

# 4B

# RELIGION

Life 1B



## Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12

Paul begins 1 Corinthians 12 with the words, "Now concerning spiritual gifts" This tells us that he is about to address another question that was put to him in a letter that the Corinthian church sent him (see 7:1, 25; and 8:1).

We have left the idea of running the Christian race to win, and are looking at the spiritual gifts that are given to each Christian by God. Because all Christians are runners in this race and do not stop running until the race is finished, we were equipped by God with certain gifts that will be of benefit to us and to others over the course of the race. As today's lesson indicates, God's gifts are given to us to be used to His glory and for the edification-or lifting up, or strengthening-of His people.

### QUESTIONS

I. The Need for the Gifts-1 Corinthians 12:1-3.

1. What divine influence causes someone to confess Christ?

The Holy Spirit is the One who convicts an unbeliever to confess his sin. And it is through Christians witnessing to those unbelievers that this conviction is given its start. John 16:8 says, "When He (the Helper or Holy Spirit) has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (NKJV). The Holy Spirit demonstrates the truth of Jesus Christ beyond fear of contradiction.

II. The Source of the Gifts-1 Corinthians 12:4-6.

2. Where do we see the Trinity in this passage?

Paul mentions each of the Godhead in these verses. In verse four he says that while the spiritual gifts vary, the (Holy) Spirit is the same. In verse five he says that there are different ministries in the working of the gifts, but the same Lord (Jesus Christ). And in verse six, Paul says that even though there is diversity in the uses of the spiritual gifts, it is through God's power that unification comes through all gifts to His people.

III. The Diversity of the Gifts-1 Corinthians 12:7-10.

3. What were the gifts of wisdom and knowledge?

The gift of (the word of) knowledge appears to refer to one's ability to teach doctrine; whereas the gift of (the word of) wisdom refers to one's ability to practically apply this knowledge.

4. What kinds of healings are recorded in the New Testament?

Many kinds of healings are found in the New Testament. The ministries of both Christ (see Matt. 4:23) and His apostles were characterized by healing the sick. Just to name a few: Acts 3:7 tells of the lame man whose "ankle bones received strength;" Acts 5:15 tells of how the people...

Please see GIFTS/5B

## Answers on the down low

### Charlotte pastor authors book on gays, black church

By Cheris F. Hodges  
cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

A Charlotte minister offers a black church response to the "down low" epidemic in a new book.

The African American church has historically been silent on the issue of gays in the church, but University City Church Pastor Michael A. Stevens Sr., author of "Straight Up," is speaking up about down low living.



Stevens

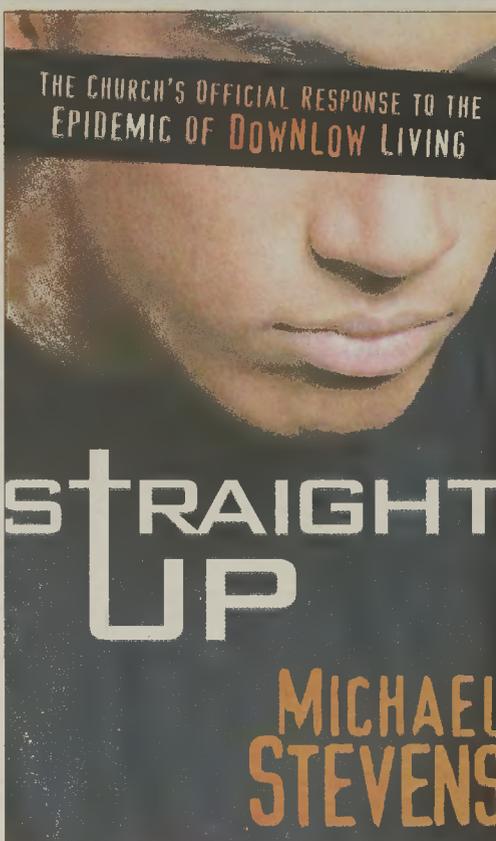
Not just criticizing the men who participate in the lifestyle but offering spiritual healing solutions.

"I was prompted out of a desire and a burden to address an epidemic in the African American community, particularly that hadn't been addressed by the church," said Stevens.

Seventy percent of new HIV cases in the U.S. are African American women, Stevens said he learned doing research for the book. More than half of them are black, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Straight Up" is an answer to author J.L. King's "On the Down Low," which Stevens said used the black church as a punching bag.

"He used the church as such a backdrop that I felt we had to punch back," Stevens said.



Though the topic of his book is controversial, Stevens said it is written in a loving way and not condemningly.

The book exposes the sins of the lifestyle and offers help to those who want out.

Blacks have long been at odds whether gay rights is equivalent to

civil rights of minorities. According to Baptist Press.org, at the 2004 National African American Fellowship meeting in Indianapolis, California pastor E.W. McCall said, "I am intensely offended To place homosexuality's sin rights movement on the same platform as the

Please see MINISTER/5B



## Scott steps up for gospel's tradition

Bishop Leonard Scott  
Live: Hymns & Church Songs  
Prince Yelder, producer  
Tyscott Records



Traditional gospel music has nearly gone the way of the Dodo. Most of today's church music sounds as if it were plucked from urban radio.

There are a few folks trying to keep the genre alive. Bishop Leonard Scott is one of them. "Hymns & Church Songs" is filled with songs of the old church and a few new ones.

Scott opens the CD with a high-spirited "Pentecostal Praise Medley" that includes "I Don't Mind Giving God The Praise" and "Praise The Lord Everybody." It's a good indication as to where Scott is taking this CD. The arrangements are on the traditional side in a modern setting.

This will be more than performance. There's some church going on!

