



Southwestern

JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY



Theology Applied



A THEOLOGY FOR THE CHURCH: George W. Truett and the Southwestern Tradition¹

Malcolm B. Yarnell III*

Nothing can take the place of the Christian ministry. The progress of civilization, the making of many books, the increase of schools and learning, the marvelous triumphs of the press—mighty as are all of these agencies—they can never supersede the divinely sent preacher.²

What is the purpose of academic theology? I am often asked about my role as a theologian. Many are shocked when I tell them it pales in comparison with biblical proclamation, with personal evangelism, with Christian mission, with Bible study in home and church, or with worship. Academic theology serves a necessary but supportive role. Academic theology serves God-called ministers, and those ministers serve the churches, who in turn serve the Lord Jesus. The logic of origins is simple: The Lord Jesus Christ created the church to fulfill his Kingdom purposes; the church verifies the calling of Jesus Christ upon the lives of her ministers; and the churches established theological academies to help their ministers prepare for gospel service. Theologians are thus servants of the churches and their ministers,

¹This essay is dedicated to the memory of my father-in-law, George Truett Searcy, who in character was exactly like the man for whom he was named. Both men were gentle in character, possessed great hearts, trusted God's Word thoroughly, and retained their integrity as they went to meet their Lord. My wife, Karen, and I named our first son, Malcolm Truett Yarnell, and are awestruck by the work God has done and continues to do in and through him. Also, please note that Southwestern Seminary's J. Craig Kubic, dean of libraries, and Jill Botticelli, archivist, have been very helpful in making sure this essay is fully researched. Finally, please allow me to express gratitude to my neighbor, Bill Warden, a great nephew of Truett, who kindly gave me two of the founding trustee's books from his personal library.

²George W. Truett, "The Subject and Object of the Gospel," Convention Sermon, 1899, Louisville, KY, *We Would See Jesus and Other Sermons* (ed. J. B. Cranfill; New York: Revell, 1915), 200.

*Malcolm B. Yarnell III serves as research professor of theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and is a former editor of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology*.

and therefore, academic theologians exist to serve the church, its ministers, and thereby our Lord Jesus Christ.

The “founding fathers”³ of The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, understanding this truth, intentionally crafted an ethos for the Seminary which would serve the churches through training their ministers. This essay draws on the thought and life of one of those fathers to demonstrate the structure and content of this claim—that academic theology necessarily serves the churches’ ministries. We could look to the founding president⁴ or the founding faculty⁵ for verification, but it seems best to hear primarily from a founding trustee of the Seminary: George Washington Truett. This particular trustee was integral to the Seminary before its conception, long remained intimately involved in its pedagogy, and elected its first three presidents. H. Leon McBeth argued in 1971 that Truett was “the symbol of Southwestern. He was what the Seminary stood for. He was the image of the Seminary to the world. He was the ministerial model for two generations of Baptist preachers.”⁶

In order to perceive the ethos of practical theology which characterizes The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, we herein review, first, Truett’s intimate involvement in the foundation of the school. Second, we rehearse Truett’s understanding of dogmatic theology as truth embodied in a life. Third, we recall Truett’s belief that a high view of God in Christ necessarily entails a commitment to a high yet realistic view of humanity. Finally, we recount his understanding of Christian ministry as displayed in the first endowed lectures series held at “Our Seminary,” a series interrupted by the death of her founding president.

I. GEORGE WASHINGTON TRUETT AND “OUR SEMINARY”⁷

Truett was born on May 6, 1867 into an extended family of farmers

³ H. Leon McBeth, “George W. Truett and Southwestern Seminary,” *Southwestern Seminary Founder’s Day Address* (Manuscript, 16 March 1971), 1.

⁴ Alan J. Lefever, *Fighting the Good Fight: The Life and Work of Benajah Harvey Carroll* (Austin: Eakin, 1994).

⁵ Jill Botticelli, ed., *The Founding Faculty of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary* (A Publication of A. Webb Roberts Library; Fort Worth, TX: Seminary Hill Press, 2016).

⁶ McBeth, “George W. Truett and Southwestern Seminary,” 11.

⁷ Carroll and Truett referred to The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary as “our Seminary,” the last known incident being three March 1942 references in Truett’s personal diary to “our

and preachers in the western mountains of North Carolina. Among the treasured books in his home were John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and James Madison Pendleton's *Christian Doctrines*.⁸ Receiving an early education in the Hayesville Academy, he seemed destined for a career either in law or education. His first work was to establish and serve as the founding principal of the Hiawassee Academy in northern Georgia. He enrolled 300 students in his first year, including 23 preachers and 51 public educators, along with leading his first convert to Christ.⁹ Other Christians discerned Truett's call to ministry before he did. For instance, Ferd McConnell introduced him to the Georgia Baptist Convention as someone who "can speak like Spurgeon."¹⁰ McConnell was not the last to draw the comparison.

Truett was converted to Christ at the age of 19 during a two-week revival. The context and content of his conversion were definitive for the character of his life and message. He framed his conversion in a soliloquy with Christ, who demanded to be his "Saviour and Master." "Are you willing for me to have my way with you, from this time on? I will not indicate to you what that way is to be—it is enough for you to know that my way is always right and safe and best. May I have your consent, without evasion or reservation, to have my way with you now and always?" Truett's answer was an "unreserved 'Yes.'"¹¹ During that revival, he also gave his first public exhortation for people to follow Christ.

