

December 19, 1968

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

THE BIBLE AND INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE

By T. B. Maston

Retired Professor of Christian Ethics
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

In the debate about race in general and intermarriage in particular the Bible has been used to some degree on both sides of the controversy. An objective examination of the record will reveal that the Bible has no special teachings that can properly be used to support any particular position on intermarriage. However, because the Bible has been quoted and misquoted so frequently, it may be helpful for us to examine what it has to say.

It is correct, as has been frequently stated, that the Jews in the Old Testament, in the main, were against intermarriage. In the Pentateuch, six (Ex. 34:10-16) or seven (Deut. 7:1-8) nations are listed with whom the children of Israel were not to marry nor to give their sons and daughters in marriage. Ezra later extended the prohibition to additional nations (Ezra 9:1).

A study of the preceding references will reveal that the restrictions were primarily national and tribal and not racial. The main motive for the restrictions was religious, as is pointedly set forth in Deuteronomy. The statement is: "You shall not make marriages with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons. For they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods" (Deut. 7: 3-4). Notice particularly the last sentence.

The prohibitions regarding intermarriage in the Old Testament might be used to argue against the marriage of a Christian and a non-Christian, and even against the marriage of citizens of different nations, but they cannot properly be used to support arguments against racial intermarriage. All of us should seek as best we can rightly to divide "the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

In contrast to the opposition to intermarriage in the Old Testament, there are a number of instances of intermarriages. Some of God's Old Testament saints, such as Abraham (Gen. 16:3), Joseph (Gen. 41:50), and Moses (Ex. 2:21), married foreign wives. The wives of Abraham and Joseph were Egyptians, descendants of Mizraim, one of the sons of Ham. Still later, Moses married a Cushite (Num. 12:1) and Cush was one of the sons of Ham (Gen. 10:6). The word "Cush" means black and is translated "Ethiopia" in some places in the Old Testament (see Ps. 68:31, Isa. 18:1).

Furthermore, many of the great characters of the Bible were of mixed blood. In the number was David, one of whose ancestors was Ruth from Moab, one of the groups with whom Ezra had forbidden the Jews to marry. The greatest descendant of the Davidic line was Jesus. In his veins flowed the blood of the nations.

There may be and are some common sense arguments against interracial marriages but the Bible does not contain a direct, authoritative word for or against interracial marriages. We may and can find some basic principles that will apply, but we do not find a specific enough position regarding intermarriage to be dogmatic about what the Bible teaches.

(The preceding is an adaptation of a section from a pamphlet entitled "Interracial Marriage" which was written a few years ago for the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.)



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

December 19, 1968

Church Response
To Servicemen Low

REGIONAL OFFICES

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 1350 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Billy Keith, 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

By Dallas Lee

ATLANTA (BP)--To a young draftee, leaving home for military service must seem like a form of bondage compared to the exhilarating liberation associated with leaving home for college.

There is an abrupt change of environment, a strictly disciplined existence, few trips home, tedium, and in many instances the awesome possibility of having to kill.

And yet, as Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Duke McCall said:

"Most churches make more to do about young people going off to school than they do about induction into military service."

Some 60,000 Southern Baptists are mustered into the armed services every year. And at any one time, there are as many as 200,000 Southern Baptists in the service.

Out of 140 churches that recently returned a survey form to the division of chaplaincy at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here, only about 30 percent provide some form of organized and continuous ministry.

According to the survey, the ministry involves mostly pastoral counseling with the young person about to enter the service, presentation of certain materials such as the pamphlet "Your Life and Military Service," public recognition of the departing serviceman or woman, and a pastoral visit with the family.

Sixty-nine percent of the churches polled reported maintaining an up-to-date roster of military personnel, but only 51 percent reported a regular plan of prayer.

Nearly 80 percent, however, communicate with some regularity with young people away in the service--mostly through church bulletins, letters, and cards and gifts on special occasions. In 51 percent of the cases, the pastor or church staff made the contacts.

Nearly two-thirds of the churches reported members visiting servicemen on their return home and more than half make a point of publicly recognizing returning service personnel.

About 25 percent of the churches polled have "effective" programs for enlisting military personnel stationed nearby in church activities. About the same percentage maintain "an active list of prospects" on nearby military personnel.

"The figures actually indicate there is some rise in interest in such ministries," said Willis Brown of the Home Mission Board's division of chaplaincy.

"It is clear, however, that there is still much to be done in this area. Servicemen and women rightfully expect their home churches to care for them."

Brown conducted an informal survey of 110 Southern Baptist military laymen at the same time he polled the churches through associational superintendents of missions.

Only 14 percent reported being contacted by hometown churches concerning the service prior to induction. However, 51 percent indicate they felt their home churches had done their "utmost to prepare them spiritually and morally for military life."

Only 36 percent said home churches were corresponding with them regularly, and correspondence was high on their list of suggestions.

Most of the men emphasized personal letters and requested other reading material, such as church newsletters, copies of sermons, devotional literature and paperback books.

Other suggestions from the servicemen include: a periodically published list of others in the church who are in the service (and addresses), a "Serviceman of the Week" feature in the bulletin asking special prayer and correspondence for an individual that week, recognition of service personnel home on leave, communication to a chaplain and introductory letters to local Baptist churches where they may be stationed.

Baker Named To New
Public Affairs Post

WASHINGTON (BP)--John Wesley Baker, 48, a native of Austin, Tex., and a well-known political scientist from Wooster, Ohio, is the new associate executive director and director of research services for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs here.

