

5B

RELIGION

Life 1B



God knows all about us

I. Have you ever tried to take apart a really complex piece of equipment? For most of us, if we dissect a computer, we have only a vague idea, at best of what all the internal components are supposed to do. For some of us, even taking apart a toaster leaves us wondering how on earth the thing works. However, those who make computers and toasters for a living don't have any trouble understanding the functions of various parts. We tend to understand the things we make ourselves.

So, it should not come as a surprise to us that the God who made us knows how we work. He knows how we think, as well as how we feel. David said God sees our actions and even hears our thoughts. When we wake up in the morning, He not only sees us get out of bed, but He also hears that muttered expression of disgust that the alarm went off too soon. He even knows what we dreamed about the night before.

David says, in verse 3, that God knows all our ways. He has been watching us and listening to us for so long that nothing we do comes as a surprise to Him. In fact, David says that before we were born, God knew every detail about us. Knowing that He is aware of all our faults and flaws, yet still loves us, is difficult for us to conceive, especially after we make a whopper of a mistake or commit a terrible sin.

II. We Cannot Escape from God

Most of us like to believe that our lives are our own. In America, the right to privacy is one of our most cherished rights, and we do not like the thought of the government listening to our phone conversations or reading our mail.

If we think people are spying on us, we try to stop or escape their behavior. It makes us uncomfortable to think others know our deepest thoughts and darkest secrets, but the truth is there is no place to hide from God.

David said we cannot flee from Him because He is everywhere. Where would we possibly go to hide from God? Even if we die and are buried in the ground, God knows exactly where to find us.

Because we cannot escape from God, we cannot escape from Him knowing everything there is to know about us. We cannot lie to God and get away with it. We cannot rationalize with God and think he will buy our brand of logic. We cannot attempt to distract God in hopes He will forget why He was searching for us and move on to something else.

God made us, and He knows everything about every detail of our lives before we were formed in the womb.



PHOTOMARK MANN

Simply inspirational

Gospel giant Kirk Franklin headlines Hero Tour stop in Charlotte

By Cheris F. Hodges
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When Kirk Franklin rolls into Charlotte Friday night, there will be a message in the music.

But don't let that stop you from going to the show at the Cricket Arena.

The Hero Tour is gospel music's super fest also featuring duo Mary Mary.

Franklin said he and Mary Mary have been friends for years and wanted to do something together. It just so happened that they both had disks drop this year, so they went out on the road together.

"The concept for us is to inspire

people and have them look upward," Franklin said in a phone interview from his tour bus in Greensboro.

The first single from his CD "Hero," "Looking For You" has been in heavy rotation on gospel and adult contemporary stations.

Franklin also said the tour has been selling out everywhere.

"I don't say that to try and impress you but it is incredible to go into venues that play other music," he said. "It's a blessing when God's music can go into these venues."

And it also serves as a chance to give people an opportunity to see the world is greater than what they see, Franklin said.

"I'm grateful that God gave us the opportunity to reach people because there are people out there who need the message of the Lord," he said.

This year has been a busy one for Franklin. He's been named ambassador to the Children's Defense Fund and will host and star in a concert fund raiser this summer. He's made appearances on "Oprah" "Live with Regis and Kelly" and BET's "Celebration of Gospel."

Franklin will also co-host and perform on the 37th annual Gospel Music Awards in Nashville on April 5.

Franklin and his wife, Tammy, Please see **FRANKLIN/6B**

Mary Mary sings and writes praises

By Victoria Elmore
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Soul sisters Mary Mary are coming to Charlotte this Friday as a part of the Hero Tour.

Mary Mary (sisters Tina and Erica Campbell) are touring with Kirk Franklin through April. The duo sisters and Franklin will perform at Cricket Arena Fri-

day.

Mary Mary comes from a family of eight and are natives of Inglewood, Calif. They started their careers as R&B backup singers. Then landed a deal with Warren Campbell and their singing careers sailed.