Truett followed his family to Texas in 1889, settling in Whitewright. The church there ordained him to the ministry, although he implored them to desist. He submitted to their call because he recognized in it the call of God.¹² When Benajah Harvey Carroll, chair of the trustees of Baylor University, began looking for a financial agent to retire their crippling debt, Truett's pastor mentioned the new preacher. After interviewing him, Carroll convinced the trustees to hire him. For two years, Truett lived with Carroll and raised critical

Southwestern Theological Seminary" and "our Seminary in Fort Worth." McBeth, "George W. Truett and Southwestern Seminary," 10.

⁸ Powhatan W. James, *George W. Truett: A Biography* (New York: Macmillan, 1939), 20.

⁹ James, *Truett*, 32–33.

¹⁰ James, *Truett*, 37.

¹¹ James, *Truett*, 25. Truett's most recent biography points to the characteristic note of Jesus as Lord in the very title of the book: *Keith E. Durso, Thy Will Be Done: A Biography of George W. Truett* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2009).

¹² James, *Truett*, 48–50.

funds for the school, even giving his own college savings.

Afterwards, Truett entered Baylor as a student, serving the East Waco church as pastor. Truett availed himself of free access to Carroll's private library for six years. They often discussed "theology, history, literature, biography, philosophy, homiletics, Christian apologetics, [and] Biblical criticism . . . far into the night."¹³ Truett's Baylor experience convinced him of the temporal priority of education in preparation for ministry even as he consistently maintained the eternal priority of the preaching ministry itself.¹⁴ In recognition of his excellent academic work, Truett was invited to deliver his class's commencement speech, the first among many such opportunities at both Christian and secular universities.

Truett's Baylor sermon provides a philosophical structure for his contention that theology should shape human life. He parallels John Henry Newman's Roman Catholic philosophy of education, which emphasizes the academy's role in molding human souls, rather than Friedrich Schleiermacher's Liberal Protestant proposal for a purely intellectual *Wissenschaft*.¹⁵ The choice was propitious. In that 1897 speech, Truett connected an inspiring idea with its resulting activity: "Swiftly does man become like the thoughts he loves."¹⁶ Ideals and activities are two sides of one coin.

An ideal is "a pattern in the mind, held up before its eye, for imitation, realization and guidance." A corollary term from Scripture for "ideal" is "vision," without which the people perish (Prov 29:18). Individuals and organizations progress or regress on the strength of their ideals. "What we call progress is but society following after and translating into life the visions of the mind."¹⁷ Practices may be described theologically as the "incarnation of ideals."¹⁸ In the history of the West, certain ideals advanced human welfare, such as Martin

¹³James, *Truett*, 77.

¹⁴Durso, *Thy Will Be Done*, 44–45.

¹⁵Truett does not cite him, but Newman's conception of the "idea" is evident. Cf. John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University Defined and Illustrated: In Nine Discourses Delivered to the Catholics of Dublin*, 3rd ed. (London: Basil Montagu Pickering, 1873); David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993); Malcolm B. Yarnell III, *The Formation of Christian Doctrine* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2007), 115–25.

¹⁶"The Inspiration of Ideals," in *George W. Truett Library [Hereinafter, GWTL]*, 4 vols., ed. Powhatan James (1950; reprint Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), vol. 3, part 2, 19.

¹⁷"The Inspiration of Ideals," 13.

¹⁸"The Inspiration of Ideals," 14.

Luther's "ideal of individual responsibility" and Oliver Cromwell's "ideal of personal rights." These undergirded the later American ideal of "free institutions and self-government."¹⁹ Because of its power to shape individuals and societies, an ideal must be carefully sifted and cultivated, for vicious ideals result in evil actions while virtuous visions foster good deeds.

Even "an incomparable country" like the United States incorporates both noble and ignoble ideals. The ignoble may be seen, for instance, "when the press and the public give greater prominence to the pugilist than to the poet," or, when "the unprincipled politician too frequently displaces the unselfish statesman." But Truett reserved his strongest criticism for the business world: "We talk much of heathen idolatry, but there was never a heathen temple crowded with more eager devotees, than is the temple of mammon in this land of alleged civilization and Christianity."²⁰ If we allow such vices to "lower the standards of our morality," we bring harm to humanity. Instead of false ideals, we must focus upon "the one ideal and inspiration for every day and duty of life," the person of Jesus Christ. "Study Him, and know that there can be no heroism save in self-sacrificing interest for others."²¹

Those were tough words coming from one who would soon lead a church to become the largest and wealthiest congregation Southern Baptists had ever seen. Numerous churches tried to call Truett as pastor, including the First Baptist Church of Nashville which offered him a princely salary. He declined them all because, as he at first told the First Baptist Church of Dallas, he intended to attend The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for a year in order to further his theological education. First Dallas, however, approached him again with the backing of three leading Texas Southern Baptists: B.H. Carroll, J.B. Cranfill, and J.B. Gambrell.²² Truett ultimately accepted their call, with the proviso he could build the Baptist denomination.

