

1993 T. B. Maston Christian Ethics Award to A. Jase Jones

The Trustees of the T. B. Maston Scholarship Foundation Present the T. B. Maston Christian Ethics Award to Dr. A. Jase Jones

True believer in Dr. T. B. Maston's lifelong conviction that "faith without works is dead" (*James 2:20*);

Loyal supporter of the cause of Christian ethics for which Dr. Maston gave his life;

Faithful steward of Dr. Maston's teachings, both by precept and example;

Patient workman in the cause of applied Christianity on which Dr. Maston's lifelong energies were focused; and

Consistent practitioner of Dr. Maston's special biblical watchword, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." (*1 John 2:6*)

Dallas, Texas

November 4, 1993

Response by A. Jase Jones

I begin this evening by expressing appreciation to many people who have made and are making the T. B. Maston Scholarship Foundation a living reality. This has been a cooperative endeavor from the first, with a great number having participated.

First, there is Vivian, who has been my companion for fifty-five years and who, besides having made her own distinctive contribution to the betterment of this world, has been totally supportive of the Maston Foundation, both morally and financially, and of my efforts on its behalf.

Then, there is Weston Ware, who heeded God's call to assume the chairmanship of trustees of the Maston Foundation, and is providing strong and creative leadership in this position. He has done a remarkable job in making this evening such a beautiful occasion.

The Maston Foundation has been blessed by having trustees of high character and extraordinary ability. To all of them I express my deep appreciation. Their names are on the Foundation's new brochure, except for two of the original trustees no longer serving, Charlotte Ware and Carolyn Strickland. The Foundation is deeply indebted to these two for their unfailing presence at board meetings and their active and knowledgeable participation in all deliberations and decisions.

I thank the Trustees for naming me as a recipient of the Maston Christian Ethics Award, which they did, by the way, at a meeting I was unable to attend.

Two who served with me as co-chairmen of the original Development Committee are, first, Bob Adams, until he returned to the mission field, and Keith Wills, who succeeded him. These two spent a great deal of time and effective effort on behalf of the Foundation.

There is a special feeling of gratitude toward three trustees who served with me on the Executive Committee for a number of years, Browning Ware, Hal Haralson, and Marvin Griffin. They always responded positively to any announced committee meetings and spent countless hours in doing the work of the Maston Foundation.

I read my remarks tonight for the simple reason that for me, as for many preachers, the scent of a rabbit is almost irresistible, and a written text helps to keep me on the main trail. That statement opens the door for me to tell of an incident that occurred in the summer session at Southwestern Seminary in 1946. I was in Dr. Walter T. Conner's class in Johannine Theology, which met in a classroom on the ground floor in the northwest corner of Cowden Hall. Dr. W. W. Barnes was teaching a church history class across the hall. Many of you will remember that he had a reputation, deserved or not, for chasing rabbits in his lectures.

These classes met at 7:00 A.M., which was an unearthly hour for some people, I suppose. For me, however, who had recently returned from World War II, and with memories still fresh in my mind of dodging enemy fire during the Battle of the Bulge in Luxembourg, nothing in civilian life could be anything other than heavenly.

In this class, early one morning, we heard the sound of dogs barking in the distance. Soon we saw one dog being chased by several dogs, all barking loudly and frantically. As they got close to Cowden Hall, the "chasee" saw an open door and bolted down the steps and into the hallway between the two classrooms. The other dogs followed him down the hall, yelping ferociously. Finally, when the noise had died away, Dr. Conner said, in his usual solemn and deliberate manner, "Must have been chasing one of Dr. Barnes' rabbits."

I want to give here an account of some of the important events in the life of the Maston Foundation. The Foundation's beginning can be traced to a night just before Christmas of 1975, when Vivian and I stopped for a short visit with Dr. and Mrs. Maston and Tom Mc. On that occasion, I asked Dr. Maston if anyone was writing the story of his life and work, and he replied that he had given permission to Bill Pinson to do that. He went on to say that a major difficulty in getting such books published was that they were not commercially profitable and must be subsidized. I told him that I felt sure that I could obtain the money and asked if he would mind my discussing the book with Dr. Pinson. With his permission, I was soon in contact with Bill, and it was agreed that he would begin working on the book and arranging with Broadman Press for its publication, and that I would proceed to arrange for the money.

We are indebted solely to Dr. Pinson for drawing up the structure of the book (to be entitled *An Approach to Christian Ethics: The Life, Contribution and Thought of T. B. Maston*), enlisting the services of 23 people to write its chapters, and working out the publication arrangements with Broadman Press. The book was completed in 1978 and the manuscript placed in Broadman's hands. We (Pinson and I) committed ourselves to being responsible to provide Broadman Press with the sum of \$7,000.00 to help defray the costs of the book, and Broadman, in turn, agreed to give us 4,000 copies of the book.

