

# (BP) --- FEATURES

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PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE  
(Forty-fourth in a series)

## THE DIGNITY OF MANUAL LABOR

By T. B. Maston

Retired Professor of Christian Ethics  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

There has been a tendency in recent years in church and society to respect the "white collar" more than the "blue collar" worker. Rough calloused hands are considered by many a badge of dishonor rather than of honor.

A number of factors have contributed to this attitude, which represents a change in perspective regarding manual labor. One factor may simply be the impact of numbers. Formerly the vast majority of people made their living by means of manual labor. This is no longer true in our nation and other industrialized nations of the world. Machines now do most of the heavy work.

Another factor in the changed perspective has been the attitude of those who have toiled with their hands. Many of them have said, "I am going to see that my kids do not have to work as hard as I have had to." To achieve this goal they have done what they could to see that their children, particularly their sons, secured a "good education." And by a "good education" they meant one that would prepare for business or the professions.

Whatever may be the reasons for the deprecation of the "blue collar" and the calloused hands the results have been unfortunate. Many young people have received a college education, in whole or in part, for which they were not suited. They have become misfits in society. Either they should not have gone to college or a different type of education should have been provided for them.

Because of the prevailing attitude toward manual labor many churches and even some denominations have largely lost any effective ministry to the laboring man. While this is not as true of Southern Baptists as it is of some other groups, it does seem that many of our members but particularly many of our leaders and pastors are management oriented. Unfortunately, many working people find a more congenial atmosphere in the labor union than in the church.

It would help all of us, workers with hand and head, to remember that Jesus was called "the carpenter's son." He worked with Joseph in the carpenter's shop. My judgment is that when he began his public ministry his countenance was tanned and his hands were rough and calloused. His first disciples were fishermen who doubtlessly showed the outward evidence of exposure to the elements of nature and carried on their hands and in their clothing the reminders of their trade.

And let us not forget that Paul toiled with his hands to support himself. One could not cut and sew the material of which tents were made without revealing the evidence on his hands.

We need in our churches and in society in general to recapture, so far as we have lost it, the dignity of manual labor or common toil. The man who works with his hands should be respected just as much as anyone else within our Christian fellowship.

It would be helpful if those of us who belong to the "white collar" class would do some manual labor. Many of us can mow our yards. Some of us can have a garden. We can, to a considerable degree, be our own carpenter, painter, plumber, and electrician. We can be handy with our hands. At least, we should never feel that manual labor is "beneath our dignity."

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ONE ISSUE VOTERS

By T. B. Maston

Retired Professor of Christian Ethics  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

One of the most common mistakes of many Christian citizens is that they are one issue voters. If a politician is right, from their perspective on that particular issue, they will vote for him. Frequently they will do this, regardless of how much or how little background he may have for the responsibilities of the office he seeks.

The one issue will most frequently be something in the area of personal morality. For example, if the one seeking an office does not drink, many Christians will vote for him regardless of what else he may or may not do, and regardless of his position on the major issues of the race.

On the other hand, if he has been divorced, many will not vote for him, although by training and experience he may be the best qualified man seeking that particular office. For some Christian citizens a candidate's religious affiliation will determine whether or not they will vote for him.

On the basis of personal morality and religious affiliation, there may not be a real choice between the candidates. In that case, some of us will center on one particular social or political issue. The position of the candidates on that issue will be the major factor in determining the one for whom we will vote.

The issue may be something the candidate is for or something he is against, and too frequently it is the latter. We feel so strongly about that particular matter that we will tend to vote for the one who most fully agrees with our position. The issue may be "crime on the streets," "foreign aid," "liquor by the drink," "parimutuel betting," "the political machine," "urban renewal," or "war and peace," or some other favorite subject of ours. Whatever the issue, it may have become such an obsession with us that we let it determine too exclusively how we vote.

I am not suggesting that any of the issues mentioned are of minor importance. For example, a Christian certainly should give serious consideration to the personal morality of candidates. He may wisely give some consideration to their religious affiliation. He should seek to know the position of candidates regarding all the issues that he personally thinks are important.

What I am attempting to emphasize is that we should not become so enamored with one particular issue that we will not give proper consideration to other issues that may be of equal importance. Also, it will be wise for us to seek to determine whether or not the candidate's position on an issue represents his honest personal conviction or is a political convenience.

One candidate announced that his platform was the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. It would be unfortunate if Christian men and women "fell" for this kind of propaganda. At least, they should ask how he would apply the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount to the daily problems that he would face if elected.

There are at least three things that Christian citizens should consider in determining the one for whom they will vote: (1) The basic character and integrity, as best it can be determined, of the candidates. (2) The position of the candidates on all the issues that are relevant to the office they are seeking. (3) The ability, the training, and the experience of the candidates to fulfill the responsibilities of the office.