Benajah Harvey Carroll wanted his protégé as close to his side as he could get him from the very foundation of what they both affectionately called "Our Seminary." While Carroll's mystical "vision"

¹⁹"The Inspiration of Ideals," 15–16.

²⁰"The Inspiration of Ideals," 17.

²¹"The Inspiration of Ideals," 18, 21.

²²Durso, *Thy Will Be Done*, 51.

on a train through the Texas Panhandle in 1905 has garnered much attention, the Texas Baptist patriarch was implementing his idea well before that phenomenon.²³ Under Carroll's influence, Truett began serving as a trustee at Baylor University in 1898. Truett served there for over 45 years, even turning down election as her president in 1899. In 1901 Carroll further enlisted Truett to the faculty of his Baylor University Summer Bible School, likely teaching homiletics.²⁴ As early as 1903, Southern Seminary was concerned Carroll would create a rival seminary out of the Bible School and Baylor's new Theological Department.²⁵ In 1905, the rival seminary received its first official name, "Baylor Theological Seminary," and began taking both men and women as students.

Carroll's pedagogical vision was delivered in a 1905 *Baptist Standard* article. Robert A. Baker said, "his greatest concern was not for training technical scholars but for preparing a great multitude of pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and Sunday School teachers."²⁶ Truett agreed entirely with Carroll's integration of theology with practice. He praised Carroll in 1906 at the Baptist General Convention of Texas: The Seminary is "now a vital part of our work, bone of our bone, the child of our prayers and labors," and Carroll is "in any field, first among equals as a preacher and teacher of God's Word."²⁷ Truett's vision for the Seminary thus matched that of "our beloved brother Carroll." In a novel move, the latter then called for the creation of a chair of evangelism.²⁸

The seminary was granted separate existence from Baylor by the Baptist General Convention of Texas in its November 1907 meeting in San Antonio. Truett was also elected a founding trustee. The trustees met immediately afterwards in order to elect Carroll as the school's founding dean.²⁹ Later that month, the trustees met in

²³Robert A. Baker, *Tell the Generations Following: A History of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1908-1983* (Nashville: Broadman, 1983), 24–25.

²⁴F.H. Kerfoot of Southern Seminary was also included. "The Baylor University Summer Bible School" (April 18, 1901), in B.H. Carroll, *Our Seminary or The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary: Lectures, Articles and Appeals*, ed. J.W. Crowder (Roberts Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, TX, [n.d.]), 3.

²⁵S.P. Brooks, in *Proceedings of the Baptist General Convention of Texas* (1903), 43–44; Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 118.

²⁶Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 120.

²⁷Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 126.

²⁸Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 125–26.

²⁹Minutes of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Board of Trustees, 1907 (Roberts

Truett's office in Dallas, and the school was granted a new name, "The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary."³⁰ In the March 1908 trustee meeting, Carroll was elected our seminary's Founding President, and Truett immediately moved that Carroll's salary be increased substantially.³¹

Truett was also appointed to the subcommittee on locating the seminary.³² In 1906, R.C. Buckner suggested a location in Dallas for the new seminary.³³ In 1907, the president of Baylor suggested Fort Worth so as to provide a clean break between the two schools.³⁴ When Carroll advertised for offers of locations in April 1908, several cities vied for the seminary.³⁵ Carroll at first favored a location in Dallas, until an Oak Cliff property was put forward.³⁶ But the Baptists and other citizens of Fort Worth lobbied the seminary to locate there, with even more substantial incentives. J. Frank Norris, who allowed Carroll to use the *Baptist Standard* to promote but later took a dislike to our seminary, was also pleased with the Fort Worth option.³⁷ At the November 1909 trustee meeting, Truett moved that the Fort Worth location be approved and profusely thanked the Baptists, newspapers, and citizens of Fort Worth for their generous offers of both land and money.³⁸

Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX), 6.

³⁰Trustee Minutes, 1907, 9.

³¹Trustee Minutes, 1908, 11, 14.

³²Trustee Minutes, 1908, 17.

³³R.C. Buckner to B.H. Carroll, 16 August 1906, in Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 127.

³⁴S.P. Brooks to B.H. Carroll, 19 September 1907, in Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 128-29.

³⁵Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 147.

³⁶Durso, *Thy Will Be Done*, 92-93. Carroll wrote a passionate letter opposing the move to a smaller property in Oak Cliff. B.H. Carroll to George W. Truett, 30 March 1909; Truett Collection [Hereinafter, TC] (Roberts Library, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX), TC 815. Pigott divines a supposed mutually heartfelt rivalry over Carroll between Norris and Truett. However, evidence is not brought forward to support either the emotions or the motives ascribed to Truett. A letter from Carroll may offer evidence of Carroll's emotions and motives, and attacks from Norris may offer evidence of Norris's emotions and motives, but neither Carroll nor Norris tell us anything reliable about Truett's own emotions and motives in this circumstance. Indeed, the introduction of emotive events which occurred long after the deaths of all three men tell us nothing helpful whatsoever. Kelly Pigott, "West of Eden with B.H. Carroll, George W. Truett, and J. Frank Norris: The lifelong feud between the First Baptist pastors of Dallas and Fort Worth," *Review and Expositor* 116.2 (2019): 179. Leon McBeth earlier argued that Truett was not in favor of the Dallas location. McBeth, "George W. Truett and Southwestern Seminary," 7.

