

T. B. Maston was one of the most significant Southern Baptists of the twentieth century. More than any other figure, Maston was the preeminent shaper of Christian ethics and Christian social concern among Southern Baptists. Foy Valentine, Maston's protégé and Executive Secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission once remarked.

When Maston responded to God's call to bear the Christian ethics standard of his life's work, the idea of Christian ethics among Southern Baptists existed in only very rudimentary form. No Baptist seminary had a course on the subject. No Baptist agency had published a book on the subject. No state Baptist convention had established an office to focus on the subject. No Southern Baptist Convention agency had been formed to maintain an ongoing emphasis on the subject.¹

Maston's emphasis on applying the gospel to all aspects of life made his name synonymous with Christian Ethics in the Southern Baptist Convention.² By establishing a course on Christian Ethics and later a doctoral program in the same area at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Maston led the trend to focus on social issues among some Southern Baptists. Eventually, Christian Ethics would become a field of academic inquiry at every Southern Baptist seminary. Maston also helped to birth Christian Life Commissions, both on the national level and in many of the state conventions.

An examination of selected views of T. B. Maston is a revealing picture of the ideas of social progressives in twentieth century Southern Baptist life. He was a pioneer in many areas, particularly the arena of race relations. His views on church-state relations were "mainstream" Southern Baptist, but his advocacy furthered the cause of

¹ James Dunn, "The Christian and the State: A Constructive Task," in *Perspectives in Applied Christianity: Essays in Honor of Thomas Buford Maston*, ed. William M. Tillman Jr. (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1986), 2-3.

² Mark Wingfield, "Maston's Walking as He Walked," *Baptist Standard* (March 5, 1986), 9-10.

religious liberty. Maston's legacy is perhaps his most significant influence, a legacy which lives on in the contributions of his students and their work. A study of T. B. Maston will help Baptists recover his influence upon Baptists in the South in the twentieth century.

The Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists: At Ease in Zion

From the outset, Southern Baptists have found unity in a commitment to a cultural identity. To be Baptist was to be Southern. To be Southern was to espouse a racial orthodoxy of white supremacy that characterized the antebellum period and was maintained in the segregated world of the Jim Crow South.³ To be Southern also meant that one adopted a Puritan social ethic which associated failure with deficiency of individual character.⁴ Undoubtedly, Baptists were archetypal southerners: "racially and sexually hierarchical, suspicious of modern viewpoints, complacent about the exploitation of the economically disadvantaged, militaristic, nationalistic, and generally hostile toward the reformist (and northern) social gospel."⁵ According to John Lee Eighmy, Southern Baptist churches, more often than not, reflected the values held by their surrounding society. In other words, they were held captive to Southern culture.⁶

Since the birth of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845, Southern Baptists have justified their lack of social activism by insisting that the church's rightful mission was to save individual souls rather than society. Political action was deemed

³ Bill J. Leonard, *God's Last and Only Hope: The Fragmentation of the Southern Baptist Convention* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 3ff.

⁴ John Lee Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity: A History of the Social Attitudes of Southern Baptists* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1972), 41-43.

⁵ David Stricklin, *A Genealogy of Dissent: Southern Baptist Protest in the Twentieth Century* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1999), 8-12.

⁶ Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity*, 38-40.

inappropriate and ineffective as a means of fulfilling the church's evangelistic mandate.⁷ However, Southern Baptists considered alcohol so evil that this line of reasoning was laid aside to preserve the traditional moral values associated with the "Southern Way of Life" during the era of Prohibition. The Southern Baptist Convention's active support of the temperance movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries introduced Southern Baptists to the social gospel movement of the North.⁸ When Southern Baptists joined the dry crusade they were beginning to affiliate with national movements of social protest while adopting the essential idea of the social gospel – direct church participation in social causes.⁹

While Southern Baptists as a whole were not socially conscious, there was a relatively small group of ministers, denominational employees, and laypersons who were.¹⁰ By the end of the Progressive era, the social gospel movement had made inroads into the life and social thought of these Southern Baptists. Progressive dissenters had begun to rebuff their culture's values, refusing to be, as the biblical prophet Amos said, "at ease in Zion."¹¹

Unlike the leading social gospel thinkers of the North such as Washington Gladden, Josiah Strong and Walter Rauschenbusch, this small group of socially alert

⁷ Rufus Spain, *At Ease in Zion: Social History of Southern Baptists, 1865-1900*, (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967), 288-289.

⁸ The social gospel movement - known as a sub-unit in the modernist/liberal tradition - is considered the most radical religious response to economic issues in industrialized America. The rapid industrialization and urbanization late in the nineteenth century created vast inequities in the distribution of wealth. Nowhere were these inequities more apparent than in northern cities where the ravages of unbridled capitalism gave rise to the exploitation of labor and harsh living conditions. The social gospel movement sought to address these ills, emphasizing the doctrine of the kingdom of God as a distinct historical possibility and calling upon Christians to seek the conversion not only of individuals but of sinful social institutions as well.

⁹ Eighmy, *Churches in Cultural Captivity*, 49-56.

¹⁰ Raymond L. Sikes, "An Analysis of the Speaking Program of the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention" (Masters thesis, Baylor University, 1970), 12-13.

¹¹ Stricklin, *A Genealogy of Dissent*, 19-20.

Southern Baptist progressives remained committed to a conservative theological approach that affirmed traditional doctrines like original sin, the transcendence of God, and biblical authority rather than an exalted place for human reason or progress. Most Southern Baptist progressives “studiously eschewed the theological liberalism of their northern counterparts.” Thus, because of their conservative theological underpinnings, Southern Baptist progressives were never in the mainstream of the social gospel movement. Included in this group of progressive dissenters is T.B. Maston who has been perhaps the most influential advocate of social Christianity in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention.¹²

T.B. Maston: A Biographical Overview

Born in East Tennessee on November 26, 1897, Thomas Buford Maston answered the call to Christian ministry shortly after being “born again” at the age of sixteen.¹³ In 1916, Maston entered the Baptist-affiliated Carson-Newman College where he excelled as a student-athlete on the football team. After graduating from Carson-Newman College in 1920, Maston entered Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas where he earned both the Master of Religious Education and Doctor of Religious Education degrees.¹⁴ While still enrolled as a student, in 1922 Maston began teaching courses on social Christianity through Southwestern’s School of Religious Education. Maston also earned a Master of Arts in sociology at Texas Christian University in 1927.

