. His Instructor, Vida, waited so long to receive personal letters from him. After seven lessons of silence, Vida was concerned. In her score report, she commented that he "never writes a letter or makes any comments...." What a wonderful surprise, then, when Anthony sent her a "beautiful letter" with his eighth lesson. She had been working patiently and diligently with him for eight

months, and his response was an answer to her prayers. Anthony included a prayer request for "opening up to others" and explained why he had not written. He began his letter to Vida with these words:

"Let me first say that I'm sorry for not writing a letter to you sooner. I sometimes build walls around myself to keep others out whom I don't want close to me. Considering where I'm at, I hope you can understand that. These walls, I've found, also keep me from the fellowship in the Lord's name that I so desperately need....I want to thank you for your encouragement and individual attention to my lessons."

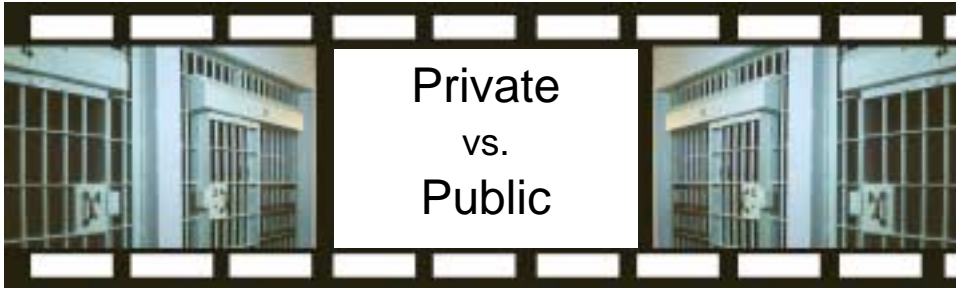
Vida was thrilled to receive the letter and encourages others to "be patient and keep praying for a breakthrough!" I Thessalonians 5:14 reminds us to "encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone." Your faithfulness and patience will be the key to giving emotionally-distant students the needed courage to open up. If they see that you care for them, continue to write to them, continue to encourage them and show interest in them no matter what, you'll most likely earn their trust and they'll eventually open up. We have never required Tier 2 students to include a letter to their Instructors, but if you are patient, they will hopefully learn to appreciate the benefits of fellowship with other believers.

*Karen Loyd serves as the Instructor Coordinator at CBI.*



# Privatization of Prisons: Less Expensive But Not Perfect

|By Aaron Van Oosterhout



**O**n the evening of July 20, 2004, in the tiny town of Olney Springs, Colorado, the dying light of the descending sun soon gave way to bright-burning flames roaring as high as thirty feet in the air. Inmates at the local prison had gained control of the facility and were bent on destroying everything in their path, and it would take guards and local law enforcement hours to restore order.

As a Colorado Department of Corrections (CDOC) inspector had warned in the months prior to the riot, guards at the Crowley County Correctional Facility (CCCF) were ill-equipped to handle large-scale prisoner aggression. In addition, CCCF authorities had largely disregarded warnings that prison conditions were below the state average, and that such conditions could lead to inmate frustration and hostility. CCCF is a privately-run prison, and the CDOC had little power to obligate the prison to reform.

This incident confirmed the fears of many state officials who spoke against prison privatization, and intensified the debate over private and public institutions. This

debate is not likely to lessen anytime soon as many states face rising inmate populations and nearly stagnant prison budgets.

With tougher crime policy and mandatory sentencing laws, many DOCs simply cannot afford to build and staff enough institutions to house all of their states' offenders, and so must find other options.

One frequently-used option is to contract prisoners out to other states with available bed space. As prisoners are farther displaced from their families, however, this can lead to inmate dissatisfaction and more violence.

Another option is to house prisoners in county jails, but counties often need all the space they have. Finally, states may consider releasing inmates earlier, but this tends to be unpopular with the residents of the cities and towns on the receiving end. Thus, the state may contract prisoners out to the care of a private company.

Put simply, private prisons cost the government less taxpayer money, as they are typically more

efficient and have similar-quality institutions as those that are state-run. They are governed by a competitive market, and therefore *must* cost less than a public prison or run the risk of losing a lucrative government contract. Once the state opens the door to privatization, even its public institutions may become more efficient in order to “compete” with the private facilities. Accounting for this competitive effect, a study conducted by the Rio Grande Foundation in March 2003 concluded that “an unprivatized state that chooses to privately house 45 percent of its prisoners can cut its per-prisoner budget by a third.”

As Colorado learned from its own experiment, however, strict privatization is not a perfect solution. The state government had little oversight of the CCCF, and it could not obligate the prison to adopt safer standards. Just this past November, the CDOC rewrote its contract with the private company that runs the CCCF, Corrections Corporation of America. With this new contract, the CDOC has the power to withhold government payments to the facility if the CCCF does not maintain conditions at least equal to Colorado's public institutions.

As prison populations continue to soar and citizens demand inexpensive solutions, then, state officials will undoubtedly keep a close eye on the CCCF as they choose between public or private.

*K. Aaron Van Oosterhout serves as an Assistant Editor of The Center for Advanced Studies at Crossroad Bible Institute.*

# IN THE NEWS...

KUNST-ESSAY  
Situationalist  
Internationale,  
Movement Group  
Workers' Council  
Temple of the  
Temple of the



## **Inmates May Lose Reading Privileges**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—This past November, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear a prison official's appeal to ban misbehaving inmates from receiving newspapers and magazines. Earlier in the year, prisoners from the "long-term segregation" unit of a Pennsylvania prison won an appeal to receive the periodicals despite their unruly conduct. The majority opinion of the Court of Appeals panel ruled that penal institutions could enforce rules regarding security, but prohibiting prisoners from reading periodicals did not impose this security. The third judge on the panel, Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito, dissented. He said that "these regulations are reasonably related to the legitimate penological goal of curbing prison misconduct." The prison official's appeal is based on Alito's dissent. The Supreme Court will hear the appeal this coming spring.

