

5B

RELIGION

Life 1B



God's majesty

PSALMS 104: 1-4

Anyone who ever has spent an hour or two on a clear night, gazing at the sky, away from the bright lights of the city, knows how unbelievably awesome the display is. There is nothing like spending time contemplating God's majesty in the dark sky. For those who never had this opportunity, this is an experience they should seek to have so they can marvel at the wonder of God's creation. Who, among finite humans, ever could have dreamed of such a spectacle?

It is a humbling experience to see the vastness of the heavens and to consider our place in such enormity. For anyone who believes in God, it is an experience of praise and worship to which nothing else can compare.

While many scholars believe David wrote Psalm 104, this cannot be proven. In Psalm 104, David expresses his awe of God's power, His control and His blessing as he thinks of God's creation.

I. God's Glory in Creation (Psalm 104:1-4)

In verses 1-4, the psalmist describes the glory of God brought upon Himself through His creation. The psalmist realizes that God is not part of creation but is greater than the inexpressible vastness of the universe. This is why He is worthy of our praise. In order to express this superiority and glory, the psalmist speaks of God using creation for His pleasure in the same way that we create.

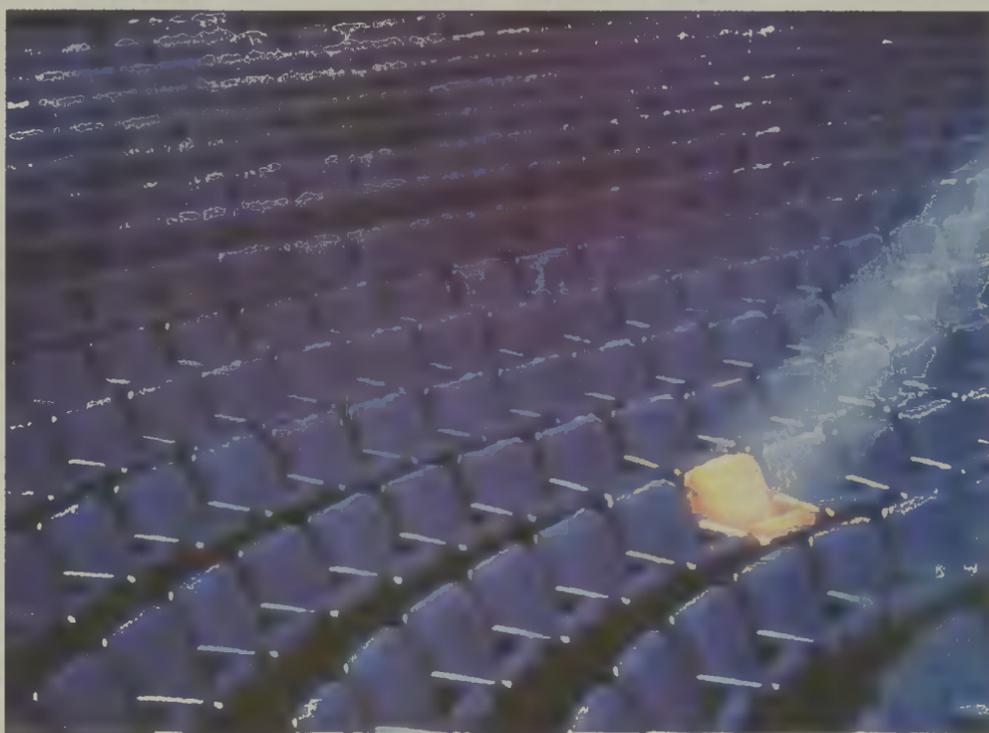
If we came to church in a suit that would make everyone stop and take notice, we would be seeking undue attention, but God clothes Himself in light this is majestic and filled with splendor. Imagine wrapping yourself up in a suit woven out of suns and wearing rings made of stars on your fingers. We are not to live flashy, gaudy lives, but God created all that exists, so it's His to do with as He pleases. He is worthy of all our praise and attention.

Perhaps you've been fortunate in life and own your own home, but imagine stretching out the heavens like a person might stretch out a tent before setting up camp. Imagine using the expanse of heaven as a foundation upon which to build your home.

The most glorious and spectacular things in the universe are simply possessions to be used by God for his everyday pleasure and glorification.

God glorifies Himself through His creation by dressing in stars and using clouds as His vehicle.

Clouds are moved by wind patterns. The Holy Spirit is likened to the wind throughout Scripture. While we can see neither wind nor spirits, we can feel the effects both have on us.



PHOTO/THE STOCK MARKET

Lights. Camera. Sing.

Inspiration Network looking for Christian talent to spotlight

By Cheri F. Hodges
cheri.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

Inspiration Network is looking for a few good singers.

Its nationally televised Christian Arts Talent Search series, known as CATS, is looking for undiscovered Christian artists.

"We're going into our fifth season," said Kristina Hill, cable public affairs coordinator of the network. "We're kind of 'American Idol'-ish."

But don't expect to find a Simon Cowell cutting hopefuls down with mean spirited critiques. "The performers are judged by Christian music professionals," Hill said. "They get critiqued on how to

advance their careers."