³⁷Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 151-52.

³⁸Truett offered the following resolution, which was seconded by W.K. Pearson and adopted: "Whereas the Baptists of Ft. Worth, together with the citizens generally, have shown a most

George Truett served on the Board of Trustees at The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary from its foundations at the turn of the twentieth century. Truett was intimately and enthusiastically involved in all the major decisions, including its first faculty members and doctrinal confession as well as its new name and new location. However, it was the common vision for theological education that the ninth pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas shared with the first president of Southwestern Seminary which was most important. Truett and Carroll believed theological education should serve the ministers of the church, who should lead the church to serve the Lord by reaching lost souls in the world with the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ the Lord.

II. THEOLOGY: "TRUTH EMBODIED IN A LIFE"

While Carroll has been described as more dogmatic and Truett as a more heartfelt preacher,³⁹ Truett's speeches at both the 1898 and 1899 Southern Baptist Convention meetings demonstrate the younger man was as denominationally visionary and theologically adept as his mentor. In his sober 1898 "Response," the young pastor reminded his audience of "the supreme purpose" of the Convention: "We are here to plan and to pray and to work for the interests of that Kingdom which is to break to pieces all other Kingdoms and extend its conquering sway over every acre of this earth."⁴⁰ He reminded them that Southern Baptists should be missionary and evangelistic, not only in "profession" but in "practice."⁴¹ Christ organized the church to be his "instrument" in order "to evangelize the world."⁴² His prayer included a subtle Trinitarianism which enabled him to integrate theology holistically with the life of the church: "Come, Spirit of God, and teach us here, as we never knew it before, that Christianity is not only truth embodied in a creed, but that it is

liberal spirit toward the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, as is manifested by their tender of One Hundred Thousand Dollars toward the Building Fund, and an eligible site of large value, which has connected with it other very valuable assets; Therefore be it Resolved: That the Board of Trustees of said Seminary would hereby express to the Baptists, to the 'Ft. Worth Record' and the 'Star-Telegram,' and to the citizens generally of Ft. Worth its profound appreciation of their good will and generosity." *Trustee Minutes*, 1909, 38–39.

³⁹Durso, *Thy Will Be Done*, 39.

⁴⁰"Response at S.B.C. at Norfolk, 1898," 6, TC 1911.

⁴¹"Response," 8.

⁴²"Response," 9–10.

infinitely more—it is truth embodied in a life—it is truth in action, out on the field of battle.”⁴³ “Truth embodied in a life”—this motto clearly characterizes the educational philosophies of the seminary’s first presidents, but it dropped from Truett’s lips.

In 1899, Truett provided more detail regarding the purpose of theology vis-à-vis the church and its ministers. In the background lay controversies at Southern Seminary as it dealt with the higher critical teachings of Crawford Toy and the critical historical teachings of William Whitsitt, controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention as it responded to the anti-missions movement, and controversy in British Baptist life as Spurgeon dealt with the Downgrade Controversy. Truett preached “The Subject and the Object of the Gospel” in Louisville, Kentucky, not far from the only Southern Baptist seminary at the time. He began by calling for personal humility and commitment to the will of God, then developed a cross-centered dogmatic orthodoxy before recalling Baptists to missionary fervor.

His first major point was that “Christianity is nothing if it is not dogmatic.”⁴⁴ However, simple, heartfelt faith in New Testament dogma must not be confused with intellectual defensiveness. We must be committed to proclaiming the Word of God with conviction and power, not providing anxious answers to higher critics: “The preacher is to be concerned mainly with the preaching of positive truth rather than the refutation of passing error. Let not the last blatant attack against the Bible be noticed overmuch. It is not the chief business of God’s minister to answer the last fool who has escaped from the mortar in which he was brayed. The Gospel faithfully preached is its own best defense.”⁴⁵

Truett did not spend much time with the doctrine of revelation in this sermon, primarily because he considered the Holy Spirit’s inspiration of the Bible a settled matter. Over the decades, however, he returned to the doctrine. What characterizes his treatment of Scripture is his demand that we demonstrate our respect for God’s Word by reading it, living it, and spreading it. The Bible could be lost to us. It can be lost through “neglect,” when we focus upon the

⁴³“Response,” 12; Durso, *Thy Will Be Done*, 80.

⁴⁴“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 202.