Mr. Frank Head, a Houston businessman and my brother-in-law, loaned us \$7,500.00 (\$500 went to Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary to pay for secretarial services needed in connection with the book's production) through one of his banks, Nixon State Bank of Nixon, Texas. Only because the law required it, he suggested that five people sign the note. The signatories were Browning Ware, Jimmy Allen, Raymond Hankamer, Jase Jones, Bill Pinson, and Orba Lee Malone. Far more than enough money to pay off the loan soon came in to enable us to pay off the note before its due date, and, as well, to pay off a sizeable amount of miscellaneous "start-up" costs. We have gone on from there to build up an investment corpus of approximately \$200,000.00, and to pay out many thousands of dollars in student scholarships and in sabbatical supplements to professors of Christian Ethics at Southwestern and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminaries.

In February, 1979, four people - Bill Pinson, Jimmy Allen, James Dunn, and Jase Jones - met for breakfast in the home of President and Mrs. Pinson of Golden Gate Baptist Seminary to make plans for the future of the Maston Fund. Two decisions came out of this meeting. One was

to have a luncheon honoring Dr. and Mrs. Maston in Houston's Shamrock Hotel in conjunction with the 1979 meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. The second decision was to launch an effort to obtain contributions to the T. B. Maston Scholarship Fund (later to be called T. B. Maston Scholarship Foundation) from Southwestern Seminary alumni, the earnings from which would be used to provide scholarships for students majoring in Christian ethics. The first public announcement of this effort was made at the Shamrock luncheon.

It is important for me to say here that everything done for and on behalf of the Maston Fund/Foundation was solely at the initiative of former students of Dr. Maston. Although Dr. Maston was keenly interested in the Fund and always with pleasure and gratitude received information from us about the Fund, he never made suggestions as to what should be done or pried into the Fund's affairs. He was content to leave such matters in the hands of his "boys."

Following the Shamrock luncheon, Bob Adams, Keith Wills, and I met upstairs in the bedroom of Dr. and Mrs. Maston's suite at the hotel and planned the initial fund-raising effort. The first step was to secure permission from Southwestern Seminary to use the seminary as our initial base of operations. I later met with Wayne Evans, John Earl Seelig, and Southwestern's comptroller. They readily gave permission for us to ask donors to the Fund to send their donations to the seminary, which deposited the gifts in a special Maston Fund account at the seminary.

A development committee was soon formed. This committee led the work of the Maston Fund until the Maston Foundation was established in 1986 and trustees were named.

The first Fund solicitation was mailed shortly thereafter (1979) to all seminary graduates through the 1963 class, the last year Dr. Maston taught at Southwestern. The response from former students all across the country was immediate and gratifying.

A principal goal, the establishment of a T. B. Maston Chair of Christian Ethics at Southwestern Seminary, is yet unreachd. An effort was made but was not successful. In a meeting I had with President Dilday, Lloyd Elder, and John Earl Seelig, ready approval of such a project was expressed, but the donor who was approached decided not to contribute to the establishment of such a chair.

A charter was secured from the State of Texas in 1986 in the name of the T. B. Maston Scholarship Foundation, and it became a not-for-profit corporation. This transition was accomplished with the skillful guidance of Attorney Hal Haralson, one of our own trustees and a former student of Dr. Maston and graduate of Southwestern Seminary.

My closing remarks center on the Mastons. First, let me tell of an incident that illustrates the warm and friendly way in which he related to his students. Seminary students at one time had an annual faculty take-off, when each faculty member would be caricatured on stage by a student. In 1948, I was selected to portray Dr. Maston. Some of the professors did not respond too well to this event, and I was not sure just how Dr. Maston would view my efforts. I had a Social Ethics class the day following the take-off, and I sat on the front row wondering just how Dr. Maston was going to act when he arrived. When he entered the room, he marched straight toward me (with me saying inside, "Oh, oh"), held out his briefcase to me and, with a twinkle in his eye, gestured toward the podium and said, "Get up there."

I call to your attention a part of one verse from *Philippians 2:5-11*, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." For almost thirty years, I have sought to plumb the depths of the phrase "the mind . . . which was also in Christ Jesus," and have come to describe that mind, that attitude with the word selflessness. Recently, in his Sunday School lesson commentary, Herschel Hobbs wrote, "According to my former professor W. Hersey Davis, the one English word that best translates the Greek word *agape* is *selflessness*." In my opinion, formed over the forty-five years that I knew Dr. Maston, he exhibited that characteristic, selflessness, as nearly

perfectly as is possible for any mortal. If he were here now to hear this, I can just hear his self-deprecating chuckle and a remark something like, "Oh, pshaw." But it is that spirit, along with his teachings and the example of his involvement in ethical causes, that this organization purposes to perpetuate.

You know, of course, that when we talk about Dr. Maston, we are also talking about Mrs. Maston. Dr. Maston never failed to give "Mommie" a huge share of the credit for all of his accomplishments. A few years ago, Mrs. Maston was named a Southwestern Seminary distinguished graduate. I am told that, while seated on the platform among the other designees, she said something to the effect that she should not be up there among those people who had done big things, that she had not done anything. But she has. Completely foregoing the use of her considerable spiritual and intellectual gifts in a separate Christian leadership career, she forged a beautiful life and character in her role of wife and mother, and in her unflagging service to her church, which perfectly exemplifies that characteristic of our Lord, *agape* love, selflessness, and provides now a model for us all. I submit to you tonight that the building of that kind of character is far nobler and more difficult, as well as being more significant as a leaven for Kingdom realization, than building buildings and organizations, as important and necessary as they are.