¹² John Storey, *Texas Baptist Leadership and Social Christianity, 1900-1980* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1986), 3-14. John Storey argues that using the term *social gospel* to discuss Texas Baptists such as T.B. Maston is inappropriate because it usually connotes a social activism supported by a liberal interpretation of Scripture. Since the social awareness of Texas Baptists came about within a conservative theological mold, the terms *social Christianity* or *applied Christianity* more accurately describe the efforts of Maston and others.

¹³ Mark Newman, *Getting Right With God: Southern Baptists and Desegregation, 1945-1995* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2001), 67.

¹⁴ William M. Pinson Jr., “Texas Baptist Contributions to Ethics: The Life and Influence of T.B. Maston,” *Baptist History & Heritage*, 33 (Aug 1998), 7-8.

Convinced that further education would significantly enhance his teaching ministry, Maston enrolled at Yale University and earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree in 1939. In 1943, Maston became the one-man faculty in Southwestern Seminary's newly established Department of Christian Social Ethics which was located in the School of Theology.¹⁵ During his years at Southwestern, Maston developed and taught courses on biblical ethics, theological ethics, family, race relations, world crises, communism, moral issues, labor relations, recreation, church/state relations, and many other subjects. His doctoral program in Christian ethics was highly respected across the nation. It is estimated that Maston taught around 10,000 persons during his forty-one-year teaching ministry.¹⁶

After his retirement in 1963, Maston continued to teach, serving as a visiting professor in numerous colleges and seminaries for nearly two decades. He also held lectureships in many universities and seminaries in the United States and abroad for missionaries and military personnel. Throughout his entire teaching career, Maston wrote twenty-two books, nearly all of them dealing with ethics and social concerns, and published hundreds of Sunday School lessons and articles for newspapers and journals. Although never ordained to the gospel ministry, Maston held several interim pastorates and served as a deacon at Gambrell Street Church of Fort Worth where he was a member from 1920 until his death in 1988.¹⁷

¹⁵ Foy Valentine, "T.B. Maston: A Conscience for Southern Baptists," *Southwestern Journal of Theology*, 25, 2 (Spring 1983), 89-90.

¹⁶ Pinson, "Texas Baptist Contributions," 17.

¹⁷ Gary E. Farley, "T.B. Maston: Advocate for Living God's Word in the Marketplace," *Baptist History & Heritage*, 31 (Jan. 1996), 31-33.

A Biblically Based Social Ethic

In his oral memoirs, Maston acknowledged that his interest in social issues was stimulated and nurtured by his family environment. Growing up as the son of a sharecropper turned railroad section hand, Maston always identified with the working poor. He noted that family conditions “have explained to some degree what I hope has been a genuine, sincere interest in the underprivileged, the poor, and the disinherited in general in our society.”¹⁸

Maston was first formally introduced to the social teachings of the Bible while a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. During his first year at Southwestern, Maston took several courses that dealt with social Christianity. His teacher, Walter T. Conner, a former student of Walter Rauschenbusch, exposed Maston to the teachings of social gospel thinkers such as Rauschenbusch, Gladden, and others. In order to broaden his social thinking, Maston enrolled at Yale University in 1932.¹⁹ At Yale, Maston studied under the renowned Christian ethicist H. Richard Niebuhr and examined the writings of neoorthodox scholars such as Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Barth, and Emil Brunner. The influence of H. Richard Niebuhr on Maston was truly incalculable. Richard Niebuhr’s paradigm of “Christ transforming culture” for approaching social ethics can be traced in Maston’s writing and teaching.²⁰

Throughout his life, T.B. Maston attempted to make Christians understand the source of Christian ethics. According to Maston, this indispensable source was the “will

¹⁸ Oral Memoirs of T.B. Maston, Waco, 1973, Baylor University Institute of Oral History, 1-6.

¹⁹ Conner did post-doctoral work with Rauschenbusch at Colgate-Rochester.

²⁰ Storey, *Texas Baptist Leadership*, 126-129. H. Richard Niebuhr popularized the paradigm of “Christ” and “culture” for the study of religion and society in American Christianity. In addition to “Christ transforming culture,” Niebuhr found evidence for other variations in Christian history such as “Christ against culture” (i.e., Christians who oppose identification with cultural practices) and “Christ of culture” (i.e., Christians who are more affirmative of identifying with cultural values). See H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (San Francisco: Harper, 1956).

of God revealed in the Bible.”²¹ As the foundation of Maston’s social thought, the Bible was held to be authoritative, trustworthy, truthful, and dependable. Maston’s hermeneutic was Christocentric. He evaluated Scripture in light of the teachings of Christ. Although Maston had a profound appreciation for the discipline of sociology and other social sciences, he never allowed them to assume the position of Scripture.²² In his book, *Biblical Ethics*, Maston argued that contemporary Christian living was morally deficient because it “has given up its own ethical standards drawn by the Bible.”²³

Maston studied the Bible carefully to discover principles that could be applied to each and every situation that arose in the life of a Christian. In his writings and in the classroom, Maston addressed a panoply of ethical concerns. Like other ethicists during his time, Maston devoted much space to the subject of communism which he considered to be a serious threat to the democratic way of life and a rival to Christianity for the souls of men and women. Maston asserted that modern communism had made atheistic materialism a religion and as a result could never “satisfy the deeper hungers and needs of man.” On the flip side, Maston never hesitated to criticize the weaknesses and excesses of capitalism and those who made Adam Smith their prophet. Maston stressed that Christianity should not be identified with any particular economic system.²⁴

Having lived through World War I and II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, issues pertaining to war and peace were always a major concern of Maston. Not a pacifist, Maston referred to himself as a “limited conscientious objector.” Maston was a fervent supporter for the rights of both the “conscientious participant” and the

²¹ Hyuck Bong Kwon, "An Evaluation of the Contributions of T.B. Maston to Christian Ethics" (Masters thesis, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1982), 71-72.

