

8B

RELIGION



Integrity in God's presence

**Job 38: 1-7;
40:6-9;
42:1-6**

Then the Lord answered Job out of the storm.

He said: "Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?"

Brace yourself like a man; I will question you; and you shall answer me.

"Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand.

Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it?

On what were its footing set, or who laid its cornerstone- while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?

Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm: "Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer me.

"Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself? Do you have an arm like God's and can your voice thunder like his?"

Then Job replied to the Lord: "I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted.

You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my counsel without knowledge?' Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know.

"You said, 'Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you and you shall answer me.'

My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.

Therefore I despised myself and repent in dust and ashes."

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Summarize God's answer to Job, and tell how Job responded.
2. Tell why it was necessary for Job to recognize his own unworthiness and God's sovereignty.
3. Express submission to God's sovereignty.

What will future of churches hold?

Congregations will look for spiritual, practical



By Artellia Burch
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Some churches are growing so quickly multiple services are needed to provide for the needs of all who attend.

However, that growth is not across the board. Some congregations have dwindled into double digits. And there's an increase in people leaving denominations for non-denominational churches.

In the book "A Wealth of Wisdom" Howard Owen Jones, a radio evangelist, from Cleveland, says the church of tomorrow must be more spiritual and have a message that's relevant to hope and encouragement.

What will the church of tomorrow look like? The answer is uncertain, but a good indication of the future church will depend on how they address the needs of those seeking organized religion.

"What I look for in a church is a place that is open not an in your face type of place," said Rhonda Williams. "Where you talk to me, not at me. I look for a leader that is a teacher, not necessarily a preacher. I look for a loving and home environment. People that I believe I can relate to. I look for a place that is about God and not about finding a mate.

"There are a few places I have been to that it seems to have a club atmosphere. You know where you have to have somebody? I look for a place that the minister and assistant ministers are not afraid to say what they are thinking and bring it home to the congregation. But overall, I look for a feeling of peace. When you walk into a church, you can't help but get a good feeling about the place."

Mary Fite says she likes a church with ministers who give the uncen-

sored Word of God.

"I want the Word," she said. "I want the sincere word to come from the Bible with no additions-no adding and no subtracting. Just tell it just as it is. We are losing people with false doctrines. The only thing that will save people is the true Word of God."

Lisa McDowell, 16, says she is looking for a youth friendly environment.

"I like a church that offers stuff for the kids," she said. "I'm looking for something to motivate me to come to church. Because a lot of people my age think church is boring. If a church has something like a liturgical dance group to motivate the youth they will want to come. I went to a church with one of my friends and they had like a gospel rap programs. I really liked that.

"I also like churches with choirs that sing contemporary music versus hymns."

Study: teens not hostile to religion

By Amanda Mantone
RELIGION NEWS SERVICE

American teens are not as hostile toward organized religion as researchers once thought, according to a recent study conducted at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The National Study of Youth and Religion found that about two-thirds of American 12th-graders say they do not feel alienated from organized religion. Only 15 percent said they feel hostile toward established religion, while another 15 percent said they have no feeling about religion at all. "Contrary to the popular stereotype of teen rebellion against organized religion, the majority of 12th-graders surveyed do not appear to be negatively disposed toward religion," said Melinda Lundquist Denton, project manager for the study.

Findings are based on data from a larger study, "Monitoring the Future," a series of nationally representative surveys on topics such as the political preferences and social lives of adolescents.

The youth and religion study measured attitudes toward organized religion by surveying whether teens agreed with their parents' religious beliefs, if the teens thought religious organizations have too much or too little power in America, and how many respondents currently give money to religious organizations or plan to in the future. It also compared answers along racial and gender lines.

The study found that black youths are less likely to be alienated from organized religion than teens of any other race. Nearly 70 percent of black teens surveyed said their religious views were very similar or mostly similar to those of their parents, and more than 64 percent give money to religious organizations or anticipate doing so in the future.

Female respondents were more likely than males to support organized religion, with 47 percent saying they currently donate money to religious organizations or plan to in the future, and only 16 percent saying they never expect to. Almost 45 percent of females said they want more social influence for religious groups in America.

The study also found that the numbers of teens who said they are alienated from religion have hovered at about 15 percent of the population since studies began in 1976.

The report said the study was conducted in part because issues such as school shootings and sexually transmitted diseases have called the influence of religion and spirituality on teens into question.

The four-year National Study of Youth and Religion surveyed about 2,000 adolescents and will continue through 2005.

Using the Bible as a blueprint for business success

By Alvin A. Reid
ST. LOUIS AMERICAN

ST. LOUIS - Calling it "an indispensable volume that shows how to succeed in business by using the Bible and its lessons as a source of inspiration and guidance," World Wide Technology founder and CEO David Steward's Doing Business by the Good Book: 52 Lessons Straight From the Bible hits book store shelves this

month. In 1990, Steward founded his company, World Wide Technology, Inc., "on a shoe-string budget and borrowed money."

He was well aware of the high-risk nature of the venture he was undertaking. Despite the fact that he was a novice entrepreneur, he was certain he would succeed. Steward believed intensely that God wouldn't let him

down. "Doing Business by the Good Book" shares the inspiring lessons culled straight from the Bible, that Steward says he continues to use to build his privately held billion-dollar company into a global information technology enterprise.

Steward delivers 52 chapters, each accompanied by scriptural passages that emphasize their impact on

his personal struggle to build a billion-dollar business. Included are chapters such as:

Being a customer-driven company

"In everything do to others as you would have them do to you." (Matthew 7:12)

Implementation

"Be doers of the world, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves." (James 1:22)

Praise and recognition

"Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it." (Proverbs 3:27)

Good leadership

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

Consistency "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

CHURCH NEWS

The Diocese of Charlotte office for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development is accepting grant applications for the 2004-funding year. CCHD makes small grants from \$500 to \$5,000 to organizations with-

out regard to religious affiliation. Applications must be postmarked by Feb. 14.

The CCHD Committee solicits programs and projects that:

1. Seek to affect the root causes of poverty in the tar-

get community;

2. Involve genuine participation of the people served in the planning and decision making of the sponsoring organization

3. Indicate potential for institutional change, empow-

erment for the people and community involved, and the development of local leadership

4. Conform to Catholic Social Teaching

For an application, contact Terri Jarina, Diocesan Direc-

tor, CCHD, and Office of Justice and Peace, 1123 South Church Street at (704) 370-3234 or hit

www.cssnc.org/justicepeace.

January 23
The Charlotte New Covenant Mass Choir invites

the public to interview and audition for the newly formed mass choir at 4 p.m. at Silver Mount Baptist Church at 501 W. Arrowood Road.

For more information call (704) 583-2341 or 535-1066.

Please see **CHURCH/7B**

