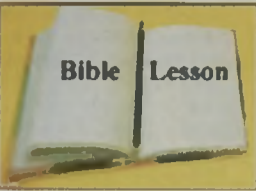


5B

RELIGION

Life 1B



Way to freedom and life

Romans 8: 1-8

In Christ Jesus (vv.1,2) There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

God has solved what we cannot solve. God has paid a price that we cannot and could never pay. His Son took the condemnation that we deserved because of our sin. Even though our past is shot through with inconsistencies and failures, even though our present practice is imperfect, and even though we can count on facing Satan's "fiery darts" in the future, there is now no condemnation because we are in Christ Jesus.

To be in Christ, however, involves more than just a position or standing. To accept Christ as Savior marks the beginning of a process of growth. The word walk implies a way of living—a commitment to growing in the will of God. Because we are now Christ's we are to take orders from the Spirit, not from the flesh. The term flesh most likely refers to the physical body, which is the source of sinful desires and "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11). We are not guided by these desires; because we are in Christ, we are guided by the Spirit's desires.

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

A new law is at work in the Christian. This law is not loaded with restrictions, prescriptions, accusations, or condemnations. It offers life, not death—including possibilities, opportunities, freedom from sin and death, and help through God's spirit.

Not in law and flesh (vv.3-8) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.

The law called people to obedience. It pointed out failures, but it provided no forgiveness for those failures and no power to do better. The law itself was good; in fact, Paul calls it "holy" in Romans 7:12. But it was weak through the flesh. Humanity has not been able to keep the standards set forth in the law. And the flesh always pulls us in the opposite direction for that established by God's law.

God addressed the law's failure by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. "The Word was made flesh" (John 1:14) but came only in the likeness of sinful flesh. Jesus had a human body, but Jesus controlled that body and did not allow the flesh to

Please see WAY TO/6B



PHOTO/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, left, and Interior Secretary Gale Norton hand Sixteenth Baptist Church Pastor Arthur Price a declaration dedicating the church as a national landmark Monday.

Alabama church bombed in 1963 gets landmark designation

Birmingham building where four girls killed in attack

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BIRMINGHAM—Relatives of the four black girls who were killed in a Ku Klux Klan bombing in 1963 gathered at the church where they died to mark its designation as a national landmark.

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales on Monday called the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church "a catalyst for the cause of justice" as he referred to the girls—Addie Mae Collins, Carole Robertson and Cynthia Wesley, all 14, and Denise McNair, 11.

"We protect this place for them," Gonzales said, speaking at the church's pulpit.

Gonzales likened the deadly bombing of the old brick building to a

series of arsons that have hit 10 Alabama churches since Feb. 3.

Investigators have said they don't know a motive in the arsons, but there is no racial pattern. Five of the churches had white congregations and five black. All were Baptist, the dominant faith in the region, and mostly in isolated country settings.

But Gonzales said the fires are a reminder "there is still work to be done" in ensuring equal justice and fighting discrimination.

At the ceremony, Interior Secretary Gale A. Norton signed a proclamation adding the church to a list of about 2,500 places that carry the title of National Historic Landmark.

Church members gave Gonzales a

lengthy ovation, and the pastor, the Rev. Arthur Price Jr., called the historic landmark designation "major for us."

Price said a previous attempt to have the 200-member church designated a federal landmark failed, although he was unsure of details.

Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was an important meeting place for activists during the civil rights era, and the bombing became a worldwide symbol illustrating the depth of racial hatred in the South at the time. Three Klansmen were convicted in the blast, the last in 2002.

The bomb knocked out part of a wall and heavily damaged the bathroom where the girls died.

Greensboro church celebrates 200 years

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GREENSBORO — Let's not quibble over a misspelling. This is a church, not an English class.

Rehobeth United Methodist Church started as Rehoboth Methodist. That's the way the Bible uses the word, meaning broad places.

Fannie Blackwood, the

church's historian, says she and previous historians have been at a loss to determine why the second "o" became an "e" before 1900.

But what really matters to the 810 Rehobeth members is that the church on Rehobeth Church Road has survived. It celebrated its 200th anniversary Sunday.

Blackwood and other

women dressed in 1800s garb for the worship service.

"Everything around here is pretty old, including myself," Blackwood said. "I'll be 88 on March 17."

Rehobeth remains at its original southern Guilford site, which in the early 1800s lacked wagon roads leading to the church.

