

The teachings
of Jesus Christ

Sunday School Lesson

Devotional reading: Luke 24:1-12.

Lesson scripture: Luke 24:1-36.

Who and what was Jesus?

A Christian can't answer that question as it is presented. The living Lord is not a has-been, to be described in the past tense. The testimony of the apostles, sustained by the Holy Spirit, is couched in an unchanging present, and that testimony is vital: "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3, New International Version).

The apostle Paul affirmed the resurrection as the central fact in establishing Jesus' identity. Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4).

"Resurrection from the dead!" Those four words compress the bad news/good news core of the gospel.

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" 1



Corinthians 15:3). The four Gospels detail the bad news of that death,

which left even the material world in quake-torn darkness. Jesus' death was necessary as the atonement for our sin. Its necessity saves it from the ultimate tragedy of being without meaning, but does not provide genuine relief. That relief awaited the dawn of the third day, when Christ "rose again...according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:4). The good news of resurrection provides hallelujahs that begin with the final four chapters of the four Gospels, continue as a theme for the book of Acts and the New Testament epistles, and furnish a background for triumphant revelation. So Jesus is the Lamb of God - "he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen" (Revelation 1:18).

Our studies in March dealt with five parables teaching about the kingdom of Heaven. We turn now to four lessons teaching about God, as living, and loving, and caring, and life-sustaining. These qualities are presented not only in the words of Jesus, but especially in His works and His being. In this lesson, the lesson, the lesson for Easter, we find "The Living Lord" in Jesus, risen from the dead.

Before there could be a resurrection, there had to be a death - a real, stone-cold death. Jesus spent much time and effort in teaching His disciples that He must die at the hands of His enemies, but that He would rise again. Luke 19:28-22:46 details the events of Jesus' final week, and 22:47-23:49 tells of His arrest, trials, and crucifixion.

Luke 23:50-56 tells of Jesus' burial. Two believing members of the Jewish high court took His body down from the cross, prepared it hastily for burial before the Sabbath began at sundown on Friday, and laid it in the new tomb belonging to one of them (John 19:38-40; Matthew 27:59, 60). The tomb was sealed by the Roman authority and soldiers were posted to guard it (Matthew 27:62-66).

Christian night club opens

By Tammie Tolbert
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Crystal Lord chooses to praise God by playing instruments, dancing and opening a night club.

It's no ordinary club, though. Choices is Christian-oriented.

Tonight at 8 p.m. at the Hilton Hotel of University Park, the party will include music from Voices of Praise and the Imani Singers. The deejay, "The Hip Hop Minister," will be on hand playing the latest in gospel music.

Lord, 23, says, "When I lived in Hartford Conn., my friends and I always thought of fun and social things for us to do with our other Christian friends. I have

Venue offers fellowship

always been involved in the church," Lord said.

After being in Charlotte for only 10 months, Lord said she came up with the idea for a Christian night club. Lord said she has encountered some people who oppose the venture.

"People are afraid of the words 'night club,'" she said. "They believe that by using those words it would attract the wrong kind of people."

Her response to people who feel that way is, "These are the type of people we are trying to help." Lord said that her mother, Junetta Lord and her family as a whole have been very supportive.

In an age where the media bombard people with

negative images of destructive young blacks, Lord represents the opposites. "My mission with this Christian night club is to do something to try and reach the young people and the people on the street to let them know that people can have fun without getting into trouble," she said.

Lord said she hopes that Choices will attract and help the people who would not normally go to church. "There is no set age group," she said.

Lord said that she believes that Choices could be instrumental in introducing young Christians to one another and hopes to see the club grow to become a continual event. "After starting a mailing list, I'd like to have a party with various special guest at least once a month and I would eventually like open a permanent location," she said.

Eye On Gospel

Key gospel releases to hit market in time for summer listening

Fast and furious is the pace of key releases expected to hit the gospel marketplace over the next eight weeks, prompting a handful of gospel executives to rethink their marketing strategies.

Among those major players set for release are O'Landa Draper & The Associates' "Gotta Feelin'" (Tuesday) Witness' "A Song In The Night" (April 16), Richard Smallwood's "Adoration" (April 30) and Kirk Franklin & the Family's "What Cha Lookin' 4" (April 30). Several releases including Dottie Peoples' "Count On Me" have been delayed and others like Savoy's already completed and much-anticipated "A Wealthy Place" (LaShun Pace) have not confirmed release dates, though most had been originally slated for April.

Also unconfirmed and perhaps the biggest threat could come from Commissioned whose "Irreplaceable Love" initially set to release on Wednesday has been delayed. The group enlisted the aid of Boyz II Men's Wanya Morris and Shawn Stockman. Meanwhile, leading the charge of new releases is Bryan Williams' much anticipated recording debut, "Bryan's Songs" which

shipped from Malaco Tuesday.