I know that all in this room tonight are of one mind in thanking our Heavenly Father for giving to us and the world Dr. and Mrs. T. B. Maston.

Jones gets Maston Award; Allen shares journey

(from the *Baptist Standard*, November 17, 1993)

When AIDS gripped Jimmy Allen's family, the former president of the Southern Baptist Convention saw his children and grandchildren rejected by a "dysfunctional family of faith."

But in walking through the valley of death's shadow, Allen said he learned from his family the importance of "loving past our differences" and clinging to God's abiding presence.

The long-time Baptist denominational executive shared "Echoes from the Valley of the Shadow: Reflections on the Church and AIDS" at a Christian ethics awards banquet sponsored by the T. B. Maston Foundation, Nov. 4, in Dallas.

A Jase Jones of Austin, former area director for the Interfaith Witness Department, Home Mission Board, was presented the biennial T. B. Maston Christian Ethics Award.

Jones was instrumental in creating the T. B. Maston Foundation to provide financial support for the study and application of Christian ethics and to honor the memory of Maston, who for more than 50 years taught Christian ethics at Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth.

Four graduate student in Christian ethics at Southwestern Seminary were awarded scholarships by the Foundation: Barbara Jean Bell, Rob Blackaby, Mark Elder, and Kevin S. Key.

Allen shared with the banquet audience his living nightmare that began eight years ago with a call from his son, Scott, in Colorado. Scott said his wife, Lydia, had contracted the AIDS virus from a tainted blood transfusion during her first pregnancy and had passed it on to their two sons, Bryan and Matthew.

Scott, who was not HIV-positive, described his family's situation to leaders of the Disciples of Christ church where he served on staff, and within a week he was fired.

"That church failed. It was not to be our last experience like that," said the elder Allen, currently pastor of Big Canoe Chapel in rural Georgia.

Devastated, Scott's family returned home to Texas where seven-month-old Bryan died. In the months that followed, the Allens approached the pastors of several churches, explained their situation, and asked if Matt could attend their Sunday School and worship services. They were turned away each time.

While some individual Christians offered tangible support to Lydia, Matt, and Scott, the institutional church failed to do so, Allen said.

"Risk-taking is difficult for individuals and virtually impossible for groups," he said.

Lydia Allen died in February, 1992. Scott now works as a consultant on an AIDS-related project at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School. He left the ministry, rejecting the church that rejected his family.

People with AIDS suffer the same isolation that lepers endured in biblical days, Allen said. But modern-day disciples of Jesus largely have failed to follow their Lord's example of ministering to society's untouchable members.

Part of the church's dilemma stems from the link between AIDS and homosexuality. That dilemma became personal for Allen with the realization that another son, Skip, was gay and with the news Skip was also HIV-positive.

"Because I take the Bible seriously as the authority for life, there is no way I can discover to justify acting out homosexual behavior," Allen said.

At the same time, he described the struggle faced by serious Christians to reconcile biblical prohibitions regarding homosexual acts with abiding principles of God's loving mercy for people with those desires.

Choked with emotion, he described the pain felt by families of homosexuals, caught between the angry voices of preachers proclaiming AIDS as God's judgment upon sodomites and the strident voices of gays seeking to justify their own behavior.

"Suffocating beneath the load of hostile, angry encounters, suffering quietly in anguish and pain are the parents and children of faith who are rejected and blamed because sons or daughters are having to cope with sexual desires for their own gender," Allen said.

Skip's struggle with his sexuality led him to substance abuse and suicide attempts, but through a 12-step recovery program he found wholeness.

Describing the agony of a father and son trying unsuccessfully to reach toward each other across a chasm of differences, Allen said of his relationship with Skip, "Our differences of opinion were deep and continue to be so, but we love each other through them. I respect him. I love him. He's carving out a meaningful life in helping others. He loves God. And he's HIV-positive."

The challenge to individual Christians and to churches is to exercise the grace of God in human relationships, realizing that a person's behavior at a given time may have little to do with who he really is, Allen said.

"Judgmentalism is deadly to human relationships," he said. "But love goes past that to the heart of the matter. Persons are more than the sum of their parts. We move beyond theology to love."

Even in the midst of the dark valley, the Good Shepherd leads His flock toward refreshing green pastures, Allen testified. In his own walk, Allen said, encouragement has come through the

support of good friends, a realization that the church's response to people with AIDS has drastically improved in the last few years, and mystical awareness of God's presence.

Christians need to pray for a cure to AIDS, minister to people with AIDS and their families, and work for prevention of the disease, he said.

"A Christian strategy is essential in this prevention effort. If it's not to be condoms as a stop-gap while ethical ideals of persuasion to abstinence and away from promiscuous behavior take precedence, we will have to answer to God for what we have done. We must come up with something better."