

# STRICTLY BUSINESS

## Faith and finances together

CHARLES ROSS

### Your Personal Finance



Many churches are offering a variety of support groups, programs and seminars to their members to help cope in a complex society. One topic that is becoming popular personal finance. Congregations around the country are teaching biblically based principles to money management.

The Bible has hundreds of verses that deal with handling money. Subjects covered include debt, investing, budgets, insurance, charitable giving and teaching children wise money management skills.

Many people are turning to the scriptures out of frustration of seeing their own finances impacted during challenging times. They are looking for sound advice that is divinely inspired.

#### Debt

One subject that is covered very well is - debt. There are many warnings about the misuse of debt. The Bible never mentions that it is wrong or sinful to use debt, but cautions that debt is a kind of slavery and that being overextended without a means for repayment can mean the loss of your possessions and more importantly your reputation.

One clear direction is given and that is if you borrow money, it must be repaid. The biblical financial advice shared is that bankruptcy is not an alternative to working out a plan with your creditors.

#### Investing

Saving and investing always seems to be an area of much concern for many people. There is, of course, the encouragement to save money on a regular basis, but there is also a recommended amount. We should save 20 percent. This is revealed in the book of Genesis.

One basic advice from scripture deals with diversification, spreading your money among different types of investments since you never know which investment will prove profitable. The bible also warns against investing in speculative, get rich-quick schemes and says that it's wiser to put your money in investments you are familiar with.

#### Charitable giving

As far back as Sunday School you probably remember the verse: "It is better to give than to receive." In the biblical sense, giving is recognized as an admission that there is a higher authority that governs the universe. Giving to support the work of the church and those who are less fortunate is an acknowledgment of that divine

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# Metro Express expands its services

By Herbert L. White  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

A Gastonia-based company is making major changes in its 10th year of operation.

Metrolina Courier Inc.'s biggest change is its name, now Metro Express. The change, according to president Joseph Greene, reflects the company's shift in focus toward expansion. In addition, there are several

management changes.

Greene, who co-founded Metrolina Courier in 1986, will continue as president and CEO, but two new senior managers assuming day-to-day responsibilities for the company. Barry McNaughton, a former



Greene

Spartan Express executive, has been named executive vice president and will oversee Metro's overall management. Another Spartan Express executive, Rick Wyatt, was named vice president of operations. He will oversee management of Metro's vehicles, employees and facilities, including new facilities in Charlotte and Durham. R.A. Bell, who has been with the company since its founding, will continue as operations and fleet

maintenance supervisor.

Jackie Gardin, another 10-year employee, will oversee all administrative functions, including the Durham and Charlotte terminals.

Metro's growth started with the acquisition and renovating



McNaughton

of a terminal facility on Piper Lane near Charlotte/Douglas International Airport. The facility has 12 employees and covers 10,000 square feet.

"With this new terminal, Metro Express will be delivering to several large retail chain stores in the greater Charlotte area," Wyatt said. "We opened the facility already handling up to 9,000 pieces a week. We expect the facility to reach

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## Northwest entrepreneurs



PHOTO/PAUL WILLIAMS III

Northwest Enterprise Community Empowerment Center executive director Rock Johnson, president Jim Ross and administrative assistant Bettye Clark talk about the future during Tuesday's open house at the West Charlotte Business Incubator.

## Program to boost westside businesses

By John Minter  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Another city-sponsored effort to boost black entrepreneurship in west Charlotte has started.

The Northwest Enterprise Community Empowerment Center, operational for several months, officially opened Tuesday at the West Charlotte Business Incubator. C.R. "Rock" Johnson is executive director at center, one of three in the city.

The centers are funded

through the Charlotte City Within a City program, which secured a federal grant to set up enterprise zones which are targeted for economic development assistance.

Johnson said the Northwest Enterprise Center will focus on fostering black entrepreneurship and helping establish and sustain small businesses in the Statesville Avenue, Rozzelle's Ferry Road, Trade Street (between Johnson C. Smith University and I-77) and

Beatties Ford Road areas.

"The Enterprise Community will help revitalize communities by encouraging businesses to move into the enterprise zone and attracting businesses by showing them tax breaks," Johnson said.

"We are working to bring resources together with ideas. The money we have is seed money from the federal government."

The other enterprise zones are the west, made up of

Wilkinson Boulevard and the Wilmore area off West Boulevard, and the east, which includes Cherry and Griertown.

Charlotte applied for the enterprise community grant three years ago and decided to have three distinct zones to reduce competition among the different areas.

"We are working and serving as brokers for resources in this area," Johnson said. "We are

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## Texaco tries to repair image

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WHITE PLAINS, N.Y. - Texaco Inc. said Monday it will sell \$150 million in corporate debt securities through a minority investment firm, trying to enhance its image after the recent race-discrimination embarrassment.

The company selected

Blaylock & Partners L.P., a New York firm formed in 1993, as the lead underwriter for the 10-year note sale. Texaco hasn't borrowed money from investors through a debt offering in about four years.

Texaco acknowledged it chose Blaylock & Partners as part of its efforts to reach out to minori-

ties following the recent \$176 million settlement of a race discrimination lawsuit by black employees.

"We are saying it is consistent with our plans," said Cynthia B. Michener, a Texaco spokeswoman. "But we were also impressed with Blaylock's track record."

Michener said Texaco selected Blaylock after careful studies, but she could not say how many other firms were considered and how many were minority owned.

She said Texaco was impressed by the company's successful underwriting of a

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Beth Bull, director of finance for Texas Instruments in Asia, said that since moving to Taiwan she's had to adjust her attitudes about one of the fundamentals of business life - meetings.

Americans readily offer suggestions during meetings, but Asian employees usually defer to

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