



principleemotion



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Dr. David Schuringa



Should Thankful Giving Be Based on Principle or Emotion?

By Dr. David Schuringa, President

I read with interest a recent newspaper article entitled, “Americans’ Generosity Is Enormous But Sometimes Perplexing.” The author was amazed how Americans respond so generously when we have a disaster like Hurricane Katrina. However, she was perplexed that (1) people insist on contributing to disaster relief when aid agencies already have a surplus of funds and (2) while Americans respond generously to the suffering covered by the news media, they tend to forget those who suffer in their own backyards.

It is perplexing.

It was a relief to read the column, because as head of a non-profit organization, I suppose it sounds like “sour grapes” if I say what she did. However, as with 9/11 and the tsunami in

Southeast Asia, more gifts than necessary are being diverted to the Gulf, to the detriment of ministries like CBI. We started the year behind due to the tsunami and, unless God’s people respond strongly, we’re not looking at a pretty year-end.

Televised disasters seem never to hurt for money. The U.S. government is pledging billions for Katrina’s clean-up. Movie, sports and rock stars are giving millions as each postures for the paparazzi. In the fine print of their appeals for funds, relief agencies explain that if they happen to receive more than they need for a particular project, the money will be used for “similar” causes. They know they will get more than is necessary. Let’s face it, even repro-bates are moved to donate in response to the relentless, 24-hour-a-day images.

The point I’m trying to make is that Christian giving needs to be based on principle, not emotion. Christians need to ask, “Is there really a need for my money here?” More importantly, does anyone remember the forgotten ones? My wife, Mary, and I have discussed, half-kidding, how much easier it would be to raise money for a ministry to needy children. Or for disasters that get free television coverage. Most people are not emotionally moved to help inmates. This is why they are called the “forgotten ones.” Giving based on reason rather than emotion, however, knows that CBI’s cause is right and necessary, according to Scripture.

In the United States, Thanksgiving Day is commemorated this month. But no matter where we live, we seek to demonstrate our gratefulness to God. To do so, we need to be sure that our giving is not based on emotions that are easily manipulated, but on sound principles for giving thanks to God for what He has done for us.

I’m deeply grateful that the disaster response is providing all that is needed, and that even unbelievers were moved to help. But now I’m asking for your *thoughtful*, generous Thanksgiving and year-end support for remembering those in prison—a principle God has clearly expressed in His Word (Heb. 13:3). Then giving won’t be “perplexing,” but will make perfect sense.

In the News...

China Harvesting Skin from Death Row Inmates

London—An undercover British journalist recently reported that a Chinese company has been developing cosmetics from the harvested skin of executed convicts in China. Human rights activists are calling the practice “cannibal cosmeceuticals,” as the skin is allegedly being used to make collagen for lip and wrinkle treatments (collagen is a fibrous protein found in the lower layer of skin, and its natural breakdown wrinkles skin over time). The products are reportedly being marketed in Europe, where there is an obsession to fight the aging process. This is not the first instance of prisoner-organ harvesting in China, where more inmates are executed than in any other nation. In 1995, there was an uproar regarding the government’s harvesting of executed prisoners’ kidneys. The government claims that the deathrow inmates sign a consent form. Human rights groups have their doubts.

Times News Network

CBI President Named to Advisory Council

Milford, MA—Dr. David Schuringa, president and CEO of Crossroad Bible Institute, has recently been named to the Massachusetts Department of Corrections Faith-Based Reentry Advisory Council. The council is

made up of DOC staff and leaders of faith-based prison ministries. At their most recent meeting at the Old Colony Correctional Center in Bridgewater, Commissioner Kathleen Dennehy and Associate Commissioner Veronica Madden made it clear that they want help with reentry and lowering recidivism rates. Both believe that faith-based programs can make the difference, and neither feels that a DOC’s interest in such programs violates the separation of church and state. Schuringa is pleased to be a part of the discussion. “Massachusetts is not exactly in the Bible belt,” he said, “so to hear these government officials talk about the importance of faith-based ministries was amazing and refreshing.” He hopes other DOCs around the country will follow suit.

Inmates Abandoned in Katrina Disaster

New Orleans, LA—As corrections officers abandoned the building for higher ground, they left behind 600 inmates in rising floodwaters at the Templeman III building of the Orleans Parish Prison complex. There was no light or electricity, and toilets were backing up. In desperation, prisoners broke the windows of their cells and started burning blankets and clothes in an attempt to signal for help. For four days they received nothing to eat or drink, and the water continued to rise

up to their necks. “Of all the nightmares during Hurricane Katrina, this must be one of the worst,” said Corinne Carey, researcher from *Human Rights Watch*. Apparently, there was no evacuation plan in place. When help finally arrived, inmates were so frightened, some were crying. Many had already drowned. CBI had a number of students in this prison complex.

