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May 8, 1969

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
(Another in a series)

DISCIPLINE IN THE HOME

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One of the most difficult and delicate tasks of parents is the discipline of their children. Some may be too severe, others may be entirely too lax or easy, while many and possibly most are inconsistent.

Unfortunately the father and mother frequently differ regarding the discipline of the children. If this is true they should work out their differences in private and not in the presence of the children.

An understanding of the purpose of discipline will help parents to know when and how to discipline their children. The purpose from the viewpoint of the child is that he may mature into a person who can discipline himself. If this is to be accomplished, the child must understand the purpose of the discipline and believe in its fairness.

Also, children cannot mature into well-discipline persons unless they are led increasingly to make their own decisions. The effective shifting of authority from parents to growing children is one of life's most significant achievements.

Another purpose of discipline is the maturing of law-abiding citizens. The home more than any other agency or institution will determine whether or not society has such citizens. Unless parents in the home teach respect for authority and for those who exercise that authority, society will not have citizens who respect the law and those who enforce the law.

There are a number of things that will help to make the discipline more effective than it would be otherwise. Fairness of the punishment has been mentioned. The child should be convinced that the discipline or punishment is not excessive for the particular violation.

The child should also understand the reason for the discipline. This ordinarily requires the parent to be calm and to talk the matter over with the child. Seldom is a parent justified in punishing a child when he is angry.

There are few things more important in discipline than consistency. Too frequently parents let how they feel determine whether or not they discipline a child. The effectiveness of punishment depends more on its consistency and the understanding of the child of the reason for the punishment than on its severity.

Where does physical punishment fit into the whole picture of discipline? Too many parents practically equate physical punishment and discipline. There are many other methods of discipline: talking to a child, withdrawal of privileges, restriction of activities, etc. The method used should be adapted to the child as well as to the offense.

At least one or two additional words should be addressed to parents concerning the discipline of their children. They cannot expect to have well-disciplined children unless they themselves are well-disciplined. Also, when properly understood discipline includes much more than punishment.

The moral and spiritual principles and ideals that are built into the lives of growing children will be major factors in disciplining their lives. Also, the atmosphere of or the spirit in the home will make a major contribution.

The best discipline is largely unconscious, primarily caught rather than taught.



BAPTIST PRESS
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Nashville, Tennessee 37219
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May 12, 1969

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Baptist-Catholic Dialogue
States: "We Are Brothers"

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.(BP)--In the first Baptist-Catholic dialogue at Wake Forest University's Ecumenical Institute here, a group of 58 Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics adopted a resolution stating, "the principal focus of our interest is the unchallenged and overwhelming fact that we are brothers in Christ."

"We did not attempt to disguise our theological differences, but were made aware of the mutual enrichment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit," said the resolution adopted at the end of the three-day conference.

The 19 Roman Catholics (including two bishops) and 39 Southern Baptists met "not as official representatives of an ecclesiastical group, but as individuals interested in promoting Christian unity," according to the resolution.

The event was sponsored by the Ecumenical Institute of Wake Forest University, a North Carolina Baptist school. Brooks Hays, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention is director of the institute, and Judson B. Allen, professor at the university, is secretary.

Hays, in evaluating the conference, said that "at least we are making a start in establishing the basis for a reconciliation between two important religious communities.

"I believe," Hays continued, "that Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics will become increasingly aware of the contributions that each has made to each other, and that the cement of Christian love will never again be in short supply."

A Catholic bishop from Washington, D.C., John S. Spence, put it even more strongly. "During these three days, the Holy Spirit has brought together members of heretofore estranged religious traditions and has caused us to realize how much essential biblical faith we share in common."

Bishop Spence is a member of the U. S. Catholic Bishops committee for ecumenical and inter-religious affairs with a special assignment for dialogue with Baptists.

"This awakened consciousness of our spiritual kinship has created the desire, in fact, the demand for continued dialogue," Bishop Spence said.

The resolution adopted by the conference stated that the group was "united in a belief that a continuing dialogue is desirable, so that together we may better meet our responsibility to the gospel and serve the world in a period of great peril and staggering human problems.

"Consequently," concluded the resolution, "we propose to continue these discussions and to renew our efforts to acquaint those within our respective constituencies with the urgency of promoting the unity for which Christ prayed."

The resolution stated that it is believed "that this is the first meeting on such a broad scale, convened to discuss our (Baptist and Catholic) common heritage and to confront our historic differences."

Format for the three-day meeting featured six major papers delivered by both Baptist and Catholic theologians and officials, plus three dialogue group sessions and two fellowship hours. The final session was devoted to summaries and discussion from the various dialogue groups, and adoption of the resolution.

In one major address, Catholic theologian Kilian McDonnell said that "Catholics have more to receive from Southern Baptists than they have to give them."

Baptists, said McDonnell, maintain that "salvation comes to the individual through a personal faith....It is this personal moment in faith that Roman Catholicism tends to obscure."

McDonnell, director of the Catholic Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research at Collegeville, Mich., added, however, that it is this concentration on experience that has been at the expense of theological elaboration that has in some cases weakened the role of the church. "Baptists look upon the church more as a convenience than a necessity," he said.

The "raging objectivism into which Catholicism sometimes falls," McDonnell said, "would give Baptist prayer life a deeper consciousness of the importance of corporate and formal worship."

But Baptists worship has something to teach Catholicism, he added, especially in the use of worship as an essential element in evangelism. Catholics, he said, have often floundered at evangelizing.

While Baptists sometimes accuse Catholics of idolatry, Baptists have their own problems here, for the seed of idolatry are carried in the tendency of Baptists to put down doctrinal controversy in the ranks, to concentrate on numerical growth and to call themselves a "miracle denomination," he said.

