

May 9, 1969

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE  
(Another in a series)

### PASTORS' SALARIES

by T. B. Maston

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There recently has been considerable discussion of pastors' salaries. It is generally agreed that the salaries of most pastors are entirely too low. Inadequate income has been given as one reason for some pastors leaving the ministry.

Is there any feasible way for associations, conventions, or denominational agencies to guarantee a minimum salary for men who give their full time to the ministry?

While agreeing that the average salary of pastors is entirely too low, we should be fair in reporting the salary a pastor receives.

Many and possibly most churches provide a home for the pastor or furnish him a housing allowance. Many also pay all or some of his utilities. Furthermore, the pastor frequently receives a car allowance. His hospital and retirement benefits may be provided for him. Funds are made available for convention expenses and in some cases for other meetings of his own choosing. A few churches even provide "a pastor's fund" to be used for entertainment purposes or in any way related to the work of the church.

It is not being suggested that any of these fringe benefits should necessarily be eliminated. It is true that some church members believe it would be better for the pastor and for his relationships to his people if some of the benefits were eliminated or at least reduced. Surely all of us will agree that nothing should be provided for the pastor that will give him a tax advantage that is not available to the members of his church.

Some may argue that most employed church members receive fringe benefits. This is correct, but their fringe benefits are considered a part of their wage or salary. At least the pastor and other staff members believe this should be true as a basis for the member's tithe. Likewise, we believe that all the "fringe benefits" of the pastor should be considered a part of his income from the church.

It is particularly important that the members of the church should know about all the fringe benefits received by the pastor. They usually will know about the housing allowance and the car allowance. These ordinarily will be spelled out in the church budget. There are other items, however, such as utilities, that are seldom known by most of the members of the church.

What we have said about the pastors should also be true of other members of the church staff and denominational employees. Salaries should be spelled out specifically, and all fringe benefits should be clearly evident and generally known.

It is possible that some pastors of large churches and some denominational employees receive too much income. It can be a source of real temptation to them. It may contribute to materially mindedness. There is always the lurking danger that one may lose the common touch. His sympathies may be more with the privileged than with the underprivileged, which violates something basic in our Christian faith.

A wise rule of thumb that may be followed is that a pastor's income should be geared to a considerable degree to the average of the members of the church he serves. He can properly be above the average but not too much above.

Likewise, the income of denominational employees should not be too far beyond the income of pastors and other members of church staffs. It may be that in some phases of denominational life the salary scale has been determined too largely on the basis of typical practices in the business world.



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May 9, 1969

**Kansas Board Adopts  
"Program of Advance"**

WICHITA, Kan. (BP)--A Program of Advance giving immediate and long-range plans to try to unite the Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists in a comprehensive effort to overcome problems in their Church Loan Association was adopted by the convention's Executive Board here.

The Plan of Advance will emphasize, not just the financial aspect of saving the loan association from bankruptcy but also a comprehensive plan for helping Baptist churches in Kansas and Nebraska in the areas of evangelism, Sunday School, missions, and stewardship.

The board adopted a plan to begin putting \$3,000 per week into the sinking fund for Church Loan Association bonds beginning Jan. 1, 1970. The convention currently is putting \$1,000 per week into the sinking fund.

Plans call for depositing \$1,500 a week in the sinking fund almost immediately, increasing the amount to \$2,000 per week on July 1, 1969, and then to \$3,000 per week at the beginning of 1970.

On this basis, the plan would provide \$156,000 during 1970 to the sinking fund. An additional \$25,000 would be required annually for overhead expenses including salaries for the accountant, office secretary, audit fees, legal fees, etc., making a total of \$180,000 per year needed in 1970 through the next 11 years.

N. J. Westmoreland, executive secretary of the Kansas Convention, said that it appears at this point that \$2.1 million will be required above anticipated church loan payments in the 11-year period, including interest, and that there will be a recovery of \$1,325,000, for a total loss of \$778,032 in clearing up the loan association's obligations.

When asked where the \$156,000 (at \$3,000 per week) would come from, Westmoreland said that about \$40,000 would come from an increase in the budget, about \$32,300 from the budget allocation, about \$18,500 from increased revenue from the convention's leased space in the Baptist Building, about \$15,100 from cuts in the 1970 budget, and \$50,000 from a special fund campaign approved by the board.

Westmoreland added that the proposed 1970 budget had not yet been prepared in detail. "This is what we plan to do," he said. "We'll spell out later how."

