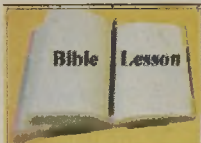


# 4B

# RELIGION

Life 1B



## Answering the burning bush

Moses and Paul both had remarkable calls to ministry. Paul saw the risen Christ in a flash of light on the road to Damascus; Moses heard the voice of God from a burning bush in the desert. Paul responded to God's calling immediately by setting out to preach the gospel. His Christian life was beset with hardships and persecution from the beginning (see Acts 9:17-26).

Moses, however, responded in a very different way. When God told Moses that He would use him to deliver the Jews from Egypt, Moses balked. He first pointed out that he was a nobody, why should people listen to him?

He then demanded some sort of evidence that God had really spoken to him. God replied by empowering him with the ability to do several attesting miracles. Moses then declined the invitation on the basis of his lack of skill in public speaking. He even asked God whether the Jews would know which "god" he was talking about!

(See Exodus 3:1-4:17)  
Moses, in other words, resisted God's call by pointing out all of the personal weaknesses that would make it impossible for him to complete the task. Paul, by contrast, refused this path. He too labored under serious personal shortcomings, including the painful "thorn in the flesh" discussed in our passage for today. Yet he was determined to fulfill his calling (as Moses eventually was as well). Paul was confident that God would provide the tools he needed to finish the job.

**Lesson Background**  
Paul wrote 2 Corinthians in a d. 57 at the conclusion of a very tense period between himself and that church. In the letter of 1 Corinthians, Paul had rebuked them sharply for sectarian divisions and a number of serious spiritual and moral failures. But that letter, even though supported by a visit from Timothy, was not as effective as Paul had hoped. Paul, therefore, left Ephesus to make an emergency visit to Corinth, one characterized by confrontation. The trip was successful, but while there Paul apparently was slandered by some of his enemies. These accusations must have continued after he left (see 2 Corinthians 1:23-2:1, 3:1, 10:1-11:33).

All this placed Paul in a difficult situation. Obviously, he needed to defend his credibility by responding to these attacks. Yet at the same time, he did not want to fall into arrogant boasting about his accomplishments or enter the trap of comparing resumes. He avoided these problems by emphasizing his weaknesses as proof that God was working through him in a unique way.

Please see PAUL/6B

# Hope after storm

Churches remember victims of Hurricane Katrina and aftermath



ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast last year, causing billions of dollars in damage and broken lives.

**THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
NEW ORLEANS—Marilyn Osborn on Sunday stood where she had stood a year ago almost to the day: Outside the First United Methodist Church in Mid-City, a church she's attended since 1946. On Aug. 28, 2005, she posted a note—written in big letters—on the church's door. It said, "No Service Today."  
Why? Hurricane Katrina was on its way.  
A year later, her church, finally, had opened its doors for its first service since the storm, just in time to commemorate the one-year anniversary of Katrina, which falls

on Tuesday.  
"We're still working on just a little bit of electricity," Osborn said, fanning herself. A temporary power line was connected to the church a month ago, but it does not supply enough power to run air conditioning, she said. "Nobody expected what we got," she said about Katrina. "The loves are what got us."  
Osborn was cheerful Sunday, welcoming people back with her husband, an usher, and snapping photographs for the church newsletter.  
Despite the devastation that lingers, the corner of the city where Osborn's church is located, a blue-collar, eclectic area of turn-of-the-

century homes known as Mid-City, was surprisingly active. The entire area was badly flooded.  
The open door of Osborn's church looked onto a congregation of Southern Baptists down the street. Still not back in their church, the Baptists held hands under a tent in the grassy median of a boulevard. Their electric keyboard, head-high fans and microphones were powered by a generator. A baptismal tub was set up under the blazing sun, and the preacher hopes to have new members to baptize as early as next week.  
"I think the anniversary spurred

Please see CHURCHES/5B

## Spiritual counselor fights removal of Jesus statue

**THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
GREENSBORO, Ga.—A Greensboro spiritual counselor is considering suing the city after workers confiscated a 6-foot-tall, half-ton statue from his front yard.  
City officials say the life-size statue violates zoning restrictions and threatens public safety. Owner Nickie Marks, though, calls it an expression of his faith. He and his attorney argue that by removing the statue, the city is violating his free speech rights.