In order to be a part of CATS, performers must be at least 15 years old. The show is seeking all genres of Christian music, including hip-hop, rock and contemporary gospel.

What many people don't know about the Inspiration Network and CATS is that it's produced here. But there is no home cooking involved in picking the participants or the winners.

"Though the show is filmed in Charlotte, we get entries from all over the country," said Hill.

Unlike the popular "American Idol," Hill said CATS doesn't hold auditions, entries are accepted

through the mail. Contestants are asked to send two musical selections on a CD or cassette tape, two copies of their biography and two copies of a recent photo.

The entry fee is \$100.

The show airs for 30 episodes and at the end of the program the winner receives a contract with Point Of Grace Entertainment.

All entries must be received by 5 p.m. on April 21 and should be submitted to CATS - Christian Artist Talent Search, PO Box 7565, Charlotte, NC 28241. Minors must have a parental signature.

For more information, call the CATS hotline at (704) 561-7955.



Funk meets neo-soul gospel



Lyricsings
Brand New Day
Various Producers
Canvas



It would be easy to write off Lyricsings as a MaryMary clone, but that would do neither group justice.

MaryMary can sing the life out of anything they attempt, whether it's traditional gospel, blues or funk. Lyricsings seems to be able to do the same, but decides to concentrate more on the hip side.

Lyricsings likes big beats - mid-tempo or otherwise. "Chronicles," "Promise Land" and "Brand New Day" will all work in current gospel playlists, but could easily find a home at urban radio.

These women can also do the neo soul thing. "Moves Me" would make Jill Scott proud. The jazzy feel of the music allows them to soften their delivery and nearly start flowing.

"Angels Watching Over Me" sounds like a song Donald Lawrence did with a group called Company years ago. This version's a lot slower and if it's not the same song, it's close.

When these women get a bit traditional, they are just as successful. "Home In Glory" displays the duo's penchant for tight harmony and meaningful lyrics. It's the kind of song that can get a congregation excited. It's not true ol' school, but passes for it very nicely.

The pair closes with "When I Think" which is just plain ol' funky Whatever style they use, Lyricsings never forgets its purpose. The lyrical content stays on the gospel. That in itself is a feat which many artists are struggling to complete.

Ratings	
Classic	★★★★★
Excellent	★★★★
Good	★★★
Fair	★★
Why?	★
No stars - A new	

Churches boost AIDS/HIV campaign

By Hazel Trice Edney
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

WASHINGTON - Seventeen years ago, some pastors were actually afraid to get into the same baptism pool with people who had AIDS. The deadly disease and its causal virus, HIV, were taboo conversations - even in the pulpit.

Now, thousands of black ministers are not only addressing AIDS in their sermons, but - for the 17th year - an increasing number will actually participate in a seven-day annual conference March 5-11 to pray for the healing of AIDS around the world and to educate themselves on dealing with it in their

communities. "There is a lot of good news to report in terms of how far Black ministers have come on the subject of HIV and AIDS. We have really some serious models of HIV ministries in Black churches today," says Pennessa Seele, founder and chief executive officer of the Balm in Gilead, Inc., now

17 years old. "But, certainly there are far too many Catholics who are still not addressing the issues. But we can certainly point to some AIDS ministries with denominational leaders who are actively giving their voice to HIV. There's movement. There's major movement among the

Please see AIDS/6B

Sign of the times for congregation's growth

By Victoria Elmore
THE CHARLOTTE POST

A new sign is an indication of growth.

Trinity Baptist Church, located at 9115 Trinity Road, recently had its old church sign torn down to continue plans the congregation made. Trinity's old sign consisted of letters glued to brick. The church's new sign is trimmed in royal blue which matches the color scheme inside of the sanctuary. The sign itself is unique. The Spirit and atmosphere will bond together," Rev. Eric Miller said.

The previous sign allowed no room for change. The glued-on previous sign held the name of the church in one place. The new sign will enable letters to be removed and replaced with other words. "Our new sign is



PHOTO/CALVIN FERGUSON

The Rev. Eric Miller said the church's new sign is preparation for Trinity Park's growth.

Please see TRINITY /6B

CHURCH NEWS

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

Ongoing

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

The 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 Inc. of Winston-Salem and Carolinas Black Pride Movement in Charlotte have teamed up to create the Pride Gospel Mass Choir, the Carolina's first gay-affirming/all-affirming gospel mass choir.

PGMC was envisioned by Pastor Roger Hayes of Church of the Holy Spirit Fellowship. This vision involved creating an outlet for gay,

lesbian, bisexual, transgender and gay-friendly individuals to worship, inspire & uplift through song and praise arts.

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

Call Hayes at (336) 575-6205, e-mail chsnc@earthlink.net or go to the internet at 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 10

The Black Church Initiative of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice North Carolina celebrates the Black Church Week of Prayer for HIV/AIDS. The event will be held at New St. John Baptist Church, 2000 St. John

Please see BROTHERHOOD/7B