Present projections for the 1970 budget call for an estimated \$330,000 state Cooperative Program goal, of which \$56,100 would go to Southern Baptist mission causes on the same percentage basis as in 1969.

As a part of the Plan of Advance, the board approved proposals to seek extensions on the maturity dates of bonds in order to help lower the annual demands, proposals to study how the convention office building can best be used in the crisis, proposals to seek church loans assistance from Texas and other state conventions, proposals to promote promissory notes of \$1,000 each; and proposals to seek a line of credit of \$2 million to completely re-finance all bonds.

Said the "Program of Advance" report approved by the board, "The precarious status of the Church Loan Association makes the idea of a complete refinancing and repayment of all bonds more and more attractive."

The report concluded by stating that the program hopefully would provide "a new optimism which will help our people take their eyes off our frightening problems to focus them on our lost people about us and upon God who can supply every need."

In an editorial in the Kansas Baptist Digest, Editor and Executive Secretary Westmoreland said that the plans "will make possible the convention's gains along the patterns to insure that we can 'run off and leave' the unpleasant experience of the Church Loan Association deficits. The convention can find itself at a new point in stature with a new dimension of compassion, with a new thrill of experience<sup>30</sup> in a victory that we so eagerly seek now."

Texas, Florida, Maryland Top  
SBC Cooperative Program Giving

NASHVILLE (BP)--Texas, Florida and Maryland Baptist state conventions led all other states in three respective categories of giving to the world missions through the Cooperative Program, a report from the Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission disclosed here.

Texas Baptists, who comprise the largest state convention in the SBC, led the denomination in the amount given to missions through the Cooperative Program. During 1968 Texas Baptists gave \$4,288,000 through the Cooperative Program.

Maryland led all other Baptist state conventions in per capita giving to Southern Baptist mission causes through the Cooperative Program. Maryland Baptists, on a per capita basis, gave \$3.49 each to the SBC mission causes in 1968.

Florida barely nosed out Georgia for the top spot in the percentage of their state budget going to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program. Florida Baptists gave 45.87 per cent of their state budget to SBC causes, while Georgia Baptists allocated 45.76 per cent to SBC causes, a difference of .11 per cent.

The top ten states in each of these three categories--amount to the Cooperative Program, per capita giving to the Cooperative Program, and percentage of the state budget going to the Cooperative Program--were listed in a tabulation compiled by the SBC Stewardship Commission here.

In the amount (dollars) going to SBC causes, Texas was followed in rank by (2) Georgia, \$2½ million; (3) North Carolina, \$1.84; (4) Florida, \$1.8 million; (5) Tennessee, \$1.76 million; (6) Virginia, \$1.68 million; (7) Alabama, \$1.65 million; (8) South Carolina, \$1.61 million; (9) Oklahoma \$1.37 million; and (10) Missouri, \$1.24 million.

All states ranking in the top ten in amounts to SBC causes in 1967 repeated in 1968, but some shifts were made within the top ten. Florida moved from fifth in 1967 to fourth in 1968. Virginia replaced Alabama for sixth place, and Alabama slipped to seventh.

In the per capita giving to SBC causes category, first-ranked Maryland led (2) Virginia, \$3.22; (3) Florida, \$2.90; (4) South Carolina, \$2.81; (5) Oklahoma, \$2.56; (6) Georgia, \$2.54; (7) Missouri, \$2.47; (8) Hawaii and Ohio (tie), \$2.42; and (10) Arkansas, \$2.39.

Hawaii, which tied with Ohio, moved into the top ten rank for the first time from 14th place in 1967. Texas dropped from eighth to 12th rank, slipping from the top ten list. Georgia moved up one rank to sixth, exchanging places with Missouri which dropped to seventh. Arkansas, which was ninth the previous year, ranked tenth in 1968.

In percentage of the state convention budget going to SBC causes, Florida and Georgia were followed in rank by (3) Oklahoma, 39.717%; (4) Maryland, 39.577%; (5) Virginia, 38.367%; (6) Illinois, 36.607%; (7) Alabama, 33.967%; (8) Tennessee, 34.967%; (9) Arkansas 33.547%; and (10) Missouri, 33.5%.

Florida barely moved up to the first ranking spot from second in 1967. Missouri, which was sixth in 1967, dropped to tenth, with Alabama, Tennessee and Arkansas each moving up one rank.

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NOTE TO BAPTIST STATE PAPER EDITORS: The SBC Stewardship Commission is sending to you the full ranking of each state in each of these three categories. You may want to insert information about your state in this story, or edit it to give the perspective of who giving in your state compared with others.

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