²² Farley, *T.B. Maston*, 31.

²³ T.B. Maston, *Biblical Ethics* (Waco: Word Books, 1970), v.

²⁴ T.B. Maston, *The Christian in the Modern World* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1962), 80-85.

“conscientious objector.” An emphasis on the right of individual conscience was at the heart of Maston’s social ethic.²⁵

Alcohol and gambling were two other popular issues frequently addressed by Maston. In the book, *Right or Wrong?*, a publication targeted at Southern Baptist youth, Maston argued that Christians should abstain from drinking alcohol. He wrote, “In determining what is right or wrong for one to do, a Christian must not only consider the influence of the particular activity upon him but also its influence on others and on the social order. One of the chief counts against beverage alcohol is its effect on society. It corrupts everything it touches.”²⁶ Similarly, Maston held that gambling was inherently wrong. Any activity that is inherently wrong, according to Maston, should be recognized as contrary to the will of God.²⁷

Maston’s social ethic was not without controversy. He took many controversial stands on issues such as sex education in public schools, capital punishment, and abortion. Maston believed that since many parents and churches failed to educate their children and youth on sex, public schools had a duty to provide a well-planned and comprehensive sex education program for all students.²⁸ In the 1971 publication, *The Conscience of a Christian*, Maston advocated that state laws concerning abortion be revised. With proper safeguards, Maston felt that abortion should be permitted in the limited cases of incest, rape, and when the health of the mother was in jeopardy.²⁹ Maston also strongly opposed

²⁵ T.B. Maston, *The Conscience of a Christian* (Waco: Word Books, 1971), 137-40. See T.B. Maston, *Christianity and World Issues* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957), 245-255.

²⁶ T.B. Maston, *Right or Wrong?* (Nashville: Broadman Press), 1955), 59-65.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 88-92.

²⁸ Maston, *The Conscience of a Christian*, 61-62.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 69-70.

capital punishment. He felt that any justification for capital punishment violated the spirit and the basic teachings of the New Testament.³⁰

Views of Church and State

Southern Baptist voices for freedom of conscience and religious liberty were not rare in the convention's first 100 years. They continued to warn against the establishment of religion, a concern articulated by the earliest Baptists of the 17th century. In the 20th century, two figures most clearly expressed Southern Baptist views on religious liberty: E.Y. Mullins, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1899-1928) and G.W. Truett, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas (1897-1944), one of the most legendary Baptist ministers in the convention's history. For Truett and Mullins, Baptists and America were suited for each other: both were democratic and loved freedom. Truett declared that Baptists "have never been a party to oppression of conscience...Christ's religion needs no prop of any kind from any worldly source, and to the degree that it is thus supported is a millstone hanged about its neck." Both hailed the competency of the individual soul as the keystone truth of all Baptists (i.e., the ability of each person to go directly to God without human or ecclesiastical mediation).³¹

T.B. Maston's views on religious liberty and the principle of separation of church and state did not blaze new ground. Identifying with Isaac Backus, an eighteenth century Baptist pioneer of religious liberty, Maston continued to articulate positions voiced earlier by Mullins, Truett and accepted by the vast majority of Southern Baptists.³²

³⁰ Ibid, 74-78.

³¹ The idea of soul competency was articulated and popularized in E. Y. Mullins, *The Axioms of Religion* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1908).

³² For Maston's appreciation of Backus, see T. B. Maston, *Isaac Backus: Pioneer of Religious Liberty* (London: James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 1962). For the religious liberty views of E. Y. Mullins, see E. Y. Mullins, "The Baptist Conception of Religious Liberty," in *Proclaiming the Baptist Vision: Religious Liberty*, ed. Walter B. Shurden (Macon: Smyth and Helwys, 1997). For the views of G. W. Truett, see G.

Because of his influence, however, the Baptist commitment to religious liberty was maintained and even expanded through his writings and his students.³³

Maston's vision of religious liberty was rooted in the concept of voluntary faith.³⁴ For religious faith to be authentic, Maston believed, it must be free and cannot be coerced. God alone is Lord of the individual conscience. Maston contended that "the final authority for the individual is neither the state nor the church. Compulsion cannot touch the soul. Neither the state nor the church has the right to attempt such compulsion."³⁵ According to Maston, a theology for religious freedom is anchored in the "viewpoint of the Christian ethic...that man was created in the image of God." All freedom is from God. The freedom of the individual conscience, then, is the cornerstone that precedes and demands religious liberty and her essential corollary the separation of church and state for all persons in the political arena.³⁶

To Maston, separation of church and state meant an organizational and functional separation. Neither the church nor the state should seek to control the other or to use the

W. Truett, "Baptists and Religious Liberty," in H. Leon McBeth, ed., *A Sourcebook For Baptist Heritage* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990). Maston never used Mullins' phrase "soul competency" but he likewise put emphasis on the individual conscience. Maston's teacher at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, W. T. Conner, was a student of Mullins at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Conner's theology class during Maston's student days (1918-1922) used a Mullins authored text, *The Christian Religion in its Doctrinal Expression*. See www.reformedreader.org/conner.htm. Accessed April 28, 2007.

³³ T.B. Maston's doctoral students in Christians Ethics wrote more dissertations with religious liberty themes than any other area. Maston's students wrote on: Southern Baptist attitudes toward church-state cooperation in religious instruction; Southern Baptist reactions to diplomatic relations with the Vatican (1939-1953); Southern Baptists and the relationship of church and state (1918-1952); Contemporary Southern Baptist involvement with the state; and Southern Baptists and labor. Further, fourteen additional dissertations explored the ethical thought of individuals such as Richard Niebuhr, Reinhold Niebuhr, Walter Rauschenbusch, Harry Emerson Fosdick, E. Stanley Jones, George W. Truett, John Bunyan, and J. M. Dawson. See James Dunn, "The Christian and the State: A Constructive Task," in *Perspectives in Applied Christianity: Essays in Honor of Thomas Buford Maston*, ed. William M. Tillman Jr. (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1986).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁵ T.B. Maston, *Christianity and World Issues* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1957), 211-212.

