

# Church news

## God provides a new way to righteousness for his people

### Sunday school lesson

#### A NEW WAY TO RIGHTEOUS

(Read from your Bible Romans chapter 7)  
"My brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Romans 7:4)

Our lessons currently are in the summer quarter of studies under the theme, "The Righteousness of God," a thirteen lesson series taken from Paul's letter to the church at Rome. James Van Buren, a noted commentator for the International Sunday School Lessons, introduced to day's study with these comments. (Quote) "Paul says that when we come out of the baptismal water we rise to walk

in "newness of life." In verse 6 of today's text he says we have been delivered from the law so we now serve God in "newness of spirit."

In fact we serve under a new "covenant." Really, since we have become new creations in Christ, "all things are new." We no longer trying to earn God's acceptance based on our observance of a detailed legal code, but rejoice in a new life of forgiveness made possible by the coming, dying and raising of the Son of God. As sons, we are joint heirs with Christ of all the great and precious promises of our heavenly Father." (Unquote.)

#### A NEW RELATIONSHIP (Romans 7:4-6)

When we read and study the book

of Romans it seems, at first glance, that the apostle is spending an inordinate amount time on the subject of law versus grace. With further consideration, however, a perspective view begins to emerge and we see Paul's intent. First, the church at Rome consisted principally of Jewish Christians. Paul had not been to Rome and had not, so far as we know, met these fellow Christians.

These Jews probably became Christians as a result of the day of Pentecost when they had come back home to Palestine to observe the Passover and Pentecost celebration. Returning to Rome they had established a church. Their religious background had been Judaism, and strict observance of the Mosaic law. Originally

God had given them ten commandments. Following the commandments they were given laws governing their inter-personal relationship, holy days' observances, sacrifices, hygiene, diet, worship, etc. During the succeeding centuries the Rabbis and lawyers had increased and expanded those basic codes into multiplied hundreds of detailed laws.

The law became cumbersome and nearly impossible to keep. Yet, Jews who converted from Judaism to Christianity, almost invariably, brought with them the practices of Judaism; it was a "do" religion. With Christ's coming, it was a new day. The keeping of the law for the Christian was over. God had established a new covenant with the people. This covenant

was of grace and love, and it included Gentiles, as well as Jews. Paul's intent was to clarify God's requirements under the covenant of grace, and to counter the Jewish Christians' confusion. (Romans 7:13-14)

#### A TENSE STRUGGLE

(Romans 7:13-23)

When we Christians begin a new life in Christ Jesus we have every intention of leaving sin behind, only to find the temptation to sin is ever present. The wise old apostle must have realized this for he turned his attention to the conflict which goes on in most Christians' lives. He paused, however, in verses 13-14 to compliment the law for it showed what sin is.

He moves then to the struggle. In each Christian there are two na-

tures; the physical and the spiritual. The Scriptures refer to the physical nature variously as carnal, the flesh, human, etc. It is this nature which wars against the spiritual part of us. That's the bad news. So intense is this struggle sometimes that it led Paul to declare that "when I would do good, evil is present with me." (Verse 21)

We Christians can live victorious lives, however, through the help of the Holy Spirit which lives within us. Through His help, we cannot be tempted beyond that which we are able to bear. That's the good news. (Lesson Based On The International Sunday School Lessons)

## Church news

### Revival set

The Rev. Frank Fortesque from Washington, NC, will be the visiting minister at a revival meeting to be held at Bethany United Methodist Church, Rt. 1, Belvidere. Services will begin each evening at 8:00 p.m.

on Sunday night July 26-July 29th. Special music is planned for each service.

Mr. Fortesque is a former pastor of The Chowan Charge and Bethany. The public is invited to attend.

### Bay Branch schedule

Bay Branch A.M.E. Zion Church begins Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. with Mr. Horace Hurdle, assistant superintendent, in charge.

Rev. David White and the people of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church will worship with them. Dinner will be served.

The public is cordially invited to attend.

### First Baptist schedule

First Baptist Church Sunday School begins at 9:45 a.m. with Superintendent Gibb in charge. Morning worship starts at 11:00 a.m. Pastor

London will preach from the subject "Passing Religious Beliefs to Your Children" Ruth 1:16-17. The senior will sing.

### Fellowship to meet

The Perquimans County Fellowship Union will be held at New Bethel Baptist Church and the Rec. Gilbert Spence, and Leigh Temple

A.M.E. Zion Church is in charge of the worship at 7:00 p.m. The Rev. J.H. London is president.

### Choir to perform

The J.H. London Crusaders will celebrate their first anniversary Sunday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. at the First Baptist Church.

loh Baptist Church Young Adult Choir. Mrs. Estella Felton will be the MC of the program.

All choirs and groups are invited to attend.

### Training union to meet

The Sunday School and Baptist Training Union of the Roanoke Missionary Baptist Association will hold its Seventy-First Annual Session July 22nd and 23rd at Cornerstone Mis-

sonary Baptist Church, Elizabeth City, N.C.

All churches are asked to please send delegates.

### Bible school scheduled

Snug Harbor Community Church will hold Vacation Bible School August 3rd thru 7th from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Classes will be for K-12th

grades. For information call 426-7757.

Worship services held Sundays at 9:00 a.m. Sunday School for all ages at 10:15 a.m. All are welcome.

