



March 7, 1968

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
(Twentieth in a series)

VIETNAM: THE MORALITY OF OUR MEANS

By T. B. Maston

Retired Professor of Christian Ethics
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Most of us, if I judge correctly, approve in general the war in Vietnam. We may wish that our nation had not gotten involved in it, but we do not believe we can wisely or honorably pull out of Vietnam.

Some citizens believe that it is unpatriotic to oppose any war in which our government is involved. Others just as strongly insist that every citizen not only has the right but also the responsibility to determine whether or not a particular war is right or just.

It may be, as many insist, that we do not have sufficient knowledge concerning this war to make a moral judgment regarding it. On the other hand, some suggest, and correctly so, that Christians have a moral responsibility to inform themselves concerning issues such as the war. Also, they have a responsibility to apply their Christian insights to the war as well as to other problems.

One may be a supporter of the war in general, and yet he should evaluate as objectively as possible the various aspects of the war. This includes the aims for which the war is being fought and the means or methods that are being used to attain those aims or objectives.

Some methods being used in the contemporary war are under examination not only by Christians but also by other concerned citizens.

The bombing of North Vietnam is questioned by a considerable segment of our people. Their questioning may deal strictly with practical results. Some of them contend that the bombing does not achieve the intended purposes. They claim that there are far more North Vietnamese fighting against our forces in South Vietnam now than when the bombing began. Instead of breaking the will of the North Vietnamese to resist, the bombings, so they claim, have strengthened that will. They believe that the chances for peace would be greater if the bombing stopped.

Other people just as strongly insist that the effectiveness of the bombing could be tremendously increased by a stepped-up tempo, particularly on previously restricted areas and targets. They contend that the bombing of North Vietnam reduces the casualties among our American fighting men and their allies. They also believe that the bombing will shorten the war, forcing North Vietnam to seek for peace.

There are some people who condemn the bombing of the North on strictly moral grounds. They suggest that the fighting is not going on in North Vietnam, hence from their perspective, the bombing of the North is wrong. This is particularly true in the light of the fact that civilians inevitably are killed.

Many who may be uncertain about bombing as such, have strong feelings against the use of napalm and fragmentation bombs. The napalm bomb in particular, is a terrible instrument of destruction. It may leave people disfigured in the most horrible ways.

The objection to such bombing is unusually strong when it is used against villages. Many old people, women, and children are killed or maimed for life.

There are also some questions about defoliation and crop destruction. The former may be helpful in uncovering an enemy but when it is used indiscriminately, it creates some serious moral problems.

Is it possible that we may fight a war to defend a people whose country will be virtually destroyed when we get through?



REGIONAL OFFICES

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 161 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303, Telephone (404) 523-2593

DALLAS R. T. McCartney, Editor, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) RI 1-1996

WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

BUREAU

BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,
Telephone (615) 254-1631

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Alabama Baptists Plan
Race Riot Prevention

SELMA, Ala. (BP)--White and Negro Baptists here have approved suggestions which they hope will stave off a "long hot summer" of racial disorder in Alabama.

Problems of racial conflict, riots and disorder were discussed in detail here by a joint committee of representatives from the Alabama Baptist State Convention (Southern Baptist) and the Alabama Baptist (National) Convention.

According to committee leaders, evidence had been brought to their attention that there may be plans in Alabama for "civil disobedience" this summer. The committee said it sought to find positive means to help promote harmony and good will among the races.

Numerous suggestions were adopted unanimously by the committee as guides for Christians in the state to cope with the problems.

They suggested that committees be formed across the state to (1) pinpoint areas of need, (2) develop services and resource materials to meet the needs, (3) discover and recruit volunteer workers, and (4) promote racial cooperation in carrying out any proposals.

The committee also suggested inter-racial city-wide meetings for inspiration and Christian fellowship among all Christian groups, and establishment of classes, especially for children and young people, for Bible study and other related activities.

The committee reaffirmed their faith in the Christian gospel to furnish solutions to racial problems, and urged that the gospel be brought into action in special areas of need in Alabama, including race relations.