³⁶ T.B. Maston, "The Church, The State, And The Christian Ethic," *Journal of Church and State*, 2 (Spring 1960), 26-30.

other to promote its interests.³⁷ Any threat to the wall of separation between church and state was a direct threat to religious liberty. In a 1964 address to the Texas Baptist

Christian Life Commission, Maston expounded on this critical issue:

We believe that religious liberty, when properly defined and understood, provides for freedom of worship, conscience, and association for the individual. This means that he is free to believe or not to believe, to worship or not to worship, to associate or not to associate with others of his religious persuasion. He is free to share his religious experiences, opinions, and convictions with others, so long as he does not violate the rights of others. These basic rights of the individual belong to him within the Christian community as well as in the world...These and other rights must be exercised always with proper regard for the rights of others. Freedom for the Christian community also means freedom from external control due to any financial, political, or other connection with any political entity.³⁸

Maston did not make the mistake of equating “the separation of church and state” with the separation of religion from politics. In a pluralistic democracy, he fully understood that religion and politics will mix, must mix, and should mix though without merging church and state.³⁹ He believed that Christian principles needed to be applied to the affairs of government, as is true of every other area of life.⁴⁰ Thus, Maston advocated that Christians be engaged in public policy debates. Maston insisted that “one of the chief threats to political democracy is the poor citizenship of good people.”⁴¹ According to Maston, Christian citizenship requires that individuals actively participate in the political process from the local level to the national arena. Christians should be encouraged to fulfill their Christian vocational calling in the political realm.⁴²

³⁷ Editor, *Journal of Church and State*, 30 (Autumn 1988), 430.

³⁸ T.B. Maston, "Christianity and Religious Liberty," in *Messages from the Eighth Annual Christian Life Workshop: Proceedings of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission* (Fort Worth: Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1964), 116-124.

³⁹ Dunn, "The Christian and the State," 22.

⁴⁰ Maston, *Christianity and World Issues*, 223.

⁴¹ Dunn, "The Christian and the State," 22-27.

⁴² Julian Bridges, "Citizenship," in *An Approach to Christian Ethics*, ed. William Pinson (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 147-149.

For over four decades, Maston addressed various church-state issues in his writings and through his work with the Texas Christian Life Commission. Like many of his fellow Southern Baptists, Maston regularly identified and opposed instances of misguided government favoritism toward religion such as government sponsored prayer, compulsory Bible readings in the classroom, tuition tax credits, and the appointment of a United States ambassador to the Vatican.⁴³ Maston also frequently addressed the controversial subject of churches and taxation. In his view, the acceptance of gifts and loans from the government weakened the wall of separation and hence was a threat to religious liberty.⁴⁴ Going beyond the generally accepted separationist views of his Baptist colleagues, Maston asserted that “churches should voluntarily make a contribution for fire and police protection.”⁴⁵ He argued that only the property of local churches used for worship and educational purposes should be tax exempt. Revenue producing property owned by churches, benevolent institutions, seminaries, colleges, and other denominational agencies should be taxed, according to Maston. “Let church-related institutions be more concerned with what is fair and right than they are with what will be most advantageous to them.”⁴⁶ When it came to church-state issues and a defense of religious liberty, Maston continued the historic Baptist tradition of his predecessors like E. Y. Mullins, G. W. Truett and others before them.

The Issue of Racial Equality

As previously mentioned, recent analysts like John Lee Eighmy have said that the racial attitudes of Southern Baptists (and other Southerners) were "culturally captive."

⁴³ Maston, “Christianity and Religious Liberty,” 116-124.

⁴⁴ Dunn, “The Christian and the State,” 29.

⁴⁵ T.B. Maston, “Taxation Analyzed,” *Baptist Standard* (28 May 1975), 19.

⁴⁶ Maston, *The Conscience of a Christian*, 95-97.

Southern Baptists not only defended the status quo of a Jim Crow South, they promoted it. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, Southern Baptists, as well as other Christian groups in the South, continued to believe in white superiority and considered segregation to be the accepted, i.e., biblical way of life. A minority of progressive Southern Baptists, however, pushed for racial equality.

T.B. Maston was one such progressive. Nearly thirty years before the heroic activity of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955-1956, Maston was addressing race relations in his writings and in the classroom. By 1946, Maston had established himself as the leading advocate for racial justice among Texas Baptists. For three decades, Maston served as the conscience of a denomination whose roots were neck-deep in the culture of the segregated South.⁴⁷

Maston's first call for racial equality came in the form of a pamphlet entitled "Racial Revelations," which was published in 1927 by the Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention.⁴⁸ This pamphlet was followed by a series of Sunday School and Training Union lessons on race throughout the 1930s, one of which was entitled "The Christian Attitude toward Other Races."⁴⁹ In 1938, Maston designed and taught an ethics course at Southwestern Seminary called "Social Problems in the South" which concentrated largely on race. During the middle of World War II, Maston taught "The Church and the Race Problem." For this course, he took his class of young seminarians on field trips through black neighborhoods in Fort Worth. They studied first hand specific aspects of Fort Worth's racial problems such as the disparities between the

⁴⁷ Farley, "Advocate for Living God's Word," 31-32.

