



News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

---FEATURES
produced by Baptist Press

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January 7, 1969

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
(Sixty-third in a series)

A PERPLEXING PROBLEM

By T. B. Maston

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One of life's most perplexing questions is why many people who do not claim to be Christians seem to do a better job of living the Christian life than many who are Christians, including some who are so-called Christian leaders. The late Karl Barth said that it is to the shame of the church that the will of God "has often been better fulfilled outside the Church than in it."

Has this ever bothered you? Have you discovered any reasons why it is so frequently true? I have personally searched for years for a satisfactory explanation. The following may not be entirely adequate, but at least the suggestions have been helpful to me.

It may be that we have not placed enough emphasis in our churches on the positive aspects of Christian living. We have tended to measure too largely the quality of a Christian's life in negative terms--what he does not do--and on the basis of his faithfulness to the formalities of the church--attendance at worship services, support of the church program, etc.

In turn, the tendency on the part of so many church members to judge those inside and outside of the church in formalistic, negative terms contributes to a hypercritical spirit on the part of many church members. Too many of us reject those within and outside of the Christian fellowship who do things that we disapprove.

Many and possibly most church members have not developed the capacity to separate "the sinner and his sin." If they disapprove of "hate" what a man does, they tend to reject or "hate" him. This limits many of us in our capacity to reach and to minister to the needs of people. We should be able to love people regardless of what they do and even regardless of what they are.

Shifting the emphasis somewhat, "the Christian life of the non-Christian" may be partly explained by his background. Many a non-Christian lives on borrowed or overflow religion that has come into his life from a godly father or mother or from some other relative who has touched and influenced his life. In such cases one source of whatever Christian standards and Christian spirit that he may have in his life is ultimately Christian.

Also, there are some non-Christians whose religion is their good works. They substitute works for faith and may never identify themselves with the Christian church. Their motivation may be self-centered or it may be thoroughly unselfish. Theirs may be a humanistic, humanitarian approach to life. They may place a high value on man and hence on their service to man, while ignoring man's relationship to God and their responsibility to God.

There is at least one other possible explanation of the fact that non-Christians frequently outlive professing Christians. Barth suggested that where this happens it is not due to the natural goodness of man. He said, "It is because Jesus, as the One who has risen from the dead and sits at the right hand of God, is in fact the Lord of the whole world Who has His servants even where His name is not yet or no longer known or praised."

This suggests that where the work of God is being done we can be sure that it is because God is at work there. This is true regardless of who or what may be the instrument of his will and work.



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January 7, 1969

**Second Baptist Missionary
To Cuba Free, May Return**

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist missionary Herbert Caudill, 65, apparently has been freed from house arrest in Havana, Cuba, and will be allowed to return to the United States.

Word of Caudill's release came from Donald Fite of Atlanta, twin brother of missionary David Fite, Caudill's son-in-law, whose release from a Cuban prison was announced shortly before Christmas.

"We don't know what is happening or why," said L. D. Wood of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here. "We are just grateful that they both are free."

Wood, after communication with Donald Fite here, said it appeared both Fite and Caudill--and their families--would be allowed to leave Cuba in February if transportation can be arranged.

Caudill and Fite were both arrested on April 8, 1965 and subsequently convicted of illegal currency exchange. Caudill was sentenced to 10 years, Fite to six.

The wives of both men have remained in their Havana homes. Just last fall, the oldest of the three Fite children, 12-year-old James David Fite Jr., was permitted to leave and now is staying with the Donald Fites in Atlanta.

Caudill, who earlier was imprisoned in La Cabana Fortress near Havana, had been under house arrest since the spring of 1967, when he was released under close watch to seek treatment for a detached retina, the same ailment that earlier had cost him sight in one eye.

He underwent surgery in March 1967 by an Atlanta eye surgeon, who was permitted into the country for the delicate operation, which apparently was a success.

Detailed information on when or how the Fites and Caudills would be able to return to the United States was not available.

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**Prayer Urged for President
On Inauguration Observance**

(1-7-69)

WASHINGTON (BP)--The interfaith religious committee of the 1969 presidential inauguration has issued a plea for all Americans to join in prayer on Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, "to proclaim to all the world our faith in God and our spiritual rededication."

The committee asked that churches across the nation be open for prayer, that bells be rung, chimes played, and lights kindled for a period of three minutes precisely at 11:00 a.m., EST (10:00 CST, etc.) "to commemorate with joyful reverence this peaceful transfer of authority."

The committee further urged churches to hold "appropriate services of prayers" on established days of worship "for the president and his cabinet, of thanksgiving to Almighty God for his mercy and blessings on America, and of rededication of our people to the ideals of responsible freedom, human dignity, and the brotherhood of all men."

Committee members included Judge Boyd Leedom, chairman, former head of the National Labor Relations Board; Rabbi A. Nathan Abramowitz, president of the Washington Board of Rabbis; William F. Creighton, bishop of Washington; Rabbi Harry J. Kaufman, president of the Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington; Patrick Cardinal O'Boyle, archbishop of Washington; Milam D. Smith of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints; and Gradon E. McClellan and Charles L. Warren, president and executive director of the Council of Churches of Greater Washington.

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Catholic Theology Students
Study At Baptist Hospital

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP)--Seven Catholic theologystudents, surprised at their warm reception at a Baptist hospital and in turn surprising some Baptists with their presence as chaplains, recently took Clinical Pastoral Education Training at Baptist Memorial Hospital here.