That's pretty much what you expect from a live recording in a Baptist church. Birmingham, Ala.'s New Hope Baptist Church was the site of the recording and its congregation seemed to be enjoying the concert as much as the performers.

Scott does a lot of singing, but shares the wealth with a number of fine vocalists. Lillian Lilly makes a powerful guest performance on "Jesus Keep Me Near The Cross." The arrangement has a few elements from the Mississippi Mass Choir's version from years ago, but with a lot of twists. Elder Jamel Strong brings all the emotion possible from "He Is Lord." Belinda George-Peoples rocks the congregation with "He Arose."

Elder has his moments as well. He's especially good on "Sing Unto The King" and "My Body Belongs To God."

This is traditional gospel done right. Elder is helping to keep a tradition alive. Praise & Worship is fine, but the real meat and potatoes in African American worship is still firmly rooted in tradition.



**Ratings**

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

## Riverboat cruise offers non-secular entertainment

By Erica Singleton  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Tony Rushing and Nikki Harper felt Charlotte was missing something for "God's people."

"In Charlotte, there is plenty of secular entertainment," Harper said. "We, as Christians, are sometimes limited in the activities where we didn't feel we were sacrificing our principles."

During an album release party on Lake Norman, Harper, her longtime friend Rush-

ing, and a few other Christians, found themselves trying to come up with an alternative.

About 25 minutes up Highway 25, the two found an 80-foot yacht to house their vision, and begin pouring their money into making it a reality. Under T-Rush Entertainment they offer more than just a two and a half hour cruise with food and local information. The Gospel Cruise provides 3 R's; relaxation, renewal, and restora-

tion.

"Gospel Cruise offers an atmosphere where adults can have an evening out without their cell phones, children or the chaos of daily activities," said Harper. "And being on Lake Norman is soothing."

Hosted by AC and Tanya

Rivens of Praise 100.9 FM, the Gospel Cruise features dinner, giveaways, Bible trivia, dance ministry, inspirational songs, and information on lakefront houses. The yacht can fit about 110 people, but thus far the cruises have averaged about 60.

"It hasn't come full circle yet," explained Rushing. "We're not creating a buzz yet."

The partners say the experience is open to anyone who

Please see GOSPEL/6B

## Moderates: Don't be bashful on religious issues

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DENVER—Rather than being bashful, Democrats should openly talk about their religious beliefs and moral values, say moderates urging the party to court voters beyond the traditional Democratic base to win control of the Republican-run Congress this fall and the presidency in 2008.

"If we continue to have this perception in the Democratic Party that faith can't be discussed, we'll continue to lose elections based on wedge issues," said Terrance Carroll, a Colorado state representative.

The view, espoused by Democrats attending the centrist Democratic Leadership Council's annual meeting, could irritate liberals who

advocate a strict separation of church and state.

But moderates claim that invoking religion will help Democrats connect with churchgoing voters — including Republicans and independents — who polls show are more apt to vote with the Republican Party.

"Democrats have run from the values issues. We now have to deal with those issues of faith," said Randal Mangham, a state representative in Georgia.

Little more than three months before midterm congressional elections, Democrats see an opportunity to wrest control of the House and Senate from Republicans. A recent AP-Ipsos poll showed Americans more inclined to vote for Democ-

rats.

Moderates fear the Democratic Party could squander its chance to be the party in power if it only focuses on energizing voters in urban Democratic strongholds. Rather, moderates say, the party must reach out to voters — including religious Americans — in fast-growing, Republican-leaning regions.

"Our goal is to broaden the Democratic Party," said Al From, the DLC's founder.

On religion, he and other moderates said Democrats must strike a careful balance — talking about their faith without shifting positions on "values issues" to score political points.

"There is a downside if it's not authentic," Karen Hale, a state senator from Utah, said.

Republicans, for their part, more easily talk about faith, perhaps an influence of the Republican Party's close alliance with highly visible religious-right conservatives.

President George W. Bush, arguably one of the most devout presidents, regularly references his Christian beliefs. His approach and the Republican Party's efforts on "values issues" helped propel Bush to a second term in 2004 over Democratic nominee John Kerry, who appeared uncomfortable talking about his Roman Catholic affiliation.

Protestants, Catholics and Americans who said they attended religious services weekly sided with Bush in larger numbers than Kerry.

## CHURCH NEWS

The deadline for announcements is noon on Fridays. Fax to (704) 342-2160 or e-mail your announcement to cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com. Please put "church news" in the subject line.

### July 27

Gospel Truth Ministries International-East Gate Church, located at 11100 Monroe Road Suite F Matthews, will host a "United Front Day of Prayer" at the Charlotte Convention Center, room 212-A.

The event begins at 9 a.m.

### July 30

Dear Musical Department: Go to war in the army of the Lord. Report to service on July 30 at 16:00 hours (4 p.m.) at 4700 Willard St. This invitation is commissioned by the KJ STAT young adult division of Bethany Baptist Church. Call Jonathan King (704) 449-5125 Karim Torrence (704)548-3919 or Zanita Robinson (704) 995-0876

### August 4

The Overflow Ministries will host a two night revival at the Church Rock of the Kingdom, located at 6640 Suite-A, Hickory Grove Business Park, W.T. Harris Blvd.

Services begin at 7 p.m. For more information, call (704) 605-7022.

### August 5

The Metrolina Baptist Association will host a Women Reaching Women Conference, sponsored by LifeWay. The event will be held at Carmel Baptist Church, 1145 Pineville-

Matthews Road. For more information, call (704) 847-8575.

### August 12

Cornelius Parks and Recreation Department will host its third annual gospel fest at Smithville Park. Tonya Rivens of Praise 100.9 will host the event. For more information, call (704) 892-6031 extension 160. The event runs from 1-7:30 p.m.

### August 13

Please see MORNING/5B