⁴⁸ W.T. Moore, *His Heart is Black* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1978), 61.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 51. Maston wrote dozens of articles for state convention newspapers on race and other social concerns during the 1930s and 1940s.

white and black public schools. Maston also regularly invited prominent African-American community leaders to lecture his classes on various issues pertaining to race.⁵⁰

Maston believed that in order for Southern Baptists to speak effectively to contemporary society, they must first confront the “race issue” which he felt was America’s most pressing social concern.⁵¹ Out of his desire to change the heart and minds of Southern Baptists, Maston published his first book on race in 1946. “*Of One:*” *A Study of Christian Principles and Race Relations* was a clarion call for racial equality based on the biblical principles that “God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34) and the example of Jesus’ acceptance of the Samaritans who were typically considered to be racially inferior by the Jewish religious leaders of his day.⁵²

In this groundbreaking book, Maston set out Christian principles that were applicable to contemporary race relations. He asserted that spiritual equality involved social equality. Because race was a moral issue, Maston contended that the moral forces of society (i.e. churches) should take the lead in its solution. He wrote, “It is the church’s business to be in the vanguard of the moral forces of society. It will be a tragedy of tragedies for the churches of Christ to surrender their moral leadership to some social agency, political party, or labor organization.”⁵³

According to one historian, the book “*Of One*” was “disagreed with by many and ignored by many more.” In a letter to Maston, a fellow Southern Baptist wrote that the book “is not Christian or American!...and if that is what you teach in the Seminary, and

⁵⁰ Jase Jones, "To Race Relations," in *An Approach to Christian Ethics: The Life, Contributions, and Thought of T.B. Maston*, ed. William Pinson (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 62-63.

⁵¹ T.B. Maston, “Baptists, Social Christianity, and American Culture,” *Review and Expositor*, 61 (Winter 1964), 521-531. See T.B. Maston, “Biblical Teachings and Race Relations,” *Review and Expositor*, 56 (July 1959), 233-242

⁵² Storey, 119-121.

⁵³ T.B. Maston, “*Of One*” *A Study of Christian Principles and Race Relations* (Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1946), 8-9.

elsewhere, you should not be allowed to teach, or instruct. I never want one of my children to become indoctrinated with such nonsense!"⁵⁴ This letter was mild compared to the hundreds of pieces of hate mail that Maston received later in his career. However, "*Of One*" did have a positive impact on some Southern Baptists, particularly women who were involved in some of the progressive ministries of the Woman's Missionary Union.⁵⁵

Unlike many Southern Baptist progressives, T.B. Maston worked to cure long-standing social ills, particularly racism, through his involvement with various civil rights organizations. As early as the mid 1940s Maston was an active member in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the National Urban League, and the Southern Regional Council. Maston was not merely a dues-paying member but actually served on the Executive Board of Forth Worth's branch of the Urban League for several years.⁵⁶ Maston understood that individual cooperation with such organizations was not enough to affect social change. Group effort was needed. So in 1946, Maston made a public plea for Southern Baptist pastors and lay persons to join these interracial civil rights organizations to help curb racial prejudice and to promote social equality.⁵⁷

Maston's activism made him a target for bitter verbal abuse from prominent fundamentalists.⁵⁸ The hate mail continued to arrive and Maston was dubbed a "nigger lover" and a "communist" by many of his fellow Southern Baptists.⁵⁹ Despite the

⁵⁴ Storey, *Texas Baptist Leadership*, 120-121.

⁵⁵ Moore, *His Heart is Black*, 54.

⁵⁶ Newnan, *Getting Right With God*, 55-56. Henlee Barnette, professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville was another well-known ethicist working to change Southern Baptist views on segregation and civil rights. Barnette wrote extensively on the subject of race and marched with Martin Luther King Jr.

⁵⁷ Storey, *Texas Baptist Leadership*, 134-135.

⁵⁸ Joe Edward Barnhart, *The Southern Baptist Holy War* (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1986), 73.

⁵⁹ Pinson, "The Life and Contributions of T.B. Maston," 17.

disparaging criticism, Maston's work and efforts helped lead the developing moderate leadership of the Southern Baptist Convention to push through a resolution in 1954 that affirmed the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of the United States Supreme Court—striking down the doctrine of “separate but equal”—as being consistent with both constitutional and Christian principles.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, this progressive resolution did not translate into changed behavior among the millions of Southern Baptists residing deep in the Baptist Southland.⁶¹

Five years after the landmark *Brown* decision, Maston authored two more books on race: *The Bible and Race* and *Segregation and Desegregation*. In both books, Maston set forth what he believed to be a biblical mandate for breaking down walls of racial division in the society and the church.⁶² Read widely by thousands of Southern Baptists and carefully studied by groups like the Woman's Missionary Union, these books offered calm advice for Southern Baptists struggling with racial issues in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁶³

In the *Bible and Race*, Maston challenged segregationists on biblical grounds, debunking popular biblical misinterpretations used to justify slavery and revived to justify segregation (e.g., the story of Noah and Ham). While taking on the segregationists claims, Maston also appealed to the evangelistic impulse of Baptists. He stressed that the gospel must be shared with all people regardless of race and that segregation stood in the way of achieving that goal.⁶⁴ Although his progressive views on race were not

⁶⁰ Alan Scot Willis, *All According to God's Plan: Southern Baptist Missions and Race, 1945-1970* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2005), 161.

⁶¹ Stricklin, *A Genealogy of Dissent*, 50-51.

⁶² Bill J. Leonard, *Baptists in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 192.

⁶³ Storey, *Texas Baptist Leadership*, 132-133.

⁶⁴ Farley, “Advocate for Living God's Word,” 31.

acceptable to many Southern Baptists captive to the Jim Crow status quo, Maston's strong biblical basis helped to silence his critics.⁶⁵ In his careful examination of biblical teachings on human relations, Maston provided seven principles that he urged Southern Baptists to adopt:

1. All nations of men are a single family and have a common origin.
2. Man was created in the image of God and therefore every human is of infinite worth.
3. Jesus Christ died for redemption of every man regardless of race or nationality.
4. Believers of all races are in the family of God, brothers and sisters together.
5. The Christian religion either abolishes or transcends human barriers which tend to set group against group.
6. The power of the gospel is such as to enable Christians to overcome racial prejudice.
7. God is no respecter of persons.⁶⁶

The Issue of Interracial Marriage

The greatest fear in the South and among Southern Baptists concerning integration and “social equality” was the “amalgamation of the races.” The possibility of interracial marriage horrified many Southern Baptists who still clung to a belief in the purity of the white race. Segregationists resorted to their typical method of proof-texting the Bible to oppose interracial marriage. Unfortunately, Southern Baptist progressives wrote little about interracial marriage. Instead, they looked to T.B. Maston to address such a difficult subject. According to Foy Valentine, executive director of the SBC’s Christian Life Commission, Maston was “the best man in the country to do it.”⁶⁷

In many editorials published in state convention newspapers, most notably *The Baptist Standard*, Maston adamantly argued that prohibitions regarding intermarriage in

⁶⁵ Walker L. Knight, cited in *Southern Baptists Observed: Multiple Perspectives on a Changing Denomination*, ed. Nancy Ammerman (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993), 171.