⁴⁵“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 202.

mundane. It can be lost through “substitution,” when the preacher reads “what the scholars, critical and practical, say about the Bible, without coming to the Bible himself.” It can be lost through “mutilation,” when the skeptics take out “a little here, and a little there.”⁴⁶ The Bible can be lost, finally, through “disobeying it.” The Bible for Truett is utterly true and utterly demanding. Divine revelation is not merely formal but powerfully practical—it is “the infallible rule of faith and practice.”⁴⁷ The Bible dispels the darkness, saves the lost, and gives wisdom for life, so it should be given to everyone, read in the home, and implanted in the hearts of the young.⁴⁸

The Word of God is threefold—Incarnate, proclaimed, and written. Firstly, the preacher’s task is primary, since God thereby saves sinners. Yet, secondly, the Bible is “the transcription of the very thoughts of God.”⁴⁹ Thirdly, the written Word cannot be divorced from the living Word, for they exist in “union.” “The Bible is the complement and counterpart of Christ. They are one and inseparable—the binomial word of God.” “They must stand or fall together, for the veracity of the one stands pledged for the perpetuity of the other.” The reign of Christ in the world spreads through the dissemination of the written Word.⁵⁰ The truth of Scripture works upon humanity like a “seed,” shaping the destinies of authors and readers, of proclaimers and hearers.⁵¹ The entire mission of the church is disseminating the Word of God through speech and literature. The final admonition of his famous speech “The Leaf and the Life” was “O brothers, I pray almighty God that we may give and pray and toil and lay our every power under tribute to magnify and glorify and make known the written Word of God to all the peoples of every tongue and every clime even as we seek to exalt the Incarnate

⁴⁶“The Bible Lost and Found,” *GWTL*, vol. 1, part 2, 67–68. Cf. “Mutilating God’s Word,” *GWTL*, vol. 1, part 2, 77–85. “What is to be our reply to all the attacks made upon the Bible? It is to print and scatter it all the more. When men tell us that it is not inspired, or it is inspired only in spots, and nobody knows where the spots are, we are not to waste our lives caviling with them. We are to go on printing and scattering it all the more, and God will see to it that it will survive every conflict.” “The Leaf and the Life,” *GWTL*, vol. 3, part 2, 44.

⁴⁷“This holy Bible is the infallible rule of faith and practice. God has spoken to men by the Holy Spirit and men thus inspired have preserved his counsels for the world’s weal, and here it is in a book for us, the infallible rule of faith and practice.” “The Bible Lost and Found,” 69.

⁴⁸“The Bible Lost and Found,” 70–73.

⁴⁹“The Leaf and the Life,” 26–27.

⁵⁰“The Leaf and the Life,” 27–28.

⁵¹“The Leaf and the Life,” 34–35.

Word, Jesus Christ our Lord.”⁵²

In his 1899 convention sermon, he claimed the subject of the church’s proclamation is located in “one great theme;” “salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ.”⁵³ “The heaven-appointed center for all true preaching is Jesus Christ, and to leave that center is to lose the dominant power and purpose of the Gospel.”⁵⁴ So, Christ and his work in the gospel are the key dogmas which must concern all Christians as they proclaim the Word of God. The gospel includes the truths of his incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, eternal reign, and call to salvation.⁵⁵ These gospel truths entail putting other concerns to the side. He asked derisively whether we should, “preach philosophy, or science, or culture, or worldly wisdom, or beautiful platitudes, preach merely to please men or entertain.”⁵⁶

Truett’s Christology is high and conversant with scholastic orthodoxy.⁵⁷ He affirmed both Christ’s “divine personality” and “the spotlessness of His humanity,”⁵⁸ as well as His threefold office. But most important is the cross: “Christ on the cross is the harmony of every doctrine of divine revelation.” He then linked Christ’s cross with divine simplicity, soteriology, and human sinfulness, as well as the Holy Spirit.⁵⁹

After affirming dogmatic orthodoxy, Truett advocated a heartfelt proclamation devoid of unnecessary subtleties: “If our preaching causes men to think that intellect or anything else is even to be compared with the saving of an immortal soul, then are we guilty of treason against the Gospel of God’s Son.”⁶⁰ The missionary

⁵²“The Leaf and the Life,” 45.

⁵³“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 203.

⁵⁴“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 204.

⁵⁵“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 204–5.

⁵⁶“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 206. “I preached philosophy and men applauded; I preached Christ and men repented.” “The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 211.

⁵⁷In another sermon, Truett employs a subtle Chalcedonian Christology. “He was both God and man, the God-man in one person. Never did hyphen elsewhere mean so much as it does here, the God-man. It both joins and divides. It marks distinction and yet unity. Jesus was as really God as though he were never man, and as really man as though he were never God.” “We Would See Jesus,” *GWTL*, vol. 4, part 2, 14.

⁵⁸Cf. “What We Preach,” *GWTL*, vol. 2, part 2, 17–19.

⁵⁹“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 206–8. The theological founder of the Modern Missions Movement, Andrew Fuller, similarly advocated a cross-centered theology. I believe the Cross of Christ provides the proper basis for a uniquely free church or Baptist theological method. Yarnell, *The Formation of Christian Doctrine*, 154–57.

