

Religion

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2007

PAGE 5B



Staying true to God

Isn't it amazing that today's lesson depicts love as a "light?" Imagine this same love lighting our lives' paths to enable us to forge ahead each and every day. Even more significant is that a Christian's example of love—Jesus Christ, Himself—is also described as a light. However, not only is He a light, the truth of the matter is that He is the only light that we need... spiritually and eternally speaking. Hallelujah!

I learned a few years ago that the moon is a bright shining star that does not emit light of its own, but rather gives off the powerfully reflected light of the sun. What a monumental parallel that we Christians are also like the moon, in that, we do not emit our own light—we have none to give off in and of ourselves; but, we discharge the supernatural light and love of the Son of God—Jesus Christ!

As we study God's Word today, let us reflect on the reality that Jesus is our perfect example of how to love and live, and the reason why we can share with others the ultimate gift of eternal life through Him. Also remember that the command for us to love reached its most genuine and fullest expression in the life of Christ. He demonstrated for us what true love is by coming into our world and giving His life to take away our sins. This is something truly worth shouting about!

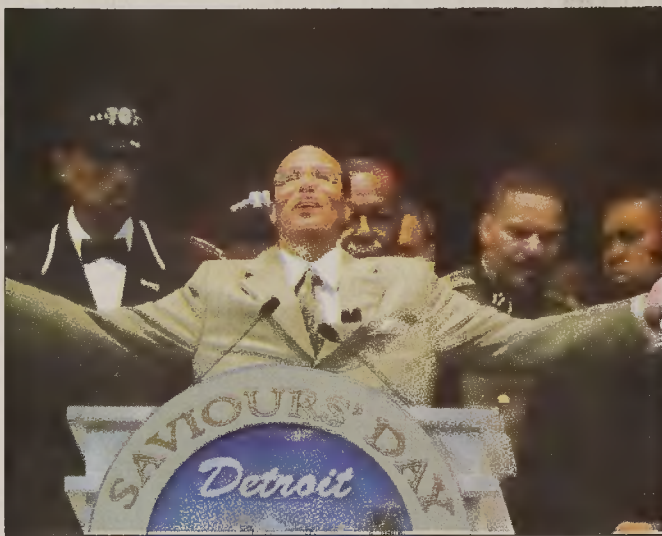
LESSON BACKGROUND

Light and love are important themes in the writings of the apostle John. (Just reflect back on the books that he is responsible for having written: John, I, II, and III John, and Revelation.) He wrote these books near the end of his earthly days—after a long life as a leader of the church. In this first of three letters, he appears to address the church at large, warning people to avoid the darkness of false teaching and to embrace the light of love.

The time of John's writing is perhaps somewhere between AD 85 and 90. At this time near the end of the first century, the church began to be troubled by a false doctrine known as Gnosticism. John was confronting an early version of that heresy. Gnostics thought that they alone would be saved. They taught that following Jesus (alone) was not enough to save. The Gnostics claimed that believers had to learn a higher secret knowledge.

Due to the "sign of the times" with false teachers and teaching abounding, John emphasized that Christ came in the flesh (see 1 John 4:3) and declared in his Gospel, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (see 1:14). This was an important issue to address because Gnostics believed that matter was evil, and as such, they could not conceive that the Son of God could dwell in

Please see STAYING/6B



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO

Louis Farrakhan urged people of faith to come together for world peace Sunday.

Farrakhan: World at war because Christians, Muslims and people of other faiths are divided

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DETROIT—Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan stressed religious unity in what was expected to be his last major speech, saying the world is at war because Christians, Muslims and people of other faiths are divided.

The 73-year-old leader of the Chicago-based black Muslim group told the tens of thousands at Detroit's Ford Field on Sunday that Jesus Christ and the Prophet Muhammad would embrace each other with love if they were on the stage behind him.

"Our lips are full of praise, but our hearts are far removed from the prophets we all claim," he said. "That's why the world is in the shape that it's in."

The fiery orator spoke for the first time since ceding leadership of the movement last year because of illness. The speech at the home of the National Football League's Detroit Lions capped the Nation of Islam's three-day convention in the city where it was founded in 1930.

"My time is up," Farrakhan said in describing his

exit from the leadership stage.

The leader of 1995's Million Man March, which was organized in 1995 to encourage black men to improve their families and communities, said he is leaving at a time of great conflict in the world, citing the war in Iraq. He said he believes God is angry with leaders who are putting politics and greed above serving their fellow man.

He said President George W. Bush should be impeached or at least censured for his "wicked policies," and urged young people to avoid joining a military that will have them "leave one way and come back another."

The downtown venue was not filled to capacity, but seats on the field and in the lower levels were packed. There were empty seats in the upper levels of the stadium.

Anita Baker performed two songs before Farrakhan took the stage and speakers from various religious and ethnic groups welcomed him. Among those on the stage behind him were U.S.