⁶⁶ Norman Alexander Yancey, “Southern Baptists and Social Action: A Historical Interpretation of the Christian Life Commission and its Denominational Role,” (Ph.D. diss., George Washington University, 1973), 233-234.

⁶⁷ Willis, *All According to God’s Plan*, 25-30.

the Old Testament could not be used to support arguments against contemporary interracial marriage. He emphasized that the Bible did not contain a direct, authoritative word for or against interracial marriages. Thus, Southern Baptists who sought “divine approval” for their dogmatic opposition to interracial marriage had misinterpreted Scripture.⁶⁸ Maston once remarked that “if people were not so prejudiced, and hence could think straight they would realize how unfounded are most of the fears regarding intermarriage.”⁶⁹

The Attitude of Churches Toward Integration

Like other major denominations, the Southern Baptist Convention voiced support for the landmark 1954 Brown decision and passed numerous resolutions regarding race relations during the 1950s and 1960s. However, many local congregations kept their silence on this divisive issue. For racial progressives like Maston, silence was unacceptable. Maston stated that “the church cannot perform God’s prophetic function in a community unless the prophetic voice is in the pulpit and the prophetic spirit is in the pew.” In his view, Southern Baptists who remained silent on the issue of race and integration lost the ability to speak prophetically to society. Maston placed the responsibility for ethical race relations squarely on the shoulders of the church.⁷⁰

If the church will not dare to be the church in the fullest possible sense, if it will not take seriously the Christian ethic, applying its principles to race and other areas of life, then it will lose its own soul. Without the Christian ethic the Christian church becomes an empty shell, a corpse that has lost the power to give life because the life principle no longer resides in it.⁷¹

⁶⁸ T.B. Maston, “Interracial Marriage,” *The Baptist Standard*, 14 June 1969, 19.

⁶⁹ Willis, *All According to God’s Plan*, 25-30.

⁷⁰ Willis, *All According to God’s Plan*, 25-30.

⁷¹ Maston, *Christianity and World Issues*, 94-95.

Maston understood that it was difficult for many Southern Baptists to apply biblical principles regarding race. Many Southern Baptists lived in areas plagued by severe racial tension where there was immense pressure to conform to the norms of white society. Nonetheless, Maston firmly believed that racial prejudices “could be overcome through the power of God.” In one editorial, Maston encouraged young Baptist women to “ask our heavenly Father to give us the wisdom to know what we should do and the faith and courage to do it and to do it in the right spirit.”⁷²

Maston declared that “in a time of crisis or potential crisis pastors should be willing to stand up and be counted.”⁷³ He encouraged Southern Baptists to open up their local association and state convention meetings to members of all Baptist churches regardless of race. According to Maston, “the more we open all our meetings to those of other racial groups the more we realize that we as well as they are blessed by our meeting together.”⁷⁴ Maston hoped that Southern Baptists would take giant steps forward in their attitudes toward and relations with African-American Baptists. He promoted fellowship between and white and black pastors, white and black youth groups, and white and black women’s organizations. He argued that Southern Baptist congregations must revise their membership policies so to have an open-door invitation towards all races. He often asked, “How can any church claim to be ‘the church of God,’ the church where Christ is head, if it does not open its doors for worship to all and its membership to all men and women of life, faith, and order.”⁷⁵ Integration was the goal and Maston knew such a lofty goal

⁷² Willis, *All According to God’s Plan*, 25-30.

⁷³ T.B. Maston, “The Role of a Pastor in a Community Facing Desegregation,” *The Baptist Standard*, 19 July 1961, 8.

⁷⁴ T.B. Maston, “The Association and Race Issue,” *The Baptist Standard*, 24 September 1969, 19.

⁷⁵ Maston, *The Conscience of a Christian*, 117-118. See T.B. Maston, “Churches and Race Relations,” *The Baptist Standard*, 7 August 1968, 8.

could never be fully realized until blacks were accepted into the life of the church on the same basis as white members.

The Influence of T.B. Maston Upon Southern Baptist Leaders and Institutions

Following World War II, a small number of Southern Baptist leaders, labeled the “progressive elite” by Andrew Manis, began to exert a real and effective influence on Southern Baptists. Members of the “progressive elite” challenged the racial and social attitudes of many in the Baptist Southland. These Southern Baptist progressives played a significant role in challenging Baptist acceptance of Southern cultural mores.⁷⁶

As the leading ethicist in Southern Baptist life, Maston was clearly part of the “progressive elite.” These progressive leaders could be found in virtually every southern state. Numerous prominent progressive leaders made their home in Texas, including A.C. Miller, Foy Valentine, Jimmy Allen, James Dunn, and of course T.B. Maston. Some progressives like Blake Smith, pastor of University Baptist Church in Austin, Texas were theologically liberal, but Maston and others were committed to traditional conservative theology.