⁶⁰“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 212.

requirement is laid upon every Christian, so ministers must lead their people to be witnesses to salvation. “Christianity is essentially and fundamentally missionary.” “Missions is not simply an organ of the church, but the church itself is the organ for missions. To this end the church was made—for this cause Christ brought it into the world. The work of missions therefore is not a little optional annex to a church, but it is as essential to the true work of the church as is the heart essential to the human body.”⁶¹

Turning the tables on those who divorce practice from doctrine, Truett makes right practice necessary for right doctrine. “Christianity is incomparably more than a creed—it is a life. Any other conception than that Christ’s Church is to be a soul-saving army is a caricature upon the churches of the New Testament.”⁶² Because Christ gave the Great Commission to the church, any distraction from it is heresy. On the one hand, he says, “We shall not cease to make much of orthodoxy.” But, on the other hand, “There is a heresy of inaction as well as of precept.” “I plead for a living orthodoxy, not a dry, dead dogma, out of which has gone all the blood and heart-beat, leaving only a grinning, ghastly skeleton behind, but an orthodoxy, every pulsation of which can be felt and which is the incarnation of practical loyalty to God.”⁶³

In a surprising twist for the academic specialist, Truett concludes, “Let us remember that the deadliest of all heresies is the anti-mission heresy. And let us remember that the anti-mission heresy is the black plague of the Southern Baptist Convention.”⁶⁴ Like an active hand grasping a knowledgeable book, “Duty” and “Doctrine” must remain together. This founding trustee’s combination of a serene evangelical Baptist orthodoxy with passion for Bible preaching, soul winning, and missions helps explain why early efforts were made to prevent “our Seminary” from becoming a haven for purely technical scholastic specialization. In April 1912, while Carroll was sick, the seminary’s new dean and another faculty member attempted to alter the curriculum, lessening the evangelism requirement and dismantling the English Bible Department. Carroll acted from his

⁶¹“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 215.

⁶²“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 217.

⁶³“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 220.

⁶⁴“The Subject and the Object of the Gospel,” 221.

sick bed to force the two faculty members out.⁶⁵

As seen in their contemporary book titles and in the establishment of the first American chair of evangelism, George W. Truett,⁶⁶ B.H. Carroll, and Lee Rutland Scarborough⁶⁷ were passionate for practical theology, in particular to pursue a “quest” or “search” for lost “souls.” Their passion was based in two foundational truths: first, utter faith in God and His Word, as noted above, and second, an intense love for their fellow human beings, as noted below.

III. ANTHROPOLOGY: “THE DIGNITY AND VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE”

While “Our Seminary” was established with a slightly revised New Hampshire Confession as its official confession, our founders emphasized humanity with an intensity absent in that earlier statement. One of the major changes between the third article of that first confession, on the fall of humanity, and the same article in the 1925 Baptist Faith and Message was the addition of a paragraph regarding the creation of humanity “in the image of God” through “the breath of God.”⁶⁸ Likely as a result of Southwestern’s tremendous growth and widespread influence, alongside the hugely popular ministry of Truett, the 1963 revision of the Southern Baptist confession saw a further change in the title of the third article and the addition of an important sentence regarding “the dignity” of human life.⁶⁹

While he sometimes criticized the social gospel, Truett’s preaching always retained a strong humanitarian streak, a humanitarianism which resulted in profound advances for the saving of human lives, not only spiritually but also bodily and mentally. In a 1907 sermon in Carroll Chapel in Waco, Truett proclaimed, “Next in importance to

⁶⁵Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 166. In 1919, the English Bible Department was dismantled.

⁶⁶George W. Truett, *A Quest for Souls: Comprising All the Sermons Preached and Prayers Offered in a Series of Gospel Meetings Held in Fort Worth, Texas* (ed. J.B. Cranfill; New York: Harper, 1917).

⁶⁷L.R. Scarborough, *With Christ after the Lost: A Search for the Lost* (Nashville: Sunday School Board, 1919).

⁶⁸Cf. The New Hampshire Confession of Faith (1853), art. III, “Of the Fall of Man,” with The Baptist Faith and Message (1925), art. III, “Of the Fall of Man.” L.R. Scarborough sat on the Southern Baptist Convention committee which drew up the confession.

⁶⁹The Baptist Faith and Message (1963), art. III, “Man.” The additional sentence states, “The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore every man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.”

a right conception of God, is a right conception of man.”⁷⁰ Theology and anthropology were dogmatically first and second. Truett deeply lamented the ways human life was devalued, for instance in Russia’s recent “anti-Jewish” programs. He also lamented atrocities in the United States: “Here in our own fair land—foremost among all the nations, in the progress of liberty and in the sway of religion—even here, we are grievous offenders against the sanctity of human life. That terrible trinity of horrors—suicide, lynching, murder—still mock us with their awful carnival in every section of our great country.” The theological basis for Truett’s high yet sober anthropology was the *imago Dei*:

If this nation is to be saved from the doom of the proud nations of the olden days, we must learn from the Son of God Himself the priceless value of human life. We must see in humanity, with all of its races and classes, the image of God, despoiled and defaced to be sure, but see that image sufficiently to know that a man, any man, anywhere, is infinitely more precious than fine gold, even than the golden wedge of Ophir. We must see that the value of the meanest human life in the earth is wholly irreducible to terms of silver and gold. This is the doctrine that needs profoundest emphasis to-day, the dignity and value of human life.