Reuters AlertNet

CBI to Partner Again with Project Angel Tree

Grand Rapids, MI—For the second year in a row, Prison Fellowship Ministries has invited Crossroad Bible Institute to partner with them in their Project Angel Tree program. Project Angel Tree equips church members to provide the children of inmates with Christmas presents on behalf of their incarcerated parent(s). The gifts provide a symbol of hope and restoration that goes right to the hearts of the children. This year, Project Angel Tree is again including CBI enrollment information with the Angel Tree catalogs from which inmates select gifts for their children. As Dr. David Schuringa, president of CBI, said, “What better way to help the Angel Tree kids than for their parents to return home with a new heart?” Project Angel Tree will translate into thousands of new students for CBI this year.



Did you know that when you donate appreciated stock or real estate to CBI, the entire value may be deducted and you don't have to pay taxes on the capital gain? That's called "win-win"! Call the office for more details.

1800.668.2450

Inmates Among Those Devastated by Hurricane Katrina



By Kathryn Shane



credits>>photo from corrections.state.la.us

credits>>photo by Jason Reed/Reuters/Corbis photo from news.nationalgeographic.com

Although U.S. news coverage has been centered on Hurricane Katrina for the past several weeks, the storm's impact on inmates has not been mentioned by many news sources. However, Katrina's devastation reached far into prisons and jails in Louisiana and neighboring states. Almost 8,000 inmates in New Orleans-area jails had to be evacuated.

In one exceptional instance, 3,000 inmates were handcuffed together on a highway overpass while awaiting transport. The Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola accommodated 2,000 surplus prisoners, including the first female inmates to be housed there in forty years—and a baby has since been born there as a result. Other inmates, however, were simply abandoned (see *In the News...*, p.3).

As lawlessness spread during the aftermath of the storm, officials were forced to set up a temporary jail in the New Orleans bus and train station, which many call “Angola South.” Run by Angola warden Burl Cain, corrections officers from his penitentiary are guarding this new makeshift facility that can accommodate 700 inmates. It is currently housing criminals who took advantage of the confusion in Katrina's wake, such as looters and those who violated curfew.

Departments of Correction from around the country are donating supplies, including clothes, water and food, to prisons in the South. Beyond the bare necessities, corrections officers from various states and probation and parole officers from within Louisiana provide security as thousands of inmates are transferred via bus to other facilities.

Currently, inmate work crews are helping to clean up the ruins. According to the Louisiana DOC, inmates at the Washington Correctional Institute have been clearing debris from roadways and distributing relief supplies. This prison was running on generator power and had minimum communications capabilities for days, as did many others.

In addition to inmates, parolees and probationers must conform to new procedures. The Louisiana DOC has set up an 800 telephone number that they must call in order to report on their

whereabouts. Normally, these released inmates would have to report to a parole officer, but the state is relaxing regulations as thousands of parolees have been evacuated to other cities and states. Also, authorities have set up a special website that lists the names of released sex offenders who may have been displaced during the hurricane.

Physical destruction and displacement aside, inmates must also withstand a great emotional strain. According to Prison Fellowship, 60% of inmates housed in Angola are from the New Orleans area. With thousands of people still missing, these inmates are concerned about the status of their homes and family members in the hardest-hit areas of the South. As for prison employees, a Louisiana DOC press release states that “approximately 95% of (Washington Correctional Institute) employees suffered some home and/or property damage from Hurricane Katrina,” and “65% of those suffered significant damage,” adding to the everyday stress of their jobs.

Prison officials are eager to establish a sense of normalcy for prison employees and for inmates, and CBI is happy to oblige. “We’re doing everything in our power to keep connected with them and get their lessons delivered,” said President David Schuringa. “Only the truth of God’s Word and the love of God’s people can get inmates and their dispersed families through this ordeal.”

As we continue to hear about the physical and emotional repercussions of this monumental disaster, let’s continue to pray for the inmates and those caring for them whose families and homes have been ravaged. As Ron Dinnocenzo, Prison Fellowship Field Director in Louisiana, stated, “Only the dead are lower on the list to be helped than the prisoners.”

Kathryn Shane serves as the Spanish and International Programs Coordinator at CBI.

Questions for Crossroad



Student Dabbling in Kabbalah

Q. Dear Crossroad,

I had a student mention “Zohar: The Book of Splendor,” which I believe has something to do with Jewish mysticism, or “Kabbalah.” I don’t think this is a good thing for a new Christian to be studying. Any information on this would be helpful. Thank you.