For a full day twice each week for three months, the students from Immaculate Conception Seminary in Conception, Mo., studied at the Baptist hospital, spending much of the time in counseling with patients and in conversations with the hospital staff and others.

Richard Dayringer, chaplain at the Baptist hospital and supervisor for the chaplains, explained that the course of training carried credit with the seminary where they were enrolled and with the Baptist hospital, an accredited training center of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc.

Dayringer said that about 25 per cent of the hospital's patients are Baptists, while about 20 per cent are Catholics. "Since all denominations and those of no denomination are represented by the patients in Baptist Hospital, theological students and pastors of all faiths are accepted into the clinical training program," he said.

The Catholic students become involved in some highly interesting conversations with patients, Dayringer said, such as talking to an ex-nun who was able to discuss her feelings and experiences since leaving the convent. She felt free to talk openly since the chaplain was a Catholic, but not yet a priest.

The students were not ordained and therefore could not administer the sacraments. Therefore, observed Dayringer, they had to rely more upon being a certain kind of person who could use the tools of pastoral care and counseling, rather than doing something for the patient.

And talk they did. Several female patients found an opportunity to discuss birth control with the young seminarians. Others, including some of the nursing personnel at the hospital, discussed celibacy with the unordained seminary students.

Not only did they talk to the patients and staff, but also to themselves. During each day in the hospital, they sat together as a group for about 90 minutes, discussing their experiences and feelings, concepts and ideas. They tried to understand themselves and each other, and the "critical incidents" they experienced each week.

Once each week they joined a doctors' discussion group, finding that their views were respected, though sometimes disagreed with in open and honest dialogue, Dayringer said. "The doctors in the group were apparently pleased at such a good opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith," he added.

Lectures and course study covered such topics as ministry to the sick, dying and bereaved, religious factors in personality development, psychosomatic ailments, religion and psychiatry, the ministry of counseling, community resources for pastoral care, and a view of the clergyman's own problems.

Socially, the Catholic seminarians spent an evening in the home of Chaplain Dayringer, and invited their Baptist chaplain supervisor to a Christmas party. For the students, it was the first time to be in the home of a Protestant minister and his family. For the Dayringers, it was the first time to have Roman Catholic trainees in their home.

"The seminarians seemed to delight in the opportunity to apply their academic studies in the very practical way of dealing with patients," Dayringer said in evaluating their response. "They were impressed with the fact that they were treated as ministers and not 'just students.'"

"Perhaps their appreciation for the program of training was revealed in the fact that at the farewell luncheon provided them by the hospital, they presented the department of pastoral care with a copy of the new Jerusalem Bible. They were the first group at Baptist Hospital to present any kind of gift." the Baptist chaplain said.

"These men made a contribution to many patients during the crises of physical illness," he concluded. "During the same time they learned from these patients how to be helpful to people in their future ministry."

Although the seven Catholic seminarians were the first to study at the Baptist Hospital here, they won't be the last. Five more students from the same seminary have enrolled for three days training weekly for three months, and in March the first group of students will return for six weeks of full time training, Dayringer said.

450 Attend Crusade Rally
In Rugged Big Horn Basin

WORLAND, Wyo. (BP)--A Crusade of the Americas rally here for churches in the Greater Big Horn Basin attracted more than 450 persons from a dozen Baptist churches located in a 7,000 square mile area.

Principal speaker for the rally was Dr. R. E. Benson, nationally-known surgeon from Billings, Mont., who compared heart transplant surgery to new life found in Jesus Christ.

Charles Clayton, Southern Baptist pastor in Cody, Wyo., said area Baptists were impressed with the extent of cooperation from the various Baptist churches across so wide an area.

Most of the 17 Baptist churches with a combined membership of about 1,800 are affiliated with the American, Conservative or Southern Baptist national bodies. Population in the area is about 33,000.

The Greater Big Horn Basin extends from the Montana border with its wild horse herds near Lovell, Mont., in the north; through the Wind River Canyon into Fremont County and the Wind River Indian Reservation on the South. The Big Horn Mountains on the East and the Absarok Range, part of the Rocky Mountains, on the West, form the entrance to the Yellowstone National Park and the Shoshone wilderness area, said Clayton.

Prior to the rally here, two fellowship meetings were held by pastors and laymen churches to introduce the Crusade of the Americas and determine to what extent they might work together in the evangelistic effort. The rally was coordinated by a steering committee composed of a pastor and laymen from each of the three cooperating Baptist groups.

Music at the rally was brought by a 75-voice combined choir, which sang the Crusade theme, "Christ the Only Hope."

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Cuban Daughters of Jailed
Pastors Respond To Gospel

(1-7-69)

EUNICE, La. (BP)--Two teenage daughters of a Baptist pastor imprisoned for "preaching the gospel" in Cuba, responded when the invitation was given to accept Christ at the Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church here in South Louisiana.

Even more unusual, the two girls, Vivian, 14, and Rebecca, 16, Medina had not understood a word the preacher had said. They spoke only Spanish, and knew no English.

As preacher's kids, they had heard the gospel all their lives, but had not responded until they came to Miami to live with an uncle. There they accepted Christ, but had no public opportunity to commit their lives until they came to South Louisiana to enroll in Acadia Baptist Academy near here.

At their initial church service of the school year, they responded to the invitation even though they had not understood the preacher.

They later said that even though the preacher was speaking in an unknown tongue, they had come to know Him of whom the preacher spoke.

Baptists in both Cuba and Louisiana are participating in 1969 Crusade of the Americas, an evangelistic effort involving 24 million Baptists in North, Central and South America.

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