-*Los Angeles Times*

## **British Jails Give Keys to Prisoners**

**LONDON**—In 22 British jails, officials have given inmates the keys to their own cells in case of an emergency when they would have to be evacuated. According to the British Audit Office, there are currently 77,774 people incarcerated in Britain, with only 373 more to go before the jails reach their official capacity. As there are not

enough prison employees to safely escort prisoners during a crisis, giving inmates the keys was deemed necessary. Security is maintained by a fence surrounding the facility. Home Secretary Charles Clarke discussed various measures to reduce the prison population, including early "electronic tagging and release."

Officials once entertained the possibility of prison ships, but this idea was discarded earlier in the year. Clarke blamed the overcrowding on rising numbers of European and foreign nationals in British prisons, primarily from Turkey, India, Pakistan, Jamaica, Nigeria and Ireland.

-*Sydney Morning Herald*

## **Protests Against Long Distance Price Gouging**

**NEW YORK CITY**—On November 16, protestors gathered here to demand that Gov. George Pataki cancel the contract between state prisons and telephone company MCI. All outgoing phone calls from prisons must be made collect, and MCI is the only service provider for the prisons. The company charges call recipients a \$3.00 "initiation fee" with a subsequent 16¢ per minute. According to the *New York Daily News*, this is a 630 percent markup from the price of a typical collect call outside of prisons. Said the editorial board of the *News*, "Making it harder for inmates to talk with family members serves no positive purpose at all; in fact, experts

agree inmates are humanized by contact with the outside world. So Pataki's shameful overcharging of those who happen to have sons, daughters, spouses or clients behind bars is not only constitutionally dubious, but unsound as a matter of public safety."

-*New York Daily News*

## **Prison Break Possible Due to Empty Guard Towers**

**FORT MADISON, IA**—Two inmates escaped from the Iowa State Penitentiary, using a rope fashioned from upholstery fabric taken from the prison's furniture shop and a "homemade" metal grappling hook. Sometime after 7:00 p.m., the pair heaved the hook over a wall in the prison's southwest corner and scaled the wall in view of an unmanned guard tower. The Corrections Department spokesperson said that the guard tower was empty due to budget cuts. To replace the guards, the prison had installed an alarm wire that would alert officials if touched, but both escapees managed to overcome the wall without tripping the alarm. While one of the inmates was captured in Illinois eventually, the other remains at large. Iowa Sen. Gene Fraise told the *Associated Press*, "I don't want to say I told you so, but those towers were put there for security, and when you don't man those towers, that puts a hole in your security."

-*Associated Press*

# QUESTIONS FOR CROSSROAD



## Student Requests Prayer for Acquittal

**Q.** My student says that he is going to trial next month, and his prayer request is to be acquitted of his murder charge. How should I respond to this?

*Instructor in Alabama*

**A.** Since you most likely do not know all the circumstances of his case, it is impossible to know whether you should pray for an acquittal. Indeed, we do not encourage Instructors to take sides in criminal cases. However, you may certainly assure him that you are praying for him and his trial. *We do encourage Instructors to write that they are praying for justice to be served.* In this way, if they are innocent, you are indeed praying for an acquittal. And if they are guilty, you are praying that an appropriate sentence be applied. So, you have not taken sides but have instead helped him feel the love, acceptance and support of the church.

**Q.** When students finish Lesson 12 of *Great Truths of the Bible*, are they all automatically given the opportunity to take the next course? If they are, can we as Instructors encourage them to continue on?

*Instructor in Michigan*

**A.** As you know, last year we added *Survey of the Bible* to the Tier 1 program. Only inmates and

released prisoners will automatically be sent the first lesson of *Survey* after successful completion of *Great Truths of the Bible*—non-inmates will not. But yes, by all means encourage inmate students to continue! Constant Instructor encouragement is crucial for student retention. In fact, because of our Instructors, CBI's retention rate is as good as or better than distance-education programs for non-inmates!

## Rev. Feddes' Installation Service



You are cordially invited to witness the installation of Rev. David Feddes as the Director of The Center for Advanced Studies at Crossroad Bible Institute.

The service will be held  
**January 8, 6:00 p.m.**

at  
**Family of Faith Church  
6645 W. Steger Road  
Monee, IL 60449**




## MAKE A LASTING IMPACT


### Remember to Include CBI in Your Will

"Remember Those in Prison"  
Heb. 13:3

**ASK FOR A FREE ESTATE PLANNING BROCHURE**



**Next Month in CNN:  
President's Report for 2005**



**Crossroad**  
BIBLE INSTITUTE

# PRISON

NEED NOT BE A WASTE OF TIME

Crossroad Bible Institute provides inmates faith-based reentry educational programming. Scientific studies show that recidivism rates drop dramatically for inmates who participate in faith-based programs during incarceration. Please "remember those in prison" (Hebrews 13:3) by supporting Crossroad Bible Institute's church-based discipleship program. Your tax-deductible gift will change lives.



**Crossroad**  
BIBLE INSTITUTE

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

ph: 616.530.1300  
fx: 616.530.1302  
[www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org](http://www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org)  
[mail@crossroadbible.org](mailto:mail@crossroadbible.org)