The CD features two cuts produced by John P. Kee and three cuts from Walter Hawkins, one of which ("Always Be With You") is a collaboration from Hawkins and his 22-year-old son Walter Hawkins Jr. Other releases include Lawrence Matthews' "All I Have" (GospoCentric); Ron Winans III, featuring Donnie McClurkin and CeCe Winans (Qwest); Willie Neal Johnson & the Gospel Keynotes' "Feel the Fire," a reissue from Nashboro; and back in the worship and praise vein is Patrick Henderson, whose latest release "Patrick Henderson & Saints Praise & Worship" dropped March 22 is best known for the innovative Saints in Praise trilogy featuring West Angeles Church of God in Christ Mass Choir.

Helping hands: A benefit is being planned for Lionel Darty on May 20 at Christian Tabernacle Church in Philadelphia. Darty, president of Sweet Rain Records, suffered a tragic accident a year ago that has left him paralyzed from the waist down and confined to a wheelchair. Funds are being raised to offset the expensive renovations needed to make his home

wheelchair accessible. Darty, through his label, has been instrumental in breaking some of the biggest names on the gospel choir scene, including Hezekiah Walker & the Love Fellowship Crusade Choir, the Wilmington Chester Choir, the Bronx Mass Choir and Bruce Parham.

By the way: Impact Super Summitt's move to Nashville will bring greater involvement from the gospel community. EMI/Christian Music Group has taken the lead with their co-sponsorship of a combined awareness campaign from Gospel labels around the country, which culminates in a gospel workshop panel, buffet dinner and showcase (May 2), featuring Kirk Franklin & the Family, Donald Lawrence & the Tri City Singers, CeCe Winans and Daryl Coley, whose next live release "Beyond The Veil" has been just slated to ship June 25.

With the success of his debut project, "Take a Trip," which cracked the Top 10 on Billboard's Gospel Albums Chart earlier this year, Intersound signee B. Chase Williams is putting together a ministry and music conference April 15-20 at the Covenant



Yolanda Adams sang well in the Tenth Annual Soul Train Music Awards.

Baptist Church in his home-base of Atlanta. The conference will culminate in a free concert on April 20, with Hezekiah Walker, Marvin Sapp and Beverly Crawford as headliners.

A much deserved shout out to Yolanda Adams on the recent performance of Open Arms from her "More than A

Melody" LP (Tribute) - on the 10th annual Soul Train Music Awards. You did us all proud.

This week's scripture: The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life; but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit. - Proverbs 15:4.

Sculptor's Jesus reflects African features

By Tammie Tolbert
THE CHARLOTTE POST

"I spent many Sundays in a church looking at a man who did not represent me," said Paul Spears, the designer of a five foot sculpted Black Jesus.

As a young boy who spent many days in church, Spears says he often wondered, "What does Jesus look like?" My experience as a child was to sit in church and listen to the pastor read scriptures out of the Bible: "His head and his hairs were white like wool and as white as snow, and his eyes were of a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they were burned in a furnace," Revelation 1:14-15.

"Sometimes I would close my eyes real hard and try to envision him," Spears said. "Remembering the way I felt as a child I was inspired to do this sculpture."

Spears, a native of Charlotte and an Express Pilot for USAir decided to make a sculpture that would represent him. Spears said that this was a meticulous task for him because he wanted to make sure that he used the right materials to make the Black sculpture of Jesus. "Before I began the project, I

Image crafted from biblical description

prayed and I asked God to direct my hands and to help me locate the right materials that I needed to make this image," Spears said.

Spears believes that divine inspiration has guided him in making this image of Christ. "I went into my back yard to pick the tree to make the cross from and something said," Get the cedar tree because it is long lasting and straight," Spears said. It took me some time to locate the genuine lamb's wool for the images' hair, but on a day when Spears was looking for something for his automobile he came across the last piece of material that he needed for this sculpture.

"I wanted to know how the public would accept this piece and thus far, people have responded very well," Spears said.

"I never really had any interest in history until I began to learn about ancient African history," Spears said.

According to Spears, There is some history out there about African and African Americans that will blow your mind."

Spears is the father of three children and he has personal accounts of how an image can affect a child. "In my house we had these images of various people hanging on our wall and I noticed when I took those images down off the wall and replaced them with positive black role models, my son began to have a better image of himself," Spears said.

"We have to be aware of the images that we allow to shape our children's minds, especially in this day and age with the lack of positive black role models," Spears said.

Christ is a universal role model and as He is described in the Bible to be of African descent. Spears says that Jesus is of African descent, but it is his love that is universal.



PHOTO/PAUL WILLIAMS III

Paul Spears' statue of Jesus.