**BAPTIST PRESS**  
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, Tennessee 37219  
Telephone (615) 244-2355  
W. C. Fields, Director  
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

**REGIONAL OFFICES**

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

**DALLAS** 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

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

September 3, 1968

Continental Congress Sets  
Rally, Opens Attendance

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Continental Congress on Evangelism slated here Oct. 10-13 as part of the Crusade of the Americas will feature a Friday night rally instead of a march from the Capitol to Washington Monument even though government officials have agreed to grant a permit for the gathering, congress officials here announced.

At the same time, the North American coordinator for the Crusade of the Americas, Wayne Dehoney of Louisville, Ky., announced that registration quotas have been withdrawn and attendance will be open to all who register and pay the \$10 fee.

The Friday night rally (Oct. 11) will be held at the Washington National Guard Armory, with Baptists from metropolitan Washington area churches invited to attend.

The rally will be held in lieu of the much-publicized march and parade from the Capitol to the Washington Monument on Sunday afternoon, said William J. Cumbie, secretary-treasurer of the Continental Congress and superintendent of missions for the Mount Vernon Baptist Association.

Cumbie said that a letter from Everett W. Sawyer, acting superintendent of the Central National Capitol Parks, National Park Services, offered the use of the outdoor facilities.

Last April, the park services declined the Baptists' request for use of the facilities for a march and outdoor rally. "Because of the civil disruption that we experienced at that time, it was necessary, temporarily, to withhold issuing any permits for the use of any park lands for that far in advance," Sawyer said in his letter.

Sawyer said that since the "emergency has subsided," the park services would be glad to make the facilities available to the Continental Congress.

Cumbie said, however, that "we will give a nice letter to Mr. Sawyer, saying, 'Thank you, but we have already made arrangements to use the Armory for a Friday night rally, and since we are having a night rally, we believe an indoor rally would be better.'"

Both Cumbie and Dehoney expressed gratitude to the park service for offering the use of the facilities, but it was too late to change the plans.

Dehoney said that attendance at the Congress would be open to all interested Baptists who want to attend the meeting at the Shoreham Hotel, and who are willing to pay the \$10 registration fee. Hotel space is still available at the Shoreham Hotel and at other hotels, Dehoney said.

Advance registration for the Congress totals 1,065 to date, Cumbie said, including about 750 Southern Baptists and 250 from other Baptist groups.

Attendance at the congress has been limited to 2,500 because of lack of hotel space and seating capacity of the Shoreham auditorium, Dehoney said.

Quotas were originally set for each participating Baptist convention, with no national convention having an allocation of less than 100 and no state convention with an allocation of less than 50. "After July 1 (this date is flexible), quotas will no longer be in effect and the remaining space will be thrown open on a first come, first served basis to everyone," said a set of guidelines on registration approved by the Steering Committee of the North American Continental Congress.

Dehoney said that the quotas were set to prevent Southern Baptists, who outnumber all other Baptist bodies in the hemisphere, from filling up all the accommodations, and to assure the other groups of proportionate representation.

Purpose of the congress, said Cumbie, "is to serve as a forum for the best thinking among Baptists on evangelistic work, its theology, its methodology, and its practical involvements."

Major speakers for the meeting include C. E. Autrey, evangelism secretary for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta; George Beasley-Murray, principal, Spurgeon's College, London, England; Baker James Cauthen, executive secretary of the SBC Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.; Kenneth L. Chafin and Dale Moody, professors, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.;

Owen Cooper, president, Mississippi Chemical Corp., Yazoo City, Miss.; J. H. Jackson, president, National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., Inc.; Reubens Lopes, president of the Crusade of the Americas Coordinating Committee and pastor in Sao Paulo, Brazil; Mrs. R. L. Mathis, promotion director, SBC Woman's Missionary Union, Birmingham, Ala.; Gordon Schroeder, American Baptist pastor in Detroit; Gardner Taylor, president, Progressive National Baptist Convention, New York; Carl W. Tiller, past president of the American Baptist Convention and layman from Washington, D. C.; John W. Williams, National Baptist Convention of America pastor in Kansas City, Mo.; Howard Butt, grocery chain executive from Corpus Christi, Tex.; and John Edmund Haggai, evangelist, Atlanta.

In addition, two large segments of program time are assigned for work shop sessions, said Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., program chairman for the congress.

A major feature at the rally program on Friday night will be a mass choir of 300 voices accompanied by a nationally-known symphony orchestra and directed by Claude Rhea, mass communications consultant for the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

Cumbie said that registration, accompanied by the \$10 registration fee, must be made with the Washington Area Committee of the Crusade of the Americas, 2932 King St., Alexandria, Va., 22302, except for the Friday night rally which will be open to the public.

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Convention Crisis Statement  
Available In Tract Form

9/3/68

NASHVILLE (BP)--"A Statement Concerning The Crisis In Our Nation," approved by the Southern Baptist Convention last June in Houston, has been published in tract form by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The publication of the statement came at the request of SBC agency representatives meeting in Atlanta to discuss ways of implementing the statement.

The tract is available to the churches through the state convention tract offices.

The tract was published in an attempt to communicate more widely to Southern Baptists the full text of the statement.

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127 NINTH AVE. N.  
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