

March 19, 1968

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
(Twenty-third in a Series)

GOD'S LAWS: WRITTEN AND UNWRITTEN

By T. B. Maston

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Life is governed by certain basic laws. These are the unwritten laws of God, except as they are written into the nature of man and of the world in which he lives. These are just as much the laws of God as are the written laws found in the Scriptures.

The basic laws are for our good. Also, these laws are valid for man in every age. They do not change with each passing generation. This is true because the nature and needs of man remain basically the same.

What about the written laws of God: are they abidingly relevant and valid?

It may help us answer this question if we will ask and seek to answer some additional questions. What is the relation of the written laws of God to his unwritten laws or the basic laws of life? Are the formalized, written laws in conformity to and expressive of the basic unwritten laws?

It seems that there should be a close relation between the written and unwritten laws since God is the source of both. It is true, of course, that God had to depend on finite man as the channels for the revelation of his written law.

These men, in turn, were limited by the people among whom they lived. Jesus recognized this limitation when he said that it was because of the hardness of the hearts of the people that Moses permitted divorce (Matt. 19:8). Jesus himself went back of the law to the original purpose of the Lawgiver.

The basic laws of life express the original purpose of God and his continuing will for man and the world. As the written laws of the Old Testament are expressive of the basic laws of God, they also are abidingly relevant and valid.

Some of the Old Testament laws were clearly for the children of Israel at a particular point in their history. For example, we do not consider the ceremonial laws and some of the civil laws as relevant for us today.

In contrast, it seems clear that the fundamental moral law of the Old Testament is in harmony with and expressive of the basic laws of God. If this is correct, then the basic moral laws of the Old Testament are applicable to us in the contemporary period. And we should not forget that the Ten Commandments is a summary statement of those basic moral laws.

It seems clear that the fundamental moral laws of the Old Testament, as is true of the basic laws of life, are given for man's good. This could be the correct interpretation of the statement of Jesus that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27).

John says that the commandments of God are not grievous or burdensome (I John 5:3). Why are they not burdensome? Because they are provided by God not to suppress us but to lift us, to protect and enrich our lives.

Life is found in its fullest when it is lived in harmony with the basic laws of life and with the written laws of God that are expressive of the basic laws.

I believe it is wise for young people, and older people as well, to remember that God knew what was best for man and for his society when he said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." So it is with every other basic law of God - written or unwritten.

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March 19, 1968

**Midwestern Board Elects
Three New Professors**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--The board of trustees for Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here elected three new professors to the faculty, planned to establish a chair of evangelism, adopted a record \$548,233, budget, and re-elected the trustees' president.

Named to the faculty were Burlan A. Sizemore Jr., as associate professor of Old Testament interpretation and Hebrew; Kenneth R. Wolfe, associate professor of New Testament interpretation and Greek; and Dewey E. Merritt, named visiting professor of missions for the academic year of 1968-69.

Sizemore, a native of Missouri, is presently a professor of Bible at Georgetown College (Baptist), Georgetown, Ky., and a graduate of Southwest Baptist College, Bolivar, Mo.; William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.; and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

Wolfe, a former foreign missionary to Brazil, has been visiting professor at Midwestern Seminary for the past two years. He is a native of Winfield, Kan., and a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Kan.

Merritt, the visiting professor, is principal of the Hausa Baptist pastor's school in Kaduna, Nigeria, and will teach at Midwestern while on furlough. He is a native of Hattiesburg, Miss., and a graduate of Mississippi College (Baptist), Clinton, Miss., and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

In other actions, the board voted to establish a chair of evangelism at the earliest feasible date, and adopted its largest budget in history. The new budget calls for cost of living salary increases for the faculty.

Re-elected president of the board was Earl O. Harding, executive-secretary of the Missouri Baptist Convention.

Other officers elected were Norman McCrummen, pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala., as first vice president; Don Dillow, pastor of Pennsylvania Avenue Baptist Church, Urbana, Ill., second vice president; Luther Dyer, Missouri Baptist Convention evangelism secretary, Jefferson City, Mo., secretary; and Frank E. Myers, pastor of First Baptist Church, Warrensburg, Mo., treasurer.

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**Golden Gate Board Elects
Librarian, Adopts Budget**

3/19/68

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Trustees of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary here elected a new librarian and adopted a \$719,105 budget for the 1968-69 academic year.

The new librarian, effective April 1, is G. Paul Hamm of Rancho Gordova, Calif., pastor of the First Baptist Church in that California city.

Hamm is a native of Fort Smith, Ark., a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary where he is currently working on a doctor of sacred theology degree. He is also studying toward a master of library science degree at the University of California, Berkeley.

