

October 31, 1968

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE  
(Fifty-fifth in a series)

## THE CHRISTIAN AND WAR

By T. B. Maston

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War through the centuries has been a continuing and a perplexing problem for many Christians. It has been particularly difficult for some when they have had to make a personal decision concerning their active participation in war. There has developed four or five more or less distinct positions.

Some Christians contend that war is exclusively the responsibility of the government. If one's country is at war the citizen's total responsibility is obedience to the commands of his nation. Some even suggest that the nation and not the individual citizen is responsible for those who may kill in times of war.

Also, there are some Christians who have no personal difficulty about full participation in war. They see no necessary conflict between their Christian faith and active participation. They are sometimes referred to as "conscientious participants."

There are still others who consider war under some conditions the lesser of two evils. They say that since we are evil and the world in which we live is evil many decisions are not between an unmixed good and an unmixed evil, not between white and black. Rather, many decisions are in the gray area.

The best a Christian can do under such conditions is to choose the lesser of two evils. Some insist that the Christian's decision regarding war in general and his participation in war is frequently if not usually such a decision. Some evil is involved whatever he does. He should seek to follow the course that will entail the maximum of good and the minimum of evil.

Then, there have been some Christians through the centuries who have said that they could not in good conscience participate in war. These have been and are the pacifists or conscientious objectors. There is more than one type of these.

Some are limited conscientious objectors. They are the ones who admit that they cannot completely avoid involvement in the sins of an evil world, including war. They do contend, however, that they must limit the extent of their involvement if they are to maintain their own personal integrity. Most limited conscientious objectors will accept non-combatant service such as the medical corps. They will participate in war up to the point of taking human life.

There have been some Christians, particularly in the first two Christian centuries and in more recent years, who are unlimited conscientious objectors. They are the absolutists or perfectionists. They say that they cannot and will not have anything to do with the whole war system. They are the ones in the United States who have gone to prison or to conscientious objector camps rather than serve with the armed forces.

Each Christian, regardless of his personal position concerning war, should defend and respect the right of conscience of every other Christian. Regardless of how much Christians may differ concerning one's participation in war, we should never permit our differences to damage or disrupt our fellowship with one another.

Let us also beware of developing a self-righteous attitude concerning our particular position. There may be men and women who are better Christians than we are who take a drastically different position regarding the Christian and war.



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October 31, 1968

**Transdenominational Evangelism  
Congress Scheduled In Minneapolis**

MINNEAPOLIS (BP)--The first nationwide, transdenominational Congress on Evangelism scheduled here in September of 1969 will "...call all of the denominations who care enough to be involved into a cooperative effort in evangelism."

Meeting recently in Minneapolis to plan the congress, appointment of a 45-member national planning committee was announced with several top Southern Baptists named to the group.

One of the committee members, C. E. Autrey of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's Evangelism Division, said that the congress is needed to "clarify on this continent our (all Protestant denominations in the United States and Canada) definition of evangelism and to set forth some objectives.

Autrey, director of the Southern Baptists national program of evangelism, said discussion at the interdenominational evangelism congress would include a study of the message, method and motivation of evangelism.

Other Southern Baptists named to the 45-member planning committee include Billy Graham, honorary chairman; Wayne Dehoney, pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville; W. Maxey Jarman, wealthy Nashville layman; and Duke K. McCall, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

The congress, hopefully to be financially self-sustaining, would be the first of its kind to be held in the United States, although a similar World Congress on Evangelism was held two years ago in Berlin, and a regional (the Orient) congress was held this year in Singapore.

The congress, scheduled Sept. 8-14, 1969, will invite about 8,000 participants with one-third composed of lay members of congregations; another third, parish pastors of congregations; and the remaining third, evangelists, educators and seminary students.

"All denominations are trying to get away from completely pastor-led anything," Autrey said.

Invitations will be handled by a committee on participation led by Conrad Thompson of the American Lutheran Church.

The committee approved a congress format which will include a position paper and panel each morning, seminar and encounter groups in the afternoon and a public session in the evening.

"Our people should not fear such transdenominational meetings," Autrey said. "We are not asking Southern Baptists to compromise or to give up any of their doctrinal convictions, no more than we are asking any other denomination to give up theirs."

He pointed out that one benefit of the encounter groups is that "everybody has a chance to speak out who wants to speak--for or against. Though we do not always agree, we are seeking a common ground on which we can confront the world with the gospel of Christ."