Truett decried the poverty which doomed neglected women and children, mourned the way the plague infected cities, and grieved how some were, through social neglect, “dwarfed in body and mind, with life’s horizon little larger than that of the beasts that perish.” Against such atrocities, human dignity must be maintained both collectively and individually. “The tiniest babe, therefore, that ever cooed in its mother’s arms, is intrinsically more valuable than the whole material universe.” Humanity has such great value because “God has stamped on man the likeness of His Deity, and infused into man’s inner life the germs of infinite possibilities. God has endowed man with a part of Himself, even with immortality, which attests

⁷⁰These profound words were preached at a peace conference. “Why Save Human Life?” *The Baptist Standard* 19.52 (26 December 1907), 1, TC 558.

man's infinite value." Ultimately, every person is valuable, because "every life is to be lived for the glory of God who gave it. Infinite dignity and value is therefore given to human life, because of its office. The humblest peasant in this way becomes a king."

In response, "human life should in every way be most sacredly cherished." From his love for human life, Truett argued military budgets should be trimmed to bare necessity. Instead, universities should be erected, business and labor should honor one another, and everyone should "acknowledge that the Prince of Peace is King of Kings and Lord of Lords." "Christ's conception of human life and His Spirit toward it must be ours. He magnified the dignity of the individual. He gave constant emphasis to human brotherhood. He practiced a pure democracy." While Truett advocated democracy as a spiritual principle derived from Baptist distinctives, he never equated America with Christianity. In 1919, he argued before French dignitaries, in words reminiscent of his later speech before the Capitol of the United States: "Religion must be free. The soul must have absolute liberty to believe or not to believe, to worship or not to worship, to say 'Yes' or 'No' to God, even as that soul, and that soul alone, shall dictate."⁷¹

In spite of Truett's declamations, lynching continued to be practiced in Texas long after 1907,⁷² and the United States was drawn into the maelstrom of the First World War. Truett was selected by Woodrow Wilson to preach to the troops on the front lines. In Europe, Truett had his horror for war reinforced and his trust in government reduced. His official autobiography notes, "He never engaged in flag-waving oratory." Instead, he "preached the same gospel to the soldiers that he had preached for twenty-five years."⁷³ After the Armistice and travel into Germany, he was profoundly touched by the humanity of the vanquished people and their torn families.⁷⁴ In 1935, when some students in India asked why his Christian nation contained crime-ridden cities, he replied, "If you

⁷¹James, *Truett*, 149. Cf. "Baptists and Religious Liberty," *GWTL*, vol. 3, part 2, 85–112.

⁷²There were approximately 500 lynchings in Texas between 1880 and 1930 and 4,700 nationwide. The 1916 lynching of Jesse Washington in Waco was particularly gruesome. Sylvia Moreno, "In Waco, a Push to Atone for the Region's Lynch-Mob Past," *Washington Post* (26 April 2006).

⁷³James, *Truett*, 142–43.

⁷⁴On his transition from anti-militarism to a chastened nationalism, see Kelly Pigott, "George W. Truett: Hawk or Dove?" *Texas Baptist History*, 29 (2009): 65–76.

have the impression that my country is a Christian land, you are mistaken.”⁷⁵ Truett’s view of humanity embraced all nations, and he did not look to the government as the ultimate solution for the problems of humanity.

Rather, he told the members of the First Baptist Church of Dallas on September 5, 1942, “The supreme agency for bringing in the glorious triumph of Christ’s Kingdom throughout the earth is His Church.”⁷⁶ This agency includes every Christian, not just pastors. His desire to help people live is why Truett pushed Southern Baptists to engage in missions, benevolence, and education. We will address missions, which he considered the supreme eternal service, in a moment, but we must consider his view of the supreme earthly importance of both benevolence and education. One of his greatest contributions to benevolence was the foundation and growth of Baylor Hospital in Dallas. He explained to a group of businessmen in Houston why they should do the same.

Truett recognized some pastors did not emphasize human service, but he told the audience they should listen to a “preacher of the right kind.” True preachers are concerned with “the deepest welfare of a city, in all its vital welfare.”⁷⁷ Christians must look after “the welfare of the body and of the mind and of the spirit” rather than succumb to “the danger of secularism.”⁷⁸ In this life, “earthly and human,” humanity’s supreme task is “to make the right kind of life” as opposed to merely “making a living.”⁷⁹ The “true object of human life” in the world now is to live in “service.” “The ideal life is described in the Bible in five little words: ‘He went about doing good.’ That is the ideal life.” Truett looks to Christ not only as the risen Lord saving souls for heaven but to Christ as the “Master of life” who washes feet.⁸⁰

Truett identified three classes of human beings according to their response to Christ’s call to serve others: tramps, spendthrifts, and

⁷⁵Durso, *Thy Will Be Done*, 222.

⁷⁶Pigott, “Truett: Hawk or Dove?” 75.

⁷⁷“Address by Rev. George W. Truett, D.D., At Banquet in Behalf of Baptist Sanitarium and Hospital, Houston, Texas, January 28, 1915,” 1, TC 1919.

⁷⁸By the danger of secularism, he means divorcing the welfare of the soul from the welfare of the body and the mind. “Address,” 2.

⁷⁹“Address,” 3.

⁸⁰“Address,” 4, 12.

trustees.⁸¹ The Christian life is a life of trusteeship. “The true conception of life is stated for us by the Master of life, and that conception is that life is a trusteeship. Every gift and talent and power and recourse that comes to us, from whatever quarter, is a trusteeship, to be invested in the service of humanity to our last dollar and to the last atom of our strength.”⁸² “You and I are here for the express business of saving the people, and we are God’s voice, and God’s machine, and God’s agent, and God’s resource, to go out, near and far, to save the people, and everything else is incidental and subordinate and subsidiary to that great thing.”⁸³ Salvation includes the mind and the body, as well as the soul, which is why he helped build sanitariums and hospitals, as well as churches.