When the collection plate was passed for the first time, it yielded 8 cents.

The church can claim almost a direct link to the Methodist denomination's second most important person, Francis Asbury. Methodist founder John Wesley sent Asbury from England to America in

Please see 200/6B

Supreme Court sides with tea drinkers

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON—The Supreme Court ruled unanimously Tuesday that a small congregation in New Mexico may use hallucinogenic tea as part of a four-hour ritual intended to connect with God.

Justices, in their first religious freedom decision under Chief Justice John Roberts, moved decisively to keep the government out of a church's religious practice. Federal drug agents should have been barred from confiscating the hoasca tea of the Brazil-based church, Roberts wrote in the decision.

The tea, which contains an illegal drug known as DMT, is considered sacred to members of O Centro Espirita Beneficente Uniao do Vegetal, which has a blend of Christian



PHOTO/HAPPYHERBALISH.COM

beliefs and South American traditions. Members believe they can understand God only by drinking the tea, which is consumed twice a month at four-hour ceremonies.

New Justice Samuel Alito did not take part in the case, which was argued last fall before Justice Sandra Day O'Connor before her retirement. Alito was on the bench for the first time Tuesday.

Roberts said the Bush administration had not met its burden under a federal religious freedom law to show that it could ban "the sect's sincere religious practice."

The chief justice had also been skeptical of the government's position in the case last fall, suggesting the administration was demanding too

Please see TEA DRUG/6B



Perry stands out in debut

Lori Perry I Found It In You Lori Perry, Craig King and Luis Bryant, producers Alliant Music



Remember the Perry Sisters? They had a couple of LPs in the 1980s and spent most of the '90s backing up Anita Baker in the studio and on tour.

Youngest sister Lori has branched out into gospel music and done so quite nicely. "I Found It In You" is about as fresh a gospel CD you'll hear this year.

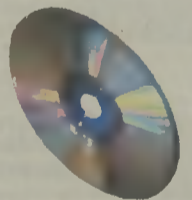
Perry's approach is about the same as the pop-jazz stuff she did with Baker and her sisters. It's light and airy, with a touch of Baker in the vocals. She brought along a lot of the crew she worked with in her secular days. Heavyweights such as George Duke, Jeff Majors and Alex Acuna contribute musically.

But Perry's vocals are the real gears driving this CD. She handles lead and background, recreating the sound she and her three sisters used. It's amazing harmony that took a lot of effort.

Perry put a lot of effort into writing and co-writing most of these songs. Some are simply inspirational, some are all-out gospel, yet all of them could fit comfortably on urban radio playlists. "Majesty Reigns" sounds like vintage Baker, but Perry's voice is a bit deeper and maybe a bit easier to understand. Her take on the 23rd Psalm - "Psalm 23" - is nearly spectacular.

Perry turns her attention to current events with "Nine Eleven." She doesn't get political, but she does ask what, if anything was learned from the tragedy.

Perry's first gospel venture is a good one. She should have a long career.



Ratings

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

CHURCH NEWS

The deadline for calendar items is noon on Fridays. Fax your announcements to (704) 342-2160 or e-mail cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com.

Ongoing

Grace Bible College will host winter classes at Grace Baptist Church, 1185 Little Rock Road in Newton through March 13th. Classes can be taken for credit. For more information call (828) 464-7055.

Millions More Movement-Charlotte Inc. will move to its new location at Little Rock AME

Zion Church, 401 N. McDowell St. The group will meet the second and fourth Monday nights of the month for six months. For more information, call (704) 333-1690.

Church of the Holy Spirit Fellowship of Winston-Salem and Carolinas Black Pride Movement headquartered in Charlotte have created the

Pride Gospel Mass Choir, the Carolina's 1st ever gay-affirming/all-affirming gospel mass choir.

PGMC was envisioned by Pastor Roger

Hayes of Church of the Holy Spirit Fellowship. The vision involved creating an outlet for gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and gay-friendly individuals to worship, inspire and uplift through song and praise arts.

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

Call Hayes at (336)575-6205 or chsncc@earthlink.net www.churchoftheholyspiritfellowshipnc.com

March 10

The Black Church Initiative of the National Coalition for Reproductive Choice North Carolina celebrates Black Church Week of Prayer for HIV/AIDS.

The event will be held at New St. John Baptist Church, 2000 St. John Road and begins at 7 p.m. For more information call (704) 598-9913.

March 11

Please see CHINA GROVE/6B