

= George Washington Truett =

George Washington Truett , also known as George W. Truett (May 6 , 1867 ? July 7 , 1944) , was an American clergyman who was the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas , Texas , from 1897 until 1944 , and the president of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1927 to 1929 . He was one of the " most famous Southern Baptist " preachers and writers of his era .

= = Early life and education = =

Truett was born on a farm in Hayesville in Clay County in far western North Carolina as the seventh child of Charles L. Truett and the former Mary R. Kimsey . He entered school at Hayesville Academy in 1875 and graduated in 1885 . He taught in a Towns County , Georgia schoolhouse and , in 1887 , founded the Hiawassee Academy in that same county , with the intention of making enough money to pay for law school . In 1889 , however , he left his position with the Academy to move with his parents to Whitewright , Texas , where he joined the Whitewright Baptist Church , and attended Grayson College . He was ordained to the Baptist ministry at the Whitewright church in 1890 . He preached his first sermon at the First Baptist Church in nearby Sherman , Texas .

= = = Baylor University = = =

In 1891 , Truett was hired by the president of Baylor University in Waco , Texas , to serve as its financial secretary . Enterprising and energetic , Truett raised \$ 92 @ , @ 000 in less than two years and completely wiped out the school 's indebtedness . After his stint as the school 's financial secretary , Truett enrolled as a freshman at Baylor in 1893 . From 1893 to 1897 he studied at Baylor and served as a student @ - @ pastor of the East Waco Baptist Church to pay for his tuition . He graduated in June 1897 with an A.B. degree . Truett would later serve as a Baylor trustee from 1934 to 1939 .

= = Pastoral career = =

Truett accepted the position of pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas in September 1897 , a position he would hold until his death . During his 47 @ - @ year pastorate , membership increased from 715 to 7 @ , @ 804 ; a total of 19 @ , @ 531 new members were received , and total contributions were \$ 6 @ , @ 027 @ , @ 741 @ . @ 52 . The church was rebuilt three times during his tenure there due to the expanding congregation .

Truett was the president of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1927 to 1929 and of the Baptist World Alliance from 1934 to 1939 . During World War I he was appointed by President Woodrow Wilson as one of 20 preachers sent by the president for a six @ - @ month tour to preach to the Allied forces .

One of Truett 's most famous sermons , " Baptists and Religious Liberty " , was delivered on the steps of the Capitol in Washington , D.C. , on May 16 , 1920 . In this sermon he claimed that the United States was founded on the principles of religious freedom and separation of church and state .

Over the course of his pastoral career , he published ten volumes of sermons , two volumes of addresses , and two volumes of Christmas messages .

Truett worried that cowboys who worked the cattle drives were too isolated from family , church and society . He made annual trips through the Davis Mountains of West Texas for thirty @ - @ seven years , traveling with cattle drives there and preaching .

= = Personal life and death = =

Truett married fellow Baylor student Josephine Jenkins on June 28 , 1894 , with whom he had three children , all daughters . He died in Dallas on July 7 , 1944 , and was survived by his wife , who

would die twelve years later . Both are interred at Sparkman @-@ Hillcrest Memorial Park Cemetery in Dallas .

= = Legacy = =

In 1957 Truett was portrayed by Victor Jory in the episode " Lone Star Preacher " of the syndicated television series , Crossroads . The actress Barbara Eiler was cast as Truett 's wife , Jo , who died eleven months before the episode aired .

An authorized biography of Truett written by James Powhatan was published in 1939 by Macmillan .

= = = Namesakes = = =

The seminary at Baylor University , George W. Truett Theological Seminary

Truett @-@ McConnell College (named for both Truett and Truett 's cousin , Fernando C. McConnell)

George W. Truett Elementary School , part of the Dallas Independent School District .

S. Truett Cathy , founder of Chick @-@ fil @-@ A restaurant chain

Truett Memorial First Baptist Church , Hayesville , North Carolina

Truett Hospital , located at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas

= = Published works = =

George W. Truett (1915) . We Would see Jesus : and other Sermons . New York : Fleming H. Revell .

George W. Truett (1917) . A Quest for Souls . Harper & Brothers .

George W. Truett (1946) . Some Vital Questions . Grand Rapids : Eerdmans .

George W. Truett (1954) . After His likeness . Grand Rapids : Eerdmans .

George W. Truett (1973) . Sermons from Paul (George W. Truett Library) . Grand Rapids : Baker Book House . ISBN 0 @-@ 8010 @-@ 8796 @-@ 1 .