In other action, the seminary board promoted Clayton K. Harrop to full professor of New Testament interpretation, and named two visiting professors---Eva Marie Kennard as visiting professor of comparative religion, and T. W. Hill of the Spanish Baptist Publishing House, El Paso, Tex., as visiting professor of missions.

A committee of trustees was appointed to make an evaluation study of the church music division to make recommendations for advancing the curriculum offerings to keep pace with the growing needs of the local constituency.

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Further studies were planned for library cataloging systems, microfilming of records and sabbatical leave policies. A document of "Principles of Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Promotion" was approved in principle with revisions to be approved in June.

Trustees approved of negotiations for a loan up to \$222,500 for construction of faculty-student apartments, and authorized plans for construction of additional faculty housing units on the basis of anticipated capital needs allocations from the Southern Baptist Convention and anticipated private capital.

Plans were announced for construction of a maintenance building and the purchase of a video-tape recorder for use in training for the pulpit, and other educational functions.

A dialogue session for the trustees was held to probe and project new ideas and services that the seminary might render to meet the increasing needs brought about by changing social patterns and urbanization.

Officers reelected were: Dr. Ernest P. Guy, Tiburon, Calif., physician, president; J. C. Segler, pastor of the Crown Heights Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, vice-president; Robert N. Stapp, pastor of Brooklyn Avenue Baptist Church, Seattle, Wash., secretary and John B. Hines, pastor of the First Southern Baptist Church, Garden Grove, Calif., associate secretary.

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Baptist Seminary Prof
Gets Grant For Study

3/19/68

FORT WORTH (BP)--Leon McBeth, professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary here, has received a \$3,500 grant from the American Association of Theological Schools for study at Union Theological Seminary, New York, during his sabbatical leave next year.

At Union Seminary, McBeth will study the impact of social and cultural factors on American Christianity including Baptists.

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Church Recreation Department
Announces Consultant Changes

3/19/68

NASHVILLE (BP)--The church recreation department, of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board has announced changes in their field consultants' responsibilities.

Bob Boyd, secretary of the department, said the changes were made because of the expanding services which the department offers to churches, especially in the field of drama.

Frank Hart Smith, formerly recreational administration consultant, will assume duties as social consultant.

Joseph S. Mason of Hopkinsville, Ky., will assume duties as recreational administration consultant on March 25.

He comes to the board from First Baptist Church, Atlanta, where he was minister of recreation and youth for six years. He has also served in a similar capacity with Maplewood Baptist Church, St. Louis, and Highland Baptist Church, Louisville.

A bachelor of arts graduate of Georgetown (Ky.) College, he holds the master of religious education degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

Other changes include Bob Oldenburg and Cecil McGee in drama. Oldenburg will serve as consultant in drama and recreational music, working mainly with adults. McGee will continue his duties as consultant in drama, but will work primarily with younger age groups.

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Texas Baptist Leader's
Father-in-Law Dies

3/19/68

ABILENE, Tex. (BP)--Henry N. Turner, 88, father-in-law of T. A. Patterson, executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, died here March 17, in a local hospital.

He was stricken while attending worship services of Second Baptist Church here and died later during the evening at Hendrick Memorial Hospital, a Texas Baptist institution.

Funeral services were scheduled in Abilene, with burial in Dallas.

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Mrs. Gayer Retires
At Baptist Aging Unit

SAN ANGELO, Tex. (BP)--Mrs. Elsie Wendt Gayer, founder and administrator of the Baptist Memorials Geriatric Hospital here, has announced her retirement after 18 years of service.

Mrs. Gayer, wife of a prominent San Angelo attorney, Louis Gayer, opened the hospital in October, 1950, and was one of its original trustees. In 1956 the hospital was given to the Baptist General Convention of Texas free of debt, and in 1959 it received full accreditation by the American Hospital Association.

Baptist Memorials, one of the few accredited geriatric hospitals in the nation, has facilities for 250 patients, operates on a near \$2 million annual budget, and occupies a spacious and expanding campus.

In commenting on her retirement, Drury P. Hathaway, chairman of the hospital's board of trustees, announced that the body had named Mrs. Gayer administrator emeritus.

Mrs. Gayer is a graduate of the Baylor School of Nursing. In 1963 Baylor University conferred upon her an honorary doctoral degree. In 1960 she was named San Angelo's "Citizen of the Year," the first woman ever so recognized.

The Baptist Memorials board made no announcement as to Mrs. Gayer's successor. Board members said that an acting hospital administrator will be appointed, pending the naming of a new administrator.