Instructor in Michigan

A. Dear Instructor,

Kabbalah is a mystical offshoot of Judaism. Most scholars claim that it originated around the 13th century A.D. Essentially, it is a doctrine comprised of teachings about God’s incomprehensible transcendence, and how a select, mature, well-studied few may experience this transcendence in one way or another. “Zohar,” or “The Book of Splendor,” was written in the 13th century by a Spanish mystic, and is now considered the quintessential Kabbalistic document.

Most likely, your student has come into contact with a more popular, watered-down version of the above practice (made famous by celebrity practitioners such as Madonna). If your student is in Tier 1, just make sure that he/she knows that “Zohar: The Book of Splendor” is NOT considered to be a Christian book, and does not teach Christian beliefs (some Christian authors have attempted to twist Kabbalah to fit Christian doctrine, but even this treatment is highly suspect). If your student is in Tier 2, you might ask the student what he/she is learning and how it compares to Christianity. In addition, there are a few RBC booklets that might be helpful: “How to Identify a Dangerous Religious Group” (RB-Q1101), and “What’s the Appeal of the New Age Movement?” (RB-Q1103). Though neither booklet deals specifically with Kabbalah, they might help your student to be more aware of false religions and their deceptive ways.

Q. Dear Crossroad,

Why are we not allowed to put our first names on a Tier 1 letter? I do understand the reason for not giving our full name, but giving our first name would seem so much more personal and heartfelt.

Instructor in Pennsylvania

A. Dear Instructor,

We appreciate your desire to be personal with your students. As you know, in the Tier 1 program students receive a different Instructor for each lesson—we have found that it encourages them to know that many Christians care about them and are praying for them. However, if an Instructor signs a name (real or pseudonym) or a code—essentially, anything that identifies him/her—the student may try to respond to that specific Instructor for a variety of reasons. For instance, the student may want to thank the Instructor for the encouragement, or ask them a specific question about a remark they made. As most prisoners never receive any personal mail, they have a great desire for a pen-pal. This is one reason why we provide a personal Tier 2 mentor for those who have faithfully completed the Tier 1 Bible Study lessons. Also, getting their own personal Instructor in Tier 2 is an incentive for them to complete Tier 1. Finally, CBI now receives thousands of pieces of mail each day. If the Tier 1 students were to write letters to previous Instructors, we could not afford the staff to connect them with the correct Instructor, or the postage to mail the letters to them, for that matter. Remember this when you respond to the students’ questions, prayer requests, etc.: your Tier 1 letter *is* personal because it was written just for them, and they know that the CBI Instructor took time to carefully read their answers and to write a full-page letter back.

Center Appoints First Senior Research Consultant

Last month, Crossroad Bible Institute was privileged to announce the appointment of Rev. David Feddes as Director of The Center for Advanced Studies. This month, CBI is pleased to announce that Dr. James A. De Jong has accepted an appointment, beginning in 2006, to serve as the first Senior Research Consultant for the Center on a limited basis.

Dr. De Jong's academic credentials speak for themselves. He holds a B.A. from Calvin College, an B.D. from Calvin Theological Seminary and a Th.D. from the Free University of Amsterdam. After many years of serving as a professor of theology at Trinity Christian College and then Dordt College, Dr. De Jong was appointed the president of Calvin Theological Seminary in 1983, a post he held for almost 20 years until his retirement. The seminary thrived under his leadership and saw the founding of a prestigious and widely respected Ph.D. program. He continues to serve as Chairman of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society. Said CBI President David Schuringa, "I'm overwhelmed with gratitude that God has led men of such high caliber as Dr. De Jong and Rev. Feddes to serve the church at

The Center for Advanced Studies."



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**

SEND-A-CARD DEADLINE NOVEMBER 15

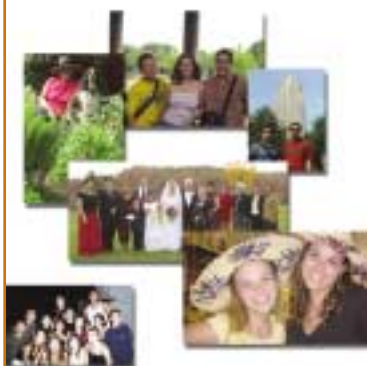
There's still time to get involved with the inmate Send-A-Card Program.

Go to www.crossroadbibleinstitute.org for details.

Let's remind our students about the true meaning of Christmas, and give them something to celebrate.

Got Enough Stuff?

Consider asking family and friends to make donations to CBI on your behalf this coming Christmas Season




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