Please see FARRAKHAN/8B



Scholars, clergy critical of documentary on a possible tomb of Jesus

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK—Filmmakers and researchers on Monday unveiled two ancient stone boxes they said may have once contained the remains of Jesus and Mary Magdalene, but several scholars derided the claims made in a new documentary as unfounded and contradictory to basic Christian beliefs.

"The Lost Tomb of Jesus," produced by Oscar-winning director James Cameron, argues that 10 small caskets discovered in 1980 in a Jerusalem suburb may have held the bones of Jesus and his family.

The documentary is scheduled to air March 4 on the

Discovery Channel in the United States. The program will air in several countries in Latin America on March 18 at 8 p.m. local time (Argentina, Venezuela, Mexico, Brazil). There are no other international confirmed air dates.

One of the caskets even bears the title, "Judah, son of Jesus," hinting that Jesus may have had a son, according to the film.

"There's a definite sense that you have to pinch yourself," Cameron said Monday at a news conference. He told NBC's "Today" show earlier that statisticians found "in the range of a couple of million to one" in favor of the

Please see SCHOLARS/7B

Invitation to integrate made history at tiny junior college

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SWANNANOVA, N.C.—There is no monument to Alma Shippy.

No plaque describes how, in 1952, the shy teenager packed a bag of clothes, caught a ride in a friend's pickup truck and walked into history on the campus of Warren Wilson Junior College.

It's an obscure vignette in civil rights history. Shippy not only was Warren Wilson's first black student, but one of the few to attend any segregated college or junior college by invitation—and not by court order and armed escort.

A core of Shippy's family and friends—some of whom paved his way and some whose path was paved by him—want wider attention for what they see as a bright moment of brotherhood in one of the South's darkest eras.

"There were no dogs, no guns. He didn't have to be shot at. There was nobody that was beaten up, nobody died because he came here," says Rodney Lytle, a 1974 Warren Wilson graduate and now the school's multicultural adviser. "And that—that story—that is beautiful!"

And it didn't happen by chance.

Shippy's presence was the culmination of a decade of work by leaders of Warren H. Wilson Vocational Junior College and Associated Schools, created in 1942 from the merger and expansion of two high schools run by the Presbyterian Church.

Arthur Bannerman, born in Africa to Presbyterian missionaries, was named the school's new president. With new Dean Henry Jensen, he opened the school's doors to a variety of outsiders, starting with two Japanese-American girls from an internment camp in Arizona.

"They were missionaries," says Warren Wilson graduate Marvin Lail, with a philosophy of "not just telling you but showing you."

Bannerman began writing to church-connected schools for blacks, seeking a student who might want to come to Warren-Wilson. It wasn't until the spring of 1952 that the men learned of Alma Shippy, a 17-year-old who had befriended some Warren Wilson students in local churches where he helped teach Sunday school and Bible classes.

Lail, then 16 years old, was deputized to walk across the Swannanoa Valley to Buckeye Cove—"truly on the other side of the tracks"—where Shippy lived with his grandmother, Ludie White. He invited Shippy to speak at the campus evening prayer service.

Jensen watched Shippy's brief address, and afterward joined Lail in asking whether he might like to attend Warren Wilson. Then, as now, students help with their expenses by working at the school. Shippy, who had no money for college, said yes.

"I think he was really taken aback that white men or peers—I was just a boy—would come and invite him to a white college," Lail said.

There was a hurdle: The college had one dormitory for male students and Shippy would have to live there. Jensen called a meeting of the 55 Sunderland Hall residents.

Jensen "was a very smart man and was a good speaker and (said), 'We're going to integrate the college and we want it to be sooner rather than later, because it's coming down the road and everything will be integrated,'" Lail recalled.

Please see INVITATION/8B

CHURCH NEWS

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

Ongoing

The Empower Women For Life At Women of The Harvest Bible Study Wednesdays at 6 p.m. at 6636 Suite I Hickory Grove Business Park.

Steele Creek AME Zion Church, located at

1500 Shopton Road, will have noon day Bible study from 12-1 p.m.

Join Scouting at Steele Creek AME Zion Church, 1500 Shopton Road, Charlotte, NC 28217. Boy Scout and Girl Scout troop meetings are held each Wednesday night at 6:30 p.m. Call (704) 523-6552 to register or to obtain additional information.

New Life Outreach is seeking donations for its residential training center in Concord. The program's services are provided at no

cost and helps men with addiction problems. The residence is located at 2216 Kannapolis Highway. The home is in need of appliances, cooking utensils, linens, china, flatware, clothing and cash donations. Donations can be dropped off at Olive Branch Furniture, located at 2603 S. Cannon Blvd. For more information call (704) 701-8783.

Restoration Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ has moved to 220 East Peterson St., off South Tryon St. The church's phone number

is (704) 523-1441. for Christians. The church is located at 1135 Redbud St. The event begins at 12 p.m.

Celebrate Ole' Timey Day with the Council of Elders at Clinton Chapel AME Zion Church, located at 1901 Rozzelles Ferry Road, at 4 p.m. for contests, games, reenactments of life after slavery, food from the period and good music.

Please see FOOD/7B