## The praying mantis

Mantises often are touted as a biological control against garden insect pests, say experts at the N.C. Botanical Garden at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

It waits for its victim to approach within pouncing distance. The praying mantis will eat any insect that comes its way. Large mantises have been seen eating lizards and small birds.

The original mantises came into this country by accident in 1899 on nursery stock from Europe. Although 4 inches or longer, the insects' green or brown color hid their bodies and their silent waiting went unobserved by inspection centers.

The female and male are extremely different. The male has to sneak up behind her to mate, and if she spots him first, she may turn on him and eat him alive. When the female mantis is ready to lay her 80-100 eggs, she deposits the cluster on a small branch and covers them with a frothy secretion that dries to a consistency of styrofoam, which is warm and durable enough to protect the eggs through the winter. They are fully grown by late summer or early fall.

The species of the mantis family most seen in North Carolina is mantis religiosa or praying mantis. The name comes from the way the insect's legs appear to bend in supplication. These legs, which are covered with spines, can shoot out at great speed to capture prey and eat it alive.



Pictured above members of Stallings Funeral Home's T-ball team battle members of Jimmy's Barbecue's team.

Dear friends,



Proof of age or citizenship is sometimes hard to produce. If you need such proof but have none of the usual documents, you can ask the U.S. Census Bureau for help. Using names and addresses of your parents, they will search past census data to see if you were shown as living with your parents and if details of your date and place of birth were recorded. The service costs \$12. Write for the application form to U.S. Census Bureau, Dept. of Commerce, Pittsburgh, KS 66762.

Respectfully,

*Larry Swindell*

**Swindell  
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## TEARS OF THE SON

by  
Randall Gibson  
Ministerial Intern

New Hope — Woodland United Methodist Charge

"Jesus wept" (John 11:35), although the shortest verse in the Bible, it is one of the most powerful contained therein. These two words exemplify the gospel and paint an accurate picture of god.

But why did Jesus weep? His tears were not meant for his friend Lazarus particularly: Jesus knew He was going to raise (not resurrect!) him from the dead. (vs 4 & 11) No, Jesus shed tears because of the hopelessness that reigned in the hearts of his friends Mary and Martha and the neighbors that joined them in mourning: "If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died!" (vs 21; see also vs 32b); "But some of them said, 'He gave sight to the blind man, didn't he? Could he not have kept Lazarus from dying?'" (vs 37)

Of course Jesus could have prevented Lazarus' death, and many of those present knew it! In fact, they knew that He did not even have to be present but only speak the word and Lazarus would not have died. Surely many had heard of the case of the Roman officer's servant (Mt. 8:5-13) and of the case of the Phoenician woman's demon possessed daughter. (Mr 7:24-30) But Jesus made no attempt to prevent Lazarus' death and even purposely delayed his coming.

Finally, however, Jesus did come and, upon his arrival, Martha confessed: "But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask Him for." (vs 22) Martha's confession had a hollowness to it. It lacked the faith that is the substance of things hoped for. It was no more than a wild empty hope, a fantasy — Lazarus was already dead! What could Jesus do? He was too late!

And "Jesus wept." Jesus, God Incarnate, shed tears for an emotionally and spiritually destitute humanity. It is not a picture of an angry

God who takes pleasure in punishing sinners. It is not a picture of a twisted perverse God who delights in bringing disease, in killing, or in inflicting sundry varieties of suffering upon people.

It is a picture of a God of love, mercy, and compassion who weeps for and with humanity, who empathizes with their pain. It is Jesus, the Son of God, who is with us always in the midst of our circumstances, whatever they may be.

God the Father did grant Jesus' request. He restored Lazarus' life, an act which caused many to believe on his name. (vs 45) But, after the shock and the excitement surrounding the miracle subsided, is it not likely that the people thought: "He could have prevented Lazarus' death and suffering it caused! Why did He wait so long? Why did He let Lazarus die?"

We can readily identify with both the people and their thoughts as often, in our prayers, we petition God for many things expecting Him to grant our requests in our way and in our time. But god's ways are not our ways, His understanding is not our understanding. His timetable is not ours. But Jesus was not late! Was not Lazarus' life being spared the people's prayer, the desire of their hearts? Their prayers were answered God's way and in God's time.

"Jesus wept," a short but powerful verse, paints a word picture of a God who sheds tears for humanity, who weeps with humanity, who is present in our circumstances, and who acts without ever being late. "Leave all your worries with him, because he cares for you. . . Be patient and wait for the Lord to act." (1 Peter 5:7; Ps 37:7a)

(All scripture quotations taken from the Good News Bible, Today's English Version.)

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## Cards of Thanks

Your thoughts, prayers, cards, and flowers, visits and calls during my recent illness will never be forgotten. I am grateful for all expressions of interest in my recovery. May God bless each of you, dear friends.  
R. L. Stevenson

We would like to thank all of you for the cards, flowers, food, visits and your prayers during the illness and death of our mother, Mattie H. Berry.  
Dan and Edgar Berry

I would like to express to my loved ones and friends my sincere thanks for all of the lovely cards, visits, flowers and food you sent while I was a patient at Leigh-Memorial Hospital and since I have been at home. Especially the many prayers offered in my behalf.  
Thank you one and all.  
Evelyn Harrell