The influence of the “progressive elite” was most strongly felt through the work of the Christian Life Commissions of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT).⁷⁷ Through her reports, resolutions, initiatives, and countless pamphlets and other publications, the Christian Life Commissions attempted to change the hearts and minds of Southern Baptists on racial injustice and a host of other social issues. The Christian Life Commissions represented a lighthouse for

⁷⁶ Newman, *All According to God's Plan*, 65-70.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

Southern Baptists on the issue of race relations and served as the apex of Southern Baptist expression in Christian ethics.⁷⁸

T. B. Maston played an important role in the formation of the Christian Life Commissions of both the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Texas. He has been credited as the person most directly responsible for the founding of the Christian Life Commission of Texas and in making Texas Baptists aware of the social application of the gospel.⁷⁹

In 1949, a three-man committee consisting of Maston, A.C. Miller, and William R. White (President of Baylor University) met to study ways in which Texas Baptists could most effectively confront social problems such as race relations, gambling, communism, and persistent threats of war. At the 1949 annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the three men issued a report which courageously declared “that an outstanding weakness of organized Christianity has been and is its failure to apply consistently the moral ideals and principles of the Christian gospel to all of life.”⁸⁰

Out of this trio evolved the Committee of Seven with Maston serving as chairman. The following year, this committee recommended to the BGCT the establishment of an agency designed to give denominational attention to social Christianity. Although the purpose of this new agency was to address social issues, Maston purposefully avoided including the word *social* in its name. The overriding reason for this, according to Maston, “was the prejudice of many Southern Baptists toward the so-called ‘social gospel.’” Prominent Texas Baptists such as David Gardner, editor of the influential

⁷⁸ Maston, “Baptists, Social Christianity, and American Culture,” 529-530.

⁷⁹ David Stricklin, “An Interpretive History of the Christian Life Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, 1950-1977” (Ph.D. diss., Baylor University, 1981), 72.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 1-10.

Baptist Standard and W.A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist Dallas, were on record as strong opponents of the Social Service Commission of the SBC and essentially any form of social activism. In their view, the one and only mission of the church was to evangelize the masses. As a result, Maston's Committee of Seven chose to name the new agency the Christian Life Commission.⁸¹

Without a doubt, T.B. Maston made an indelible imprint on the Texas Christian Life Commission. More than any other individual, Maston was instrumental in defining the character of the commission. He was a member of the original three-man committee, chairman of the Committee of Seven, and the commission's longest serving board member.⁸² During this time, he helped to shape the policies of the Texas CLC toward responsible scholarship in developing a series of widely distributed pamphlets that guided Texas Baptists in applying Christianity to virtually every aspect of life. An examination of the history of the Texas Christian Life Commission demonstrates that the commission adopted Maston's approach to biblical ethics. Like Maston, the Texas CLC consistently advocated moderation and gradualism when seeking to affect social change. It is evident that Maston's vision of social Christianity as well as his methodology for approaching social concerns found institutional expression in the Texas CLC.⁸³

Both the Christian Life Commission of the SBC and Texas have been disproportionately dependent upon persons trained by Maston. In the Christian Life Commission's (SBC) first thirty years of existence, it had thirty professional Baptist ethicists serve as full-time employees. Of the thirty, seventeen were heavily influenced

⁸¹ Storey, *Texas Baptist Leadership*, 135-138.

⁸² Stricklin, "An Interpretive History," 5-12. Maston served on the board of the Texas CLC for a total of sixteen years; 1951-1955, 1957-1962, 1964-1966, and 1976-1977.

⁸³ *Ibid*, 265-268.

by the thought of Maston. Twelve of these ethicists studied with him and the other five studied with his students, C.W. Scudder and William Pinson. In fact, Maston's first doctoral student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary was Foy Valentine who later served as the Executive Secretary of the SBC's Christian Life Commission for twenty-seven years (1960-1987).⁸⁴

In Texas, three of the first four directors of the Christian Life Commission were ethicists who received their doctoral degrees at Southwestern Seminary under the tutelage of T.B. Maston: Foy Valentine (1953-1960), Jimmy Allen (1960-1968), and James Dunn (1968-1980). Of the three Maston-trained directors, two left the Texas Christian Life Commission to run other national organizations funded by the Southern Baptist Convention that dealt exclusively with ethics and religious liberty issues. Valentine left the Texas CLC in 1960 to lead the SBC's Christian Life Commission and Dunn left in 1980 to run the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, a position he held for twenty years. Like Dunn and Valentine, Jimmy Allen left the Texas CLC and moved on to an influential denominational position. Allen served as President of both the Baptist General Convention of Texas (1970-1971) and the Southern Baptist Convention (1978-1979). In 1980, he became President of the Radio and Television Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.⁸⁵

During his four-decade long teaching career at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, T.B. Maston taught around 10,000 seminarians. Several thousand of Maston's students took three or more of his courses.⁸⁶ Many of his students served in high-ranking

⁸⁴ James Dunn, "Through Graduates," in *An Approach to Christian Ethics: The Life, Contributions, and Thought of T.B. Maston*, ed. William Pinson Jr. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 91-96.

⁸⁵ Stricklin, "An Interpretive History," 265-268.

⁸⁶ Don McGregor, "The Teacher," *Baptist Standard*, 22 May 1963, 9-10.

denominational roles. During the years 1977-1978, three of the top elected officials to the Southern Baptist Convention—Jimmy Allen, Olan Runnels, and Lee Porter—were former students of Maston. Also during this period, four of the six presidents of SBC seminaries were former students: William Pinson, Russell Dilday, Milton Ferguson, and Randall Lolley. Many of Maston’s students became professors and taught in virtually every field of study at the six Southern Baptist seminaries.⁸⁷

Forty-nine doctoral students at Southwestern Seminary received their Th.D. in Christian Ethics under T.B. Maston.⁸⁸ Almost all of Maston’s doctoral graduates have served as pastors, denominational workers, professors, or administrators in higher education. This influential list of ethicists includes forty-seven pastors, twenty-one denominational executives, fifteen seminary professors, fifteen college professors, thirteen missionaries, four government officials, and two military chaplains. High ranking denominational executives among Maston’s doctoral graduates include two seminary presidents, two college presidents, four presidents of state Baptist conventions, two-vice presidents, and one president of the Southern Baptist Convention. All but two of Maston’s doctoral graduates remained active Southern Baptists.⁸⁹ The impact Maston made on the Southern Baptist Convention and on the spiritual lives of young ministers and others preparing for church-related vocations was immeasurable.

In addition to teaching, T.B. Maston shaped Christian ethics and social concern among Southern Baptists by his writing. With twenty-seven published books, ten of

⁸⁷ Randall Lolley, “To Seminary Education,” in *An Approach to Christian Ethics: The Life, Contributions, and Thought of T.B. Maston*, ed. William Pinson Jr. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 43-46.

