

July 16, 1969

PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
(another in a series)

SEX EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
by T. B. Maston

Retired Professor of Christian Ethics
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Considerable controversy has arisen concerning the provision of sex instruction by the public schools. While many people consider such instruction a legitimate and important phase of the school's program, others contend that it does not belong in the school and that it is a part of a communist plot to undermine the morals of our nation.

What should be the position of churches and church leaders concerning the controversy?

It is assumed that most of us will agree that proper sex instruction is needed. Most of us realize that children and youth cannot remain ignorant or "innocent" even if such were desirable. They will pick up sex information, accurate and inaccurate, wholesome or unwholesome, from some source.

Parents are the logical ones to give sex instruction to their own children. Unfortunately, however, most parents give little, if any, such instruction.

Churches can and should do much more than they have done in the areas of sex education. Many of them provide no help for parents or children. Very few have a well-planned program of sex education.

Even if all churches provided an adequate program of sex education, which is far from the actual situation, many and possibly most children and youth would be untouched by the program. And since relatively few parents do the job adequately, if at all, it is evident that something is needed in addition to what the churches do or can do.

As churches and church leaders formulate their attitude toward sex education in public schools, they should not forget the great host of people who are untouched by the churches.

If proper sex education is important, and we believe it is, then it seems that the public schools must have some place in their programs for it. Otherwise, many youngsters will never receive any instruction except what they pick up.

The preceding does not mean a blanket approval of every proposed program of sex instruction in the public schools. Whether such a program is wholesome or unwholesome will be determined by its content and also by the teacher or teachers.

Churches, church leaders, and church members should not oppose sex education as such in the public schools. They should seek to have an effective voice in the formulation and execution of the program of public school sex education. They should be alert to the content of the program and the one or ones who will teach the course or courses offered.

Furthermore, parents and church leaders should insist that any course in sex education should contain more than mere facts about sex. While it is recognized that teachers in a pluralistic society face some difficulties in expressing value concepts, children and/or youth should be led to recognize that there are basic laws or principles that govern the area of sex.

Someone has suggested that teaching youngsters facts regarding sex without any ethical principles related to sex relations would be like "teaching them to drive a car without giving them the rules of the road." They may become more dangerous to themselves and to others.



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

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

July 16, 1969

Jews, Baptists Cosponsor
First Scholars Conference

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--A unique three-day Jewish-Baptist Scholars conference will be held Aug. 18-20 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary here.

This is the first conference to be held with representatives of the Southern Baptist Convention and all branches of American Judaism and Jewry, involving a select group of about 50 of the foremost Baptist and Jewish theologians and scholars in the U.S.

Joint sponsors are the Department of Work with Nonevangelicals of the Home Mission Board, SBC, in Atlanta, and the Interreligious Affairs Department of the American Jewish Committee based in New York.

The program will seek to uncover new ground by focusing on some specific historical, theological and sociological aspects of relationships between Baptists and the Jewish people, according to Southern Baptist Glenn Igleheart.

Igleheart, Northeastern Area Director for Southern Baptists ministry to nonevangelicals, is one of the program coordinators.

"Working together for social justice" will be the theme of the closing session. Final statements on "Prospectus for the Future" will be presented by Joseph R. Estes, secretary of the department of work with nonevangelicals, and by Marc H. Tanenbaum, national director of the Jewish committee's department of interreligious affairs.

-30-

Girl Interrupts Glorieta Sermon;
Congregation Reacts Favorably

7/16/69

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--A sermon on love, concern and sharing was interrupted by the questions of a girl who doubted the sincerity of the speaker. Many church leaders in the congregation beamed approval.

The occasion was a dramatic presentation at the young people's Sunday School leadership conference at Glorieta Baptist Assembly.

Written by Glorieta staffer Kathie Graves of Fresno, Calif., the "service" began with the popular song, "Elinor Rigby," which tells of the loneliness of people.

The "minister," a different staffer at each performance, read from John 4:7 about the woman at the well and then proceeded with his sermon.

Undaunted by the loud remarks of the heckler, the minister ended his talk without response to the questions about his lack of love for other races, his refusal to help her friends who take dope and his failure to help her understand about God.

Leaving the pulpit, the minister told her to "stop by my office for some pamphlets. If you have any questions, my secretary will answer them for you."

The bewildered young girl wandered away as the song was heard again . . . "All the lonely people, where do they all come from? . . ."

Kathie said that she does not have time to talk with everyone about how she feels, so she uses poetry and dramatic presentations to get her message to church leaders.

Reaction among adult young people's leaders at the conference was mixed amazement and admitted guilt.

-more-

"It shook me out of my apathy," said Mrs. Virginia Crow of First Baptist Church, Muskogee, Okla. "It was so dramatic. I know this is true and feel this terrible condemnation, but I had not been willing to admit it."

Sam Beam III, minister of music and education at First Baptist Church, Gatesville, Tex., said, "It was a graphic presentation of things that go on that we hate to admit. We close our eyes. The fact that the minister ignored her is what made it effective. This is what church leaders often do."

-30-

Former Staff Member
Appointed Missionary

7/16/69

ATLANTA (BP)--Three persons recently were appointed career missionaries by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here, including a former staff member of the National Missions Headquarters.

Beverly Hammack, who served about six years in the agency's department of special mission ministries, was named director of christian social ministries in Jacksonville, Fla.

Mr. and Mrs. Warren A. Rawls of Virginia, were appointed to New Orleans where he will direct the denomination's youth and family services in that area.

A native of Southwest City, Mo., Miss Hammack is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, Okla., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

She left the Home Mission Board in 1967 and obtained a master of social work degree from Tulane University in New Orleans.

Earlier she had served as Woman's Missionary Union youth director for the Kansas Convention of Southern Baptists and had worked at the Rachel Sims Mission and Sellers Home and Adoption Center in New Orleans.

A native of Portsmouth, Va., Rawles was a student missionary aiding in youth and family services while he attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

He is a graduate of Richmond Professional Institute and New Orleans Seminary.

A former pastor in Virginia, he also has worked as a juvenile probation officer.

Mrs. Rawls, the former Ann Floyd of Richmond, is a former public school teacher.

-30-