McDonnell added that Baptists' hesitancy to have extensive ecumenical contact is understood by Catholics, for Catholics also are latecomers to the movement.

Earlier, a Baptist professor of religion at the University of North Carolina, Samuel S. Hill, said that in general, Baptists believe that God speaks directly to them, that their religion is an internal experience, and that there thus is no need for sacraments or creeds.

Catholics, on the other hand, believe that God speaks not only privately to man but in secular and ordinary ways, through friendship, in nature, and in the world around them.

Thus, Hill said, "Catholic theology is better equipped to make a holy use of the world than is Baptist theology."

Both approaches to a religious way of life, Hill said, present possible perversions. Baptists by concentrating on inner spiritual experiences or privation may ignore their Christian responsibilities socially or politically, and Catholics run the risk of too much belief in "blessed secularity."

"How great it would be," Hill said, "if Catholics with their view that 'everything is grace-made-visible' could get together with Baptists with their marvelous inner sense of God's presence. They would really have something."

Hill urged Baptists and Catholics to make a serious effort at overcoming the misunderstandings which divide them, but warned it would take more than "warm handshakes and friendly chatter."

If the confrontation is to be effective, "there must be serious talk on the differences--talk which is honest," Hill said.

Another major speaker, Ecumenical Institute Secretary Judson B. Allen, professor of English at Wake Forest University, said Baptists and evangelical Christians must come to understand their historical roots in medieval Christianity.

For Catholics, "a miracle of renewal took place when they laid hold on the Bible," Allen said. "For evangelicals...the miracle will take place when we lay hold on history, and thus find our kinship with other Christians by discovering that we had the same parents.

"Then," he observed, "the ecumenical problem will be, in a sense, solved because we will realize that brothers do not have to be twins."

A third Baptist speaker, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Professor E. Glenn Hinson of Louisville, said that the Apostles' Creed, because it is thoroughly biblical and the most widely accepted confession to survive the centuries, may be the instrument around which Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox Christians can rally.

Hinson spoke to the group on the subject, "Creeds and the Faith." He said at the outset Baptists are hesitant about drawing up creeds, but not statements. This reluctance stems from their strict view that the Scriptures alone are "the only rule of faith and practice" with no necessity for a creedal statement.

Hinson added, however, that ecumenical dialogue requires both that we understand ourselves and that other Christians and also non-Christians understand us. He stated that the summary of faith as stated in the Apostles' Creed is a starting place for such dialogue.

A Catholic professor at St. John's College, Collegeville, Minn., Godfrey Diekmann, said that Catholics have much to learn from non-liturgical churches about liturgy and worship. "We need to study with those churches with the prophetic witness," he said.

Catholic professor Raymond E. Brown of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, said that Catholics' renewed emphasis on study of the Bible, unlike Baptists, has also included an evaluation of Biblical teachings through criticism.

Biblical criticism, Brown said, can raise problems as well as have an influential effect, but must be allowed and encouraged. This freedom, he said, may have caused dialogue between Catholic and Protestant scholars and helped ecumenism to flower.

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Dallas Citizens Group
Launches Decency Drive

5/12/69

DALLAS (BP)--An interdenominational group of Dallas pastors and laymen is entrenching for a long, hard fight against objectionable literature, "exploitation" movie houses and all advertising or entertainment "deficient in moral, spiritual or intellectual interest."

Darold Morgan, pastor of Cliff Temple Baptist Church; Charles Thrasher, pastor of Kessler Park Baptist Church; and Peter Duplessis, education minister for Wynnewood Baptist Church, were appointed to steering committee posts for the group, which has been dubbed the "Dallas Moral Improvement League."

Morgan is second vice president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and president of the Southern Baptist Annuity Board.

Also serving on the committee are pastors from Church of Christ, Assembly of God, Methodist and non-denominational congregations. Selected laymen will be added to the committee at a later date.

League representatives have met with the city attorney, and the Dallas Movie Classification Board. The pastors reported that they were very pleased with these initial contacts and that the city officials had been very courteous and responsive.

Pointing to a large collection of newspaper clippings concerning the group's picketing activities near local "adult" theaters, Thrasher stated, "The silent majority is now speaking up. Too long we've been silent. Now we are organizing. We want these theaters to either change the type of movie they show or close the doors."

The league will continue picketing, circulation of petitions and a letter-writing campaign to government officials at all levels. Among their most ambitious future plans is a downtown citizen's parade and a rally for decency in the 10,000 seat Dallas Memorial Auditorium.

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Crusaide Committee
Sets Follow-Up Plan

5/12/69

KINGSTON, JAMAICA (BP)--The Crusade of the Americas follow-through committee has charted a 1969-70 follow up to the massive hemispheric evangelism campaign.

With most participating churches either having just completed or currently involved in crusade revivals, the regional coordinators meeting here designated from now to November 1969 as a period of orientation of new believers.

"An effort was made in designing the follow through calendar to give a well-rounded emphasis to all three of the original crusade objectives," said John Havlik of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, chairman of the committee.

During November and December of 1969, the calendar encourages churches to stress studies in Christian discipleship.

Other designated emphases on the follow through schedule are:

Jan. 11, 1970 as a day of prayer and dedication for thanksgiving and renewed commitment; Jan. 25 as layman's day, to be a day of lay-led activity; January to May 1970 for emphasis on training in personal evangelism, including an eight-day personal evangelism campaign and hopefully the beginning of a perennial personal evangelism program; October-December 1970 for emphasis on Christian social ministry, including awareness classes, and promotion of commitment to ministry.

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