⁸⁸ Dunn, “Through Graduates,” 92-93. Of the 49 doctoral graduates, 48 were men. Marguerite Woodruff was Maston's lone female doctoral graduate. Woodruff was the first woman to earn a doctorate in a Baptist theological institution. She later chaired the sociology department at Mercer University.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

which were written after his retirement in 1963, Maston's writing ministry was extraordinarily prolific and fruitful. At least five of his books have been translated into other languages including Arabic, Chinese, German, Indonesian, Korean, Portuguese, and Spanish.⁹⁰

Maston chose not to simply write for other academics. His target audience was the layperson. Although he could have written for a much larger Christian audience, Maston chose to aim most of his published works at Southern Baptists in order to effect social change. Early in his ministry, Maston recognized the need for written materials which Southern Baptist churches and their members could use to consider and to confront the prevailing social issues of the day. He understood the power of the pen. While Maston could teach 100 students in a classroom, he could get his message across to well over 100,000 Southern Baptists with a one-page article published in the state Baptist newspapers.⁹¹ Utilizing the Baptist state newspapers, Maston wrote regular columns and articles to explain to the laity in clear terms the challenges of the Gospel. He also exerted influence by writing over 275 publications for the Baptist Sunday School Board. Maston's Sunday School lessons were read and studied by tens of thousands of Southern Baptist men, women, and children. The Southern Baptist faithful regularly used literature written by T.B. Maston during Sunday night Training Union Bible studies and on Wednesday nights at Woman's Missionary Union meetings.⁹² The impact of these and Maston's other books across more than five decades was, without question, significant.

⁹⁰ Keith Wills, "Through Writing," in *An Approach to Christian Ethics: The Life, Contributions, and Thought of T.B. Maston*, ed. William Pinson Jr. (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 80.

⁹¹ Ibid, 81-83.

⁹² Ibid, 82-84. See also Don McGregor, "T.B. Maston's Unique Contribution," *Baptist Standard*, 20 April 1966, 8.

Conclusion

Bill Moyers, former aide to President Lyndon B. Johnson and internationally known journalist who studied with T.B. Maston once said, “When I’m asked to define Christian ethics, my best answer is Tom Maston. What the Old Testament prophets taught, he lived. He showed us that the theatre of Christian ethics is not the pulpit, the classroom or the counselor’s corner, but all of life.”⁹³ William Pinson, another former Maston student, added “Frequently, he served as a conscience for Southern Baptists troubling us regarding our racism, materialism, and provincialism.”⁹⁴

T.B. Maston was clearly a pioneering progressive on selected social issues for Southern Baptists. As early as 1927, Maston challenged the racial orthodoxy of the South. Based on the biblical premise that “God is no respecter of persons,” Maston urged Southern Baptists to accept the gospel truth that all races are equal. Consequently, he contended that spiritual equality involves social equality and churches should take the lead in integrating themselves and opposing racial discrimination.

As a voice for freedom of conscience and religious liberty, Maston continued the Southern Baptist emphasis on the principle of separation of church and state. His focus on religious liberty helped to keep Southern Baptists thinking about what their cherished principle meant. For example, he argued for a progressive application of church-state separation in his opposition toward tuition tax credits for students of private schools.

The impact of T.B. Maston upon Southern Baptist life is best seen in his influence upon subsequent Southern Baptist leaders and institutions. T.B. Maston was an integral player in the formation of the Christian Life Commissions of both the Southern Baptist

⁹³ Dunn, *The Christian and the State*, 29.

⁹⁴ Pinson, *Texas Baptist Contributions to Ethics*, 18.

Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Texas. In the 1960s and 1970s, when moderates dominated Southern Baptist life, the Christian Life Commission of the SBC followed in the footsteps of Maston's progressive social ethic. Foy Valentine, the leader of the SBC CLC, was deeply influenced to his former professor, T.B. Maston. From its inception, the Texas CLC has articulated some progressive social views that were first voiced by T.B. Maston. James Dunn, who led the Texas CLC from 1968-1980 and who then went on to promote religious liberty for the Baptist Joint Committee in the 1980s has acknowledged his indebtedness to the teachings of T.B. Maston.⁹⁵ When students of Southern Baptist history analyze leading figures of the 1970s and 1980s, the names of Maston's students are everywhere to be found. In addition to Foy Valentine and James Dunn, the list includes, but is not limited to, Jimmy Allen, Randall Lolley, and William Pinson.⁹⁶

In 1979, then president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, William Pinson said "few men have been as widely known or as deeply loved as T.B. Maston. Few have blended ethics and evangelism, scholarship and pietism, a conservative theological outlook and a progressive social concern as well as he."⁹⁷ At the dawn of the 21st century, however, Pinson's words are likely no longer true. Many, and perhaps most, Baptists in the South have forgotten the contributions and impact of T.B. Maston upon

⁹⁵ Oral Memoirs of James Milton Dunn, Waco, 1974, Baylor University Institute of Oral History, 1-5.

⁹⁶ Dunn, "Through Graduates," 94-95. Throughout his ministry, Jimmy Allen served in various roles: Executive Director of the Texas Christian Life Commission, Executive Director of the Radio and Television Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, President of the Southern Baptist Convention, and the pastor of the First Baptist Church of San Antonio, Texas. Randall Lolley served as President of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary from 1974 to 1988. William Pinson served as the President of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (1977-1982) and as the Executive Director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas (1983-2000).

⁹⁷ Pinson, *Texas Baptist Contributions to Ethics*, 17-19. Maston protégé, Jimmy Allen, demonstrated what his teacher taught: a strong evangelistic ministry (500 baptized his first year) and a strong social ministry while the pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Texas. Joe Trull, interview by author, 27 April 2007, Waco, Texas.

Southern Baptist life in the 20th century. His progressive social ethic combined with a traditional evangelistic orthodoxy, is now seen as a position that is inherently contradictory. It is time once again for Baptists to review the contributions of T. B. Maston as they reflect upon the meaning of Baptist identity.