

8B

RELIGION



A time to remember

Ecclesiastes 11:7-12:8

Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun.

Even those who live many years should rejoice in them all; yet let them remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.

Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Follow the inclination of your heart and the desire of your eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

Banish anxiety from your mind, and put away pain from your body; for youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

Remember your creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come, and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no pleasure in them"; before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened and three clouds return with the rain in the day when the guards of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, and the women who grind cease working because they are few, and those who look through the windows see dimly; when the doors on the street are shut, and the sound of the grinding is low, and one rises up at the sound of a bird, and all the daughters of song are brought low; when one is afraid of heights, and terrors are in the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags itself along and deer fails; because all must go to their eternal home, and the mourners will go about the streets; before the silver cord is snapped, and the golden bowl is broken, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the breath returns to God gave it. Vanity of vanities says the Teacher; all is vanity.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Give reasons why it is better to remember the Creator in youth rather than in old age.
2. Describe ways the church can do a better job of reaching out to young people.
3. Identify a young person in the church and pray that he or she become a follower of Jesus Christ or grow in that relationship.

Bad friends can lead to trouble



"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of wicked."



When I look back at my life I know without a doubt in my mind that there's a God.

Not, only that there is a God but there is a merciful God that delivers all who truly call on him.

I can say with certainty that the Lord of Hosts answered my prayers and brought me out of a bad situation. He also delivered me from the company of people who were opposed to Him and His will.

In Proverbs 21: 16 it says, "A man who strays from the path of understanding comes to rest in the company of the dead." That scripture is so true because you will find yourself listening and fellowshiping with people who attempt to get through life without Jesus Christ, so therefore everyone around you is the walking dead.

I call them the walking dead because there is no life outside of Christ. People like that

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ILLUSTRATION/TRINA MONTGOMERY-ARDREY

Charities are prepared for wealth transfer

By Mark O'Keffe
RELIGION NEWS SERVICE

When the philanthropist who inherited the McDonald's fast food fortune left the Salvation Army \$1.5 billion in her will, it was a small part of a massive transfer of wealth that will provide charities an estimated \$6 trillion over the next half-century.

As the World War II generation passes away and the baby boomers begin to die, nonprofits are strategizing to be remembered in carefully planned estates. "I don't think there's anyone in the non-profit sector who isn't very much aware that the largest wealth transfer in the history of the world is about to take place," said Marshall Burke, vice president of private support for CARE, the Atlanta-based international poverty fighter.

Forward-looking charities like CARE and the Salvation Army have been positioning themselves for decades to reap dividends when old friends like Joan Kroc depart. Kroc's gift, the largest one-time charitable donation in history, was announced Tuesday.

"I couldn't speak," said George Hood, the Salvation Army's national spokesman, in describing the moment he heard the donation's size. "I said, 'Excuse me, did you say 'billion'?' It was pretty stunning."

Yet not entirely surprising. While the Salvation Army is best known for collecting nickels and dimes in red buckets at Christmas, it foresaw the millions it might raise through wills. Any donor, not just wealthy ones, can contact the Salvation Army and ask for help in planning an estate.

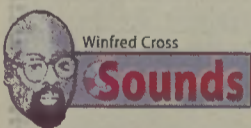
Other charities offer similar services. CARE, for example, has sample will language on its Web site. It also has financial planners eager to show wealthy donors how they can reduce their estate taxes with a gift to CARE. In the fiscal year ending last June, CARE received \$40 million in bequests, including one gift of more than \$28 million. "Any charity with a fund-raising staff of more than one person is probably doing this," said Michael Nilson, a spokesman for the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

The Boy Scouts of America in Charlotte decided three years ago to encourage wealthy donors to include the local council in their wills. So far, 31 have; 13 have disclosed the amounts. Known gifts range from \$20,000 to \$1.25 million, with a total value of \$2.6 million.

"We're really on a roll now," said Bill Staton, a volunteer who has helped raise the money and plans to remember local Scouts in his own will. "If a one-county Boy Scout council in North Carolina is doing this, you can just imagine the

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Third Destiny's Child could use help with gospel drab CD



Michelle Williams
Do You Know
Various producers
Sony/Music World
Music/Columbia



If you didn't hear Michelle Williams' first solo CD you were lucky. It remains the



Michelle Williams

worst gospel CD I've ever heard. As the third wheel in the Destiny's Child gal group,

she's OK. But as a solo act she may need to rethink.

Still, her first CD managed to eke its way to the top spot on the Billboard Gospel chart. Chalk that up to Sony's publicity department.

On her second, Williams must have listened to her detractors. She has enlisted a better crop of producers, songs and even sounds as if she's gotten some vocal coaching.

But despite being a zillion times better than the first, "Do You Know" still only

rates way below average. Bless her heart, the girl is not a lead singer. Her voice is thin and at times unpleasant. There's only so much slick production and good songs can do.

There are a couple of moments that nearly make this record tolerable. "15 Minutes" is a great song that speaks to the heart of Christianity. Williams feels this song and gives it a heartfelt reading. And Dawkins & Dawkins help Williams with some sweet background

vocals on "Love Thang." I hope this means the pair is planning to record again.

To dispel rumors about a Destiny's Child breakup, Michelle is joined by Beyonce Knowles and company on a fairly vapid song called "I Know." No one steals the spotlight from Knowles, so Williams goes back to her position of background singer with a yell every now and then.

There's a scripture that says make a joyful noise unto the Lord. But no where does

it say you have to sell that noise. If you miss this one don't feel shortchanged.

Ratings

- Classic; ☆☆☆☆☆
- Excellent; ☆☆☆☆☆
- Good ☆☆☆☆☆
- Fair ☆☆☆☆☆
- Why? ☆☆☆☆☆
- No stars - A ☆☆☆☆☆

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 grants from \$500 to \$5,000 to organizations without 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 target 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, empowerment 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 Director, CCHD, and Office of Justice and Peace, 1123 South Church Street at 704-370-3234 or hit www.cssnc.org/justicepeace.

February 6
Dr. James A. Forbes Jr. will speak at Myers Park United Methodist Church at 1501 Queens Road, at 7 p.m.

February 7
New Bethlehem FBH Church of God will hold its

29th Red & White Love Feast at 421 East 18th Street at 4 p.m.

February 8
Trevecca Nazarene University Covenant Choir and Wind Ensemble will be held at 6 p.m. at The Pineville Church of Nazarene at 8614 Pineville-Matthews Road.

February 9-10
Liberty Baptist Church at 3000 Sam Wilson Road will hold its revival conference at 7 p.m.

February 15
Silver Mount Baptist Church will hold its Glimpse of Hope Radio Choir concert at 6 p.m.

February 16-19
The Mecklenburg County Missionary Union of the Women's Baptist Home and Foreign Missionary Convention will be held at 1303 Hawthorne Lane.

February 21
Winston-Salem State University Concert Choir will

perform at Friendship Missionary Baptist church at 3301 Beatties Ford Road.

February 25
Ash Wednesday Service will be held at Friendship Baptist Church at 7 p.m.

February 28
The North Carolina Baptist Ushers Convention one-day session will be held at M.G. Benton Convention Center at 301 West 5th Street, Winston-Salem at 8 a.m. Registration is \$10.