The Grammy Award winning sisters earned admiration and success with

their 2000 platinum debut album "Thankful," in which the song "Shackles" placed high on the charts. In 2002, the sisters gave the world a follow up with "Incredible."

Their self-titled album "Mary Mary" has graced the charts with the feature hits "Yesterday" and "Heaven."

Their greatest inspiration while writing lyrics for their new album was God. "We prayed and made sure that God was speaking to us," Tina said. The sisters have always wanted their work to be God sent.

"We have a real deep desire to please the Lord. Other things can some-

Please see **MARY/8B**

VOCAL VISITORS



Memorial Presbyterian Church, located at 2600 Beatties Ford Road, celebrated Black History/Race Relations Sunday with the Anson Aires from the Anson County Correctional Institution.



Jones solid with 'Dance'



Chris Jones
Featuring Word of Praise
Dance
Various producers
TyScot Records



Chris Jones sounds a lot like a young, inexperienced Marvin Winans.

That's not a bad thing at all considering Winans is a fine singer and was so when he was younger. Jones doesn't have his explosive vocal style, but he can sing.

I wish Jones had Winans' writing skills. If he would have come close to "Ain't No Need To Worry," "Finders Keepers" or "Millions" this would be a stellar CD.

But Jones didn't do anything close to that so what you have is an OK CD. That's not to say there's nothing at all interesting "Praise Him" - probably the most overused title for a gospel song - has great potential. Jones' backup group Word of Praise gets into the song with fervor. "Spend Time" is churchy and bluesy. Word of Praise has much attitude and feels those background vocals. Jones sounds as if he's channeling Winans, even through the vamp which is fairly cliché, but lots of gospel is these days. "Fight My Battles" has a John P. Kee quality that makes it instantly likable.

Actually, the CD's downfall is that it sounds as if it were recorded by any church choir. Professional recordings need to sound that way. The approach that some of the other lead singers take is almost lackluster. "Arise" is a good song, but the lead sounds as if she simply trying to hit the right notes and get through. I wanted her to sing. It sounds as if she's got it, but just didn't use it.

Still, this CD has some uplifting moments that make giving it a listen a fair experience.

Ratings

Classic	★★★★★
Excellent	★★★★★
Good	★★★★
Fair	★★★
Why?	★★
No stars = A mess	★

CHURCH NEWS

The deadline for announcements is noon on Fridays. Fax your announcements to (704) 342-2160 or e-mail to cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com. Please include the address of the church and a contact number.

Ongoing

Grace Bible College will host winter classes at Grace Baptist Church on 1185 Little Rock Road in Newton through March 13. These classes maybe taken for credit. For more information contact (828) 464-7055.

Church of the Holy Spirit Fellowship of Win-

ston-Salem and Carolinas Black Pride Movement in Charlotte have teamed up to create the Pride Gospel Mass Choir, the Carolinas first gay-affirming/all-affirming gospel mass choir.

PGMC is actively seeking sopranos, altos, tenors, baritones, basses, musicians of all instruments, songwriters, poets, praise dancers and mime performers.

Call Pastor Roger Hayes at (336) 575-6205 or chsc@earthlink.net.

www.churchoftheholyspiritfellowshipnc.com

Inspiration Networks is holding a gospel talent search for its nationally televised series Christian Artist Talent Search. The winner will receive a national recording contract with Point Of Grace Entertainment. All entrants must be at least 15 years old by April 21. Entries are due by April 21. For rules and entry forms, log on to www.insp.com or call the CATS hotline at (704) 561-7955.

March 16

Essence Of The Cross Ministries presents the third annual Essence Apostolic Network

Conference through Saturday. Registration fee is \$25. All services are free of charge.

For more information call (704) 516-0759.

March 17

Plaza Baptist Church located at 3321 The Plaza, will hold a three-day revival through Sunday. Friday and Saturday night service will be held at 7 p.m. and the Sunday services will be at 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m. The theme of the revival is "Running from God."

For more information call the church (704)

Please see **CHAPPELLE/6B**