Present at the joing committee meeting were a number of leaders from both the Southern Baptist and National Baptist groups, including George E. Bagley, executive secretary, Baptist State Executive Board, Montgomery; Robert Thompson, pastor, Winfield, Ala., and chairman of the committee; J. U. Robinson, president of the National Baptist group in Alabama; Charles A. Lett, executive secretary, National Baptists in Alabama; and Mary Essie Stephens, executive secretary, Alabama Baptist Woman's Missionary Union. More than 25 representatives of both groups were present.

Meeting with the group on the campus of Selma University, a National (Negro) Baptist college, was Gaines S. Dobbins, retired Southern Baptist seminary professor.

Dobbins proposed that the suggestions passed by the committee might well bring about a "Happy Summertime" in Alabama this year instead of "a long hot summer."

Chairman Thompson stated at the close of the meeting, "These suggestions are given prayerfully in the hope that the Holy Spirit will use them to bring about a peaceful climate in our beloved state in which all people may worship, work, play and live in the will of God.

"They are suggestions, not recommendations, which Christians in local areas may utilize to alleviate tension and head off trouble before it occurs," Thompson said.

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Stockwell Resigns Oklahoma
Staff For Edmond Pastorage

3/7/68

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP)--An official of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma has resigned effective May 1 to become pastor of First Baptist Church, Edmond, Okla.

Eugene Stockwell, 42, associate secretary of the convention's department of evangelism and Brotherhood since 1961, will succeed M. E. Ramay who is retiring from the pastorage after 32 years at Edmond.

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Computer Communications
Pioneered At Texas Hospital

BEAUMONT, Tex. (BP)--A \$2 million hospital communications network utilizing electronic computers, the first of its kind in the nation, will be tested at Baptist Hospital of Southeast Texas here, the hospital administrator and board chairman have announced.

The elaborate and completely new system called REACH (for Realtime Electronic Access Computers for Hospitals) was developed by National Data Communications, Inc., of Dallas, and the Data Processing Division of Honeywell Corp., Wesley, Mass.

The total cost of installation, programming and operation of the system will be borne by the two corporations, said W. D. Norwood, president of the hospital's board of trustees, and Guy H. Dalrymple, administrator.

The ultimate goal of the hospital information system is to link dynamically and coordinate all essential hospital activities such as patient care, administration, education and research. It will provide a vital aid toward integration of the complex information and operational service needs into a tailored information system, officials said.

Norwood said engineers of the two electronics firms have made detailed studies of the hospital's operations and now are programming the new system. The actual research testing will begin in September or October of this year after "hardware" has been installed.

Thomas W. Butler of Dallas, chairman of the board of directors and executive officer of National Data Communications, said when the tests begin the hospital will receive "a tremendous amount of national and international publicity."

He said after the system is installed, the two firms will bring numerous teams from other areas of the hospital field to study its operations.

The nerve center of the REACH system will be installed in Dallas. The system's supervisory control will be in the form of several satellite computers installed in the hospital to feed data into the center and to receive instant instructions to be passed along to doctors, nurses, and other professional or administrative members of the hospital's staff.

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Baptist Editorial Prompts
State Safety Committee

3/7/68

RALEIGH, N.C. (BP)-- An editorial in the Biblical Recorder, official publication of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, has prompted Gov. Dan Moore to name a committee to promote highway traffic safety in North Carolina's churches.

The governor has set aside two days in June for the religious community of North Carolina to promote traffic safety, and named a 16-member interdenominational committee headed by Evangelist Billy Graham to direct the program, slated June 29 and 30.

One of the 16-member committee is W. Perry Crouch, general secretary of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

In January, Biblical Recorder Editor J. Marse Grant wrote an editorial suggesting that the governor call key denominational leaders together to explore the possibility of setting a highway traffic safety Sunday in the churches, perhaps the last Sunday in June just before the July 4 holiday period.

Grant also suggested that the governor might name a committee representing the various faiths to promote the special emphasis. The Baptist editor said he got the idea when he heard Billy Graham preach about 18 months ago on highway safety.

The governor has invited the committee to meet in May at the Governor's Mansion here when Graham, if he is able to attend, will be the speaker. Packets of information on the proposed observance would be made available then.

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