C. Emanuel Carlson, executive director, said that Baker's appointment means the creation of a new post on the staff of the Baptist Joint Committee.

In addition to his duties as associate executive director, Baker will plan public affairs research projects on the Washington scene as well as promote such studies in Baptist institutions and agencies, according to Carlson.

Other staff positions of the Baptist Joint Committee remain the same, Carlson pointed out. These are W. Barry Garrett, director of information services, and James M. Sapp, director of correlation services.

Walfred H. Peterson, former director of research services, is now teaching political science at Washington State University, Pullman, Wash.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs is a denominational agency supported by eight Baptist bodies in North America. The Southern Baptist Convention supports the committee through its Cooperative Program and by the election of 15 of its members.

For the past 10 years Baker has been chairman of the department of political science at the College of Wooster, a Presbyterian school in Wooster, Ohio.

Baker's other teaching experience includes Trinity University, San Antonio, Tex., University of California, University of Florida, Harvard University, Humboldt College in California and American University, Washington, D. C.

Baker is a graduate of the University of Texas where he also did a year of graduate study in sociology. In 1953 he earned the doctor of philosophy degree from the University of California, Berkeley, with emphases in the fields of political theory, American government, public administration, public law and political sociology.

During the school year 1967-68, Baker was a guest scholar at Brookings Institution, Washington, D. C., where he worked on a book on government involvement in labor-management disputes.

Baker is a Baptist deacon and is married to the former Mary E. Posey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. G. Posey, retired executive secretary of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California. The Bakers have four sons, Bob (22) now in the Peace Corps, Fred (20) in the Marine Corps, Brian (12) and Jay (10).

-30-

BP PHOTO mailed to Baptist state papers.

\$700,000 Given Baylor
Communications Center

(12-19-68)

WACO, Tex. (BP)--Stock valued at almost \$700,000 has been donated to Baylor University for the purpose of constructing a Communications Center to house the school's departments of journalism and oral communications.

The new building, which will include facilities for student publications and the radio-television-film division, will be named in honor of the late Jack Castellaw, son of the donor, Mrs. Janie Castellaw of Denton, Tex.

Young Castellaw, a Baylor student, was killed in a bus accident in 1927, along with nine members of the Baylor basketball team. Castellaw, who was just short of graduation, was manager of the Cub Basketball team at the time of his death.

Mrs. Castellaw told Baylor President Abner V. McCall that her gift was motivated by love for Baylor and its students and that she hoped it would "promote God's kingdom here on earth."

-30-

Dallas Cowboys Worship
Five Hours to Kickoff

By Larry Jerden

DALLAS (BP)--At 7:30 on Sunday morning, 35 telephones ring in the Hilton Inn in Dallas.

The Dallas Cowboys have a home National Football League game that afternoon in the Cotton Bowl, and preparatinn begins early.

Shortly after they rise and dress, some of the players begin being taped for the game. About an hour later, at 8:30, 17 of the players, a couple of coaches and a visiting minister gather in a small room in the hotel. It's five hours before kickoff.

"There are many people who do not believe you do this sort of thing," the Methodist minister, John Rasmussen, says--"not because of what you do on the field, but just because you are professional football players. They are surprised to find that you do have worship periods."

The players are gathered for their last devotional of the season. The short worship period has been a regular part of the home-game Sunday routine, and this is the last regular home game of the season.

On occasion, when their game is played later in the afternoon for television, there is time for regular church, but on most Sundays only a devotional can be squeezed into the schedule.

"The gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those that find this life are but a few," Rasmusser quotes.

"Jesus was concerned about how individuals relate to God the Father--and that is what we are concerned with today: How you as football players, I as a Methodist minister, and Mr. (Tom) Landry as a coach relate to God."

Lee Roy Jordan, a linebacker, is in charge of securing speakers for the period. The 17 men in the room represent about half the active squad, with the Catholics having attended mass earlier.

Following the devotional the players finish game preparation and go to their meals.

After the meal the squad goes to the dressing room.

"Our Father," the closing prayer begins, "We pray blessings on this football team, that as they go into competition this afternoon they can play to the very limits of their capabilities, that they can play with cleanliness of heart, mind and spirit, and come away victorious as a result of their dedicated efforts together."

The Cowboys were victorious that afternoon and are the 1968 champions of the NFL's Capitol Divison. The playoffs await.

-30-

Texas Pastor Sends
Radios to Missionaries

(12-19-68)

TYLER, Tex. (BP)--A Baptist pastor here has found a unique way of giving extra support to foreign missions, and he'd like to see others take it up.

M. O. Davis, pastor of North Dixie Baptist Church, helps raise funds to buy shortwave radios for individual missionaries. He has sent five in the past three years, gathering \$3,300 from 45 individuals and eight churches to support the effort.

The sets, valued at about \$700 each, have gone to Steve Ditmore, Bryan Brasington, Harvey L. Nowland, and Lewis Lee, all of Peru, and Garreth Joiner in Ecuador.

"After the Lottie Moon Offering," he said, "I am committed to help purchase a radio for George Luzok in Caracas, Venezuela, and for James Stiles, who will soon be located in Cacuta, Colombia.

Davis said the radios help the missionaries keep in touch with each other and give instant communications with the United States.

-30-



BAPTIST PRESS

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

RECEIVED
DEC 30 1968

HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SBC

DAVIS C. WOOLLEY HQ
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
127 NINTH AVE. N.
NASHVILLE, TENN. 37203