"My whole thing is that I just want my statue back in my yard," Marks said. "Why would they move it? It wasn't hurting anybody. People actually liked it—they have been very supportive of our case."  
The statue was removed from Marks' front yard and kept as evidence at a city storage lot. It was returned to him last week, covered with red clay.  
"It really was like someone just taking a Bible and throwing in the dirt," he said of

the statue, which he's since moved to his back yard.  
City Manager Larry Postell said the city has an ordinance prohibiting signs without words in residential areas. The ordinance was meant to keep business owners from welding cars to the tops of large poles as advertisements, but he said it also applies to Marks' statue.  
"He's a spiritual counselor, and he's got a spiritual icon in his front yard," Postell said. "I think it constitutes a sign."

## Authors explore religion-politics connection

**THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
NEW YORK—This fall, former Senator John C. Danforth will tour the United States in support of his new book, "Faith and Politics," an attempt, he says, to start a discussion about the role of religion in elections and government.  
Danforth will not be alone.  
Religion in politics, a key topic of the 2004 presidential campaign and possibly the next one in 2008, is the subject of numerous books over the next few months, including Mel White's "Religion Gone Bad," Dan Gilgoff's "The Jesus Machine," Richard Dawkins' "The God Delusion" and the Rev. Barry W. Lynn's



PHOTO/THE STOCK MARKET

"Piety & Politics."  
Most of the authors have harsh criticism for religion's impact, with Dawkins writing in disgust about "a system of morals which any civilized modern person, whether religious or not, would find... obnoxious." Dawkins' book has an announced first printing of 75,000 and his editor at Houghton Mifflin, Eamon Dolan, says that "The God Delusion" reflects a "rising unease with the current state of the world."  
"I feel that there's a growing sentiment among thoughtful people in general, whether they're religious or not, that religious belief has gotten

Please see AUTHORS/5B



## Moore old school with latest release

Lucinda Moore  
Lucinda Moore  
VaShawn Mitchell,  
producer  
Tyscot Records



Lucinda Moore seems to be from the new school but she approaches her new CD with an old school sensibility.  
Moore obviously likes the praise and worship trend that's going on. About half this CD is devoted to such. But Moore puts lots of feeling into these songs to lift them past the genre. When she sings something as repetitious as "We Lift Our Hands" she doesn't settle for something soft and simple. She's singing full voice and enjoying the song. On "Pressure Into Praise," Moore heads toward the islands, but doesn't try to do a fake accent. She blasts the lyrics out with a gospel diva attitude. Her background vocalists are singing into the rafters. "Balm In Gilead" has been used for so many song titles, but Moore's song is anything but a cliché. The song gives her a chance to show off her emotion and she has lots.  
Moore is good at this, but she's even better at gospel. She puts a delightful spin on "Safe In His Arms," one of my favorite gospel songs from the '80s. She takes it up a notch without going overboard.  
Moore certainly can sing with the best of them. On "Already Done," Moore teams with Darryl Coley, who's in fine voice on this song. The duo is certainly dynamic, pushing each other to sing harder with each passing verse. It's a screamfest, but boy, they are singing.

Moore goes completely old school on her "Going To Church" medley which includes "Storm Out On The Ocean," "O' Glorious Day," "Hiding Place" and "Pressing My Way." Moore is as comfortable wailing out these old tunes as she is with the new stuff.



**Ratings**

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

## CHURCH NEWS

The deadline to have your church announcements added to the calendar is noon on Fridays. Fax your announcements to (704) 342-2160 or e-mail your announcements to cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com. Please put "church news" in the subject line.  
**Ongoing**  
We Empower Women For Life At Women of The Harvest Bible Study Wednesdays at 6 p.m. at 6636 Suite L Hickory Grove Business Park.

**September 9**  
Pineville Church of the Nazarene will host Frank Reich as a part of its kick off for the North Carolina chapter of the Men's Fraternity. The event begins at 7 a.m. and the cost is \$8. The church is located at 8614 Pineville-Matthews Road. For more information call (704) 542-3618.  
• The Voices of Hopes Recovery Choir will celebrate its seven-year anniversary with an evening filled with praise. The choir has trav-

eled the U.S. carrying a message of "Hope after Dope." The concert will be held at the Hope Haven Conference Center, located at 3815 N. Tryon St.  
**September 11**  
Memorial Presbyterian Church will host two Bible study events. The first features Christian educator Dianne Wright at 7 p.m. The theme is Living in the imagination of God. On September 25, the Rev. David Frye will host a teaching of Spiritual reading of scripture.

• First Mount Calvary Baptist Church, located at 209 W 28th St., will host its fall revival through Wednesday. Services begin nightly at 7:30 p.m.  
**September 30**  
The Calvary Church of Nazarene will present a full length drama and dinner theatre at 5 p.m. Tickets go on sale September 5. For more information and tickets, call (704) 536-6485.

Please see WALK/5B