Earthquake Jolts Baptist  
Leaders At Alaska Rally

FAIRBANKS, Alaska (BP)--A sharp, rocking earthquake jolted and shocked Southern Baptist Convention denominational leaders who were here for a series of world mission rallies to promote the Crusade of the Americas in late October.

Although no Baptist churches here were seriously damaged by the quake, Baptist leaders were reminded again of the destructive flood that hit Fairbanks a year ago while the annual state Convention was in session here.

The quake, which registered a magnitude of seven on the Richter scale for several seconds, was followed by about 40 minutes of light after-shocks.

No injuries were reported and apparently no windows were broken, but packages and other items tumbled off shelves in the stores. The quake centered in the Baldry Mountain area about 100 miles northwest of Fairbanks.

While the noon-time earthquake was in progress, two Southern Baptist groups were in luncheon meetings.

Miss Alma Hunt, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, was meeting with a group of women in the Kings Kup Restaurant at the time of the quake.

A meeting with local pastors at the same time at the Travel Inn, where the lights went out when the quake hit, involved George W. Schroeder of Memphis, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, Harold Graves, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., and visiting pastors Paul McCray of Jonesboro, Ark., and Paul Box, reportedly of Garden Grove, Calif.

The night following the afternoon quake, about 400 people from the Tanana Baptist Association gathered at the First Baptist Church of Fairbanks for the mission rally.

When Arthur B. Rutledge, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta who arrived after the quake, was introduced, the crowd rose to a standing ovation in appreciation of Southern Baptist involvement in assisting in the Fairbanks flood last year.

The flood hit Fairbanks during August of 1967 while numerous top Southern Baptist leaders were here to attend the annual Alaska Baptist Convention. A group of more than 100 Baptist laymen, enlisted by the SBC Home Mission Board, soon afterward flew to Alaska to help rebuild the churches and homes destroyed or damaged by the flood.

The Home Mission Board, which Rutledge heads, sent \$10,000 from its disaster relief fund immediately, and established a \$50,000 Alaska Disaster Relief Fund to help rebuild the churches.

One of the Baptist leaders who was in Alaska during the flood quipped when he learned that another potential disaster, the earthquake, had occurred while Southern Baptist leaders were in Fairbanks: "They're going to quit inviting Baptist leaders from the lower 48 (states) to Alaska if that keeps up."

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Hardin-Simmons Names  
Walton To Emeritus Post

(10-31-68)

ABILENE, Tex., (BP)-- W. T. Walton has been designated vice president emeritus of Hardin-Simmons University here.

A native of Mansfield, Tex., Walton, who spent about 30 years on the Hardin-Simmons faculty and administration, retired in 1967 as the Baptist school's vice president and summer session director.

At Hardin-Simmons, Walton has served also as a professor of Bible and philosophy, associate dean of academic affairs, dean of students, assistant to the president, and acting comptroller.

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Student Center Named  
In Memory Of Binns

ROME, Ga. (BP)--Shorter College, a Baptist school here, has dedicated a new student center in memory of the late Walter Pope Binns, late president of William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., and prominent Southern Baptist leader.

The dedicatory address was made by Miss Alma Hunt, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union who praised Binns as a pastor, educator, and Southern Baptist Convention statesman.

Binns died in 1966 at the age of 71 after serving in top leadership positions in the Southern Baptist Convention. He was a pastor in Virginia, Georgia and Kentucky.

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SBC Pastors' Conference  
Theme, Musician, Selected

(10-31-68)

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--The theme and the music director for the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference meeting here June 9-10, 1969, has been announced by the organization's officers headed by Harper Shannon, president, and pastor of First Baptist Church, Dothan, Ala.

Theme for the conference will be, "The Living Lord Confronting Today's World," Shannon said.

"It is my intention to meet the major issues of our day head-on with strong, positive Biblical preaching," stated Shannon, who is responsible for outlining plans for the program.

Music director for the Pastors' Conference will be Larry S. Andrews, minister of music for the First Baptist Church, Dothan, Ala. Andrews once before was music director for the Pastors' Conference when it met in Kansas City in 1963.

The Pastors' Conference will be held in the New Orleans Municipal Auditorium and Concert Hall, which will accommodate crowds of more than 8,000. The first of five sessions will begin Monday, June 9, and the last session will end Tuesday afternoon, June 10, just prior to the Southern Baptist Convention which will open Tuesday evening.

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