

January 10, 1969

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

THE MEASURE OF A MAN

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"When God measures a man he measures the heart and not the head." Is this statement from a denominational publication correct, does it contain an element of truth, or does it represent a false antithesis or alternative?

It is true that God measures a man primarily by what is within the man rather than by external appearances. His word to Samuel when he was selecting a successor to Saul is an abiding word. He said to Samuel: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7). The Lord considers what a man really is and not what he may seem to be.

It is possible that the statement quoted above was made in an effort to correct the tendency of some to overemphasize native ability and training in the work of the Lord to the neglect of dedication and consistency of life. There may be a sense in which God is more concerned about the size of our hearts than of our heads, but he evidently is most concerned about the dedication of both to his purposes in the world.

There is a possibility that the statement stems from an anti-intellectualism which is still entirely too prevalent among Southern Baptists. Many Baptists are afraid of the trained mind.

They seemingly think that education will undermine faith. It may be that their attitude is derived primarily from the threat that education and the trained mind poses for them. Their faith may be based more on second-hand, hand-me-down ideas and prejudices rather than on meaningful personal experiences. Their faith may be dependent on non-essentials rather than on essentials, on the superficial and incidental rather than on the real and vital.

In contrast to some Southern Baptists, God is evidently not afraid of the trained mind. There is considerable evidence that he has a special affinity for the trained mind if that mind is dedicated to the work of God among men. Many of God's big men in the Old Testament and New Testament were men with the very best of training. This was certainly true of Moses who was trained in all the learning of the Egyptians and Saul or Paul who had studied at the feet of Gamaliel.

This should mean among other things that every child of God should secure the best possible training and then dedicate it to the service of God and his fellow man. The head or the mind, as is true of the total personality of man, is a part of his stewardship responsibility.

Our conclusion is that the statement may serve a good purpose as a corrective, but as is frequently true of a corrective it goes too far. Some limiting word should have been inserted such as "When God measures a man he measures primarily the heart and not the head." Or, possibly better: "he measures both the heart and the head" or "the heart as well as the head."

It seems, however, that God does not measure a man so much by his heart or his head as he does by the moral and spiritual stature of the man. Paul suggests that the work of the apostles, prophets, pastors, and others who perform distinctive functions within the Christian fellowship was to equip God's people. The latter in co-operation with the specially called ones were, among other things, to build up the body of Christ till we all come "to a mature manhood and to a perfect measure of Christ's moral stature" (Eph. 4:13, Williams).

Here is God's supreme measuring stick for a man. How do we measure up when we stand beside the stature of Christ? How tall are we?



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Houston Foundation Plans
India New Life Crusade

HOUSTON (BP)--A four-month evangelistic campaign in India is being planned by an organization called the New Life Foundation of Houston, which is seeking to enlist 500 pastors, laymen and musicians from across the Southern Baptist Convention to participate in the campaign.

Four crusades are scheduled--one each month, August through November of 1969, according to Joe West, director of the foundation and coordinator for the crusade.

Known as the All India New Life Crusade, the nation-wide endeavor is being sponsored by the 5,900-church India Prayer Fellowship, comprised of evangelical churches of India, including a number of Baptist churches.

"Our teams will go into the India churches and give them practical help and counsel in how to share the message of Christianity with the masses around them," said West, former pastor of the Westheimer Baptist Church of Houston.

"All the local meetings will be held in established churches and Christian schools," he added. "Christians are not allowed to meet in large auditoriums, in parks, or on the streets."

Currently, 34 associate crusade coordinators, who will be leading teams in major India population centers, have been enlisted from eight states--Texas, Michigan, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Louisiana, North Carolina, Colorado, and New Mexico. West hopes for widespread support from all states.

He noted a particular interest in India because at the present time, only medical missionaries are allowed to enter the land. There are only seven Southern Baptist missionaries serving in India, all in the medical field.

The foundation which is sponsoring the crusades, however, has no official connection with the Southern Baptist Convention and its Foreign Mission Board. Rather, the foundation operates independently from the Foreign Mission Board, said Winston Crawley, overseas division director for the board in Richmond.

West added that because there are so few missionaries in India, all limited to medical work, the challenge is even greater.

"There are more than 500 million people there, yet most of them have never had an opportunity to hear the Christian message," West said.

West said he believes there is a silent stirring in the hearts of Christians in America because the church isn't doing more, in a physical and spiritual way, for the underprivileged people of the world.

"Too long we have kept the message of salvation concealed within the four sanctuary walls and have failed to take it to the people of the world," he said.

According to West, the New Life Foundation in Houston grew out of the Japan New Life Movement in 1963 in which 600 Baptist pastors, laymen and musicians went to the Orient to assist the churches there in evangelistic meetings.

Last year the foundation conducted crusades in Australia, Taiwan, and Brazil. Future plans call for meetings in Europe, Africa and South America.

West also announced the completion of a color film on India, entitled "Who Will Walk Among Tears." Produced by the foundation, the film presents the needs and challenges of India, he said, and is being distributed to churches in Texas by the public relations department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Dr. Mackie, Southeastern
Seminary Physician Dies

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--The campus physician for Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary since its founding, Dr. George Carlyle Mackie, died here Jan. 8.

Funeral services were scheduled Jan. 10 at the chapel of Southeastern Seminary, with seminary president Olin T. Binkley and Wake Forest Baptist Church Pastor Lamar Brooks officiating.

Dr. Mackie had taught and practiced medicine in Wake Forest for the past 40 years. He was professor of physiology and pharmacology at Wake Forest College's medical school before the school moved to Winston-Salem, N. C. He had been the physician for Southeastern Seminary since it was founded in 1951.

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Students Get Chance
To Express Concerns

(1-10-69)

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist students will be given a chance to express their concerns to denominational leaders, to each other and Southern Baptists at large as the Consultation on Student Concerns opens Jan. 24-25 at the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention here.

"Impetus for this consultation began last June when about two dozen college students pick ted auxiliary meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston," Doyle Baird, coordinator of national projects, student department of the Sunday School Board, said.

At that convention, students were given an opportunity to dialogue with about 250 Southern Baptist leaders and pastors.

Many leaders, including Ed Byrd, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Florence, S. C., urged the students to "stay with us since you have these insights and convictions, and help us."

The student department of the Sunday School Board is sponsoring the consultation to provide students with an opportunity to suggest appropriate actions which may be taken in the light of present-day concerns," Baird said.

Attendance for the consultation is on a quota basis. Each state convention will be represented by from six to twelve students, depending on its size.

"Enthusiasm has been running high for this consultation, which will provide a hearing for the students' opinions and suggestions," Baird said.

All participants are coming at their own expense or that of a sponsoring state or campus group.

Students will moderate discussion groups and will present summary reports orally in the presence of SBC agency heads. The agency leaders in turn will be requested to respond to the students' conclusions, Baird added.

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