

# George washington truett biographical sketch term paper

[History](#), [American History](#)



Baptist church is one of the most prominent Christian denominations. It has a long history, which goes as far back as the 17th century, in the United States. The church has had many preachers who have made significant contributions to the church's history. One of the most influential pastors in Baptist history is George Washington Truett. This illustrious individual was able to leave a lasting legacy through his work in the church for over four decades. This paper will provide a biographical sketch of his life, highlighting the most noteworthy contribution that Truett made to Baptist history.

George W. Truett was born to a rural farming family on May 6, 1867. His parents, Charles and Mary Truett, built a home for their family in Hayesville, North Carolina. While Charles and Mary had only attained minimal formal education for themselves, they wanted their children to have a good education in order to increase their chances of succeeding in life. They therefore sent their son to Hayesville Academy where Truett proved to be an exceptional student. He graduated in 1885 and was given the responsibility of becoming the superintendent and teacher at the Crooked Creek School.

Truett had been raised in a devoutly Christian home and he was introduced to the bible at an early age. However, he was not converted until 1886. In this monumental year in his life, he attended a Methodist revival in Hayesville. Following a preaching by J. D. Pulliam, Truett surrendered his life to Christ and therefore became a Christian (Durso 19). However, Truett did not begin his ministry immediately after his conversion. Instead, he came up with an idea for a private school.

He managed to gather enough resources to implement this idea in 1887 where he established the Hiawassee Academy. Within a short time, Truett was forced to leave his newly founded school since his parents decided to move the family to a bigger farm in Texas. The family settled in Whitewright, Texas and became a part of the local community. While in Texas, Truett had the ambition to become a lawyer and to this end he attended Grayson College. Truett was initially opposed to becoming a preacher. He therefore objected to initial attempts by the Church in Whitewright to ordain him. However, the members of the Whitewright Baptist Church were convinced that Truett was meant to be a pastor. Due to the strong conviction of the church leadership and its congregation, he was persuaded to become a minister in 1890.

This marked the beginning of Truett's long and illustrious ministry in the Baptist Church. Following his ordaining, Truett started preaching in Sherman but he also got a job at the Baylor University as a financial agent. He joined the University as a student in 1893 and he graduated in June 1897 (Caner and Mehmet 64).

After graduation, Truett decided not to pursue a professional life using his degree and instead turned to preaching. In the East Baptist Church where Truett served, he established himself as a great preacher who was able to deliver powerful sermons to his congregation. Truett's stint at the Waco based church was brief as he was soon asked to transfer to Dallas. He took up the position of pastor in the First Baptist Church and he continued to hold

this position until 1944. Under his stewardship, the church experienced immediate growth and this expansion continued until his death.

Truett engaged in numerous church related activities in the early 20th century. He travelled to West Texas to preach to cowboys who were on cattle drives and also preached to soldiers during the First World War. He made his famous “ Baptists and Religious Liberty” address in 1920 at the request of the Baptist leader J. B. Gambrell. Smith documents that Truett ministered not only in the US, but also in the world centers in London, Stockholm, Paris, and Berlin (60). Over the course of his 47 year old ministry, George W. Truett managed to give numerous sermons that have been compiled into ten books.

George W. Truett is credited with making a number of notable contributions to Baptist history. The most significant contribution is that he championed for religious liberty in the US. Through his Religious Liberty address, made on May 16, 1920, Truett presented the most compelling argument for religious liberty in America (Durso 268). This speech was made at a time when the government was working towards infringing the religious liberties of the Church. Truett declared that the government should respect the constitutionally guaranteed right of the church to enjoy freedom without government interference. His advocacy contributed to the increased protection of the church from attempts by the government to infringe on its freedom. Due to his contribution in this area, the religious liberties enjoyed by American Christians today are regarded as a Baptist innovation.

Many statements were made about George Truett both during his lifetime and after his death. Speaking of Truett's ability to deliver sermons in a forceful and compelling manner, Dr. J. B. Hawthorne acknowledged that " I have heard many of the world's famous speakers, but never in all my life has my soul been more deeply stirred by any speaker than it was the day at Marietta by the boy out of the mountains" (Caner and Mehmet 61).

Truett was able to attract the attraction of clergymen outside of his denomination. Following his death, the Temple Emanu-El Rabbi David Lefkowitz stated " He was a great churchman, and above all, a great man. He, above all others, purified the soul of Dallas and lifted it to the heights" (Durso 262). There is common agreement that Truett left a lasting legacy on the Christian Church landscape in the US. The historian Douglas Southall Freeman declared that " It would be difficult to exaggerate the influence of Dr. Truett's positive preaching on American ministers in a critical age" (Larsen 740). For all his greatness as a speaker, Truett was criticized for his lack of ability in expository preaching and coming up with original interpretations of the bible. The historian Powhattan James noted that Truett would not be credited for " profundity of thought, or brilliance of rhetoric, or originality of exegesis, nor cleverness of homiletics" (Larsen 741).

The United States has numerous famous preachers in its history. This paper set out to provide a biographical sketch of the life of George Truett, who is one of the greatest preachers the country has ever had. To this end, it has discussed his life, conversion, and ministry. The paper has singled out his advocacy for religious liberty in the US as Truett's most noteworthy

contribution. It has then reviewed some of the things that were said about Truett by his contemporaries and historians. From this paper, it is evident that Truett was a great man and a spectacular preacher of the Gospel.

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