Truett inspired Baptists not only to support benevolence work, but also to support Christian education. At the height of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy which roiled American evangelical denominations, Southern Baptist educators likewise found themselves under attack. Controversialists like J. Frank Norris complained heresy was overtaking schools like Baylor University. At the Southern Baptist Convention in 1926, Truett stepped forward to defend Christian education. Truett began by admitting there has “now and then” been a rogue teacher, but the overwhelming majority of “the teachers in such schools constitute one of the most faithful and sacrificial and nobly useful groups of workers to be found in the whole realm of Christian service.”⁸⁴ Christian education, moreover, is “necessary” and will always be so, for “knowledge is power,” and power must be harnessed to serve the Lord. Through education, the elitist powers of “rulers and priests” are distributed to “the common man.”⁸⁵

While secular education has its place, Christian education is necessary since it alone can teach religion. “Christian education is the only complete education. Man is a tripartite being, possessed of body, mind and soul.” And the state has no business with the soul. As “our

⁸¹“Address,” 6.

⁸²“Address,” 7.

⁸³“Address,” 9.

⁸⁴*Christian Education: An Address by George W. Truett, of Dallas, Texas, at the Southern Baptist Convention in Houston, Texas, Thursday morning, May 13, 1926* (Birmingham: Education Board, Southern Baptist Convention, 1926), 2.

⁸⁵*Christian Education*, 3.

Baptist fathers in Holland” wrote in 1611, only “Christ is King and Law-giver of the conscience.” Christian education is of supreme importance precisely because the “supremely essential element of human life is the spiritual element.”⁸⁶ Moreover, when Christ gave the Great Commission, He included “teaching” along with “disciplining and baptizing.” “In the method of Jesus, preaching and teaching went hand in hand. He was more frequently called ‘Teacher’ than anything else. His method was chiefly teaching. Certainly, the authority of Christ is the end of all debate for all true Baptists.” These Christian academies also happily contain “the seed beds from which come our vast army of preachers and missionaries.”⁸⁷

Truett believed the Christian academy must be “fundamentally, unfalteringly and aggressively Christian,” providing evidence to students as to why their faith is most important. Christian truth must come in the classroom through the teacher and in the very “atmosphere” of the school. Both “men and women” should attend these schools, so as to be equipped to fulfill the Great Commission.⁸⁸ Because Southern Baptists are a cooperative people, it is right for people to make sure the schools fulfill their function. “By all means, let all our co-operative work—missionary, educational and benevolent—be fully and faithfully discussed by all the people.”

However, “when such discussion is uncandid and untruthful and un-Christian, when it leads to sourness and bitterness and alienations and non-co-operation, then such discussion is to be reprobated by all who care for the honor of Christ’s name and the advancement of his cause.” According to Truett, the biggest problem among the critics of higher Christian education is that they lack love, even as they exalt their liberty. He reminds critics that Paul said, “only use not your liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love, serve one another.” “God give our Baptists to remember, now and always, that the last word in our Baptist vocabulary is not liberty but love!”⁸⁹

Truett appealed to the founding president of Southwestern Seminary as an example of one who stood in the gap to defend Christian schools. “The immortal Texan, Dr. B. H. Carroll, often

⁸⁶Christian Education, 5.

⁸⁷Christian Education, 7.

⁸⁸Christian Education, 9.

⁸⁹Christian Education, 11.

left his mighty post as pastor, and as the head of a noble theological seminary, and went afield to call to account the misstatements of reckless agitators against the co-operative work of the churches. This whole Convention has been made to glow under his incomparable appeals for a worthy co-operation.”⁹⁰ We now turn from Truett’s co-operative efforts to his own pedagogical work within that “noble theological seminary.”

IV. MINISTRY: THE LEWIS HOLLAND LECTURES

In 1909, Lewis Holland of San Antonio endowed the first formal lectureship of the new seminary, requesting Carroll appoint Truett the first lecturer.⁹¹ Truett thanked both Holland and the faculty for inviting him to initiate the lectures in 1914.⁹² The original plan included three lectures in February and three in November, but only four lectures remain in the Truett Collection. The stenographer’s transcript has been corrected with the number “six” being stricken twice in the first manuscript. However, these strikes appear to be from a more forceful hand than the gentle lines characteristic of Truett’s own hand, and the “six” is retained in the other manuscripts.⁹³

The fifth and sixth lectures may have been postponed indefinitely since Carroll was soon known to be on his deathbed. Indeed, he passed away the day after the final lecture was scheduled.⁹⁴ The faculty began gathering at Carroll’s side during his final days as he was passing in and out of a coma.⁹⁵ As his greatest student, Truett was doubtless included. Truett wrote out his notes for Carroll’s funeral on the back of an envelope, perhaps as he traveled to the First Baptist Church of Waco the very next day. That iconic funeral sermon was published a week later.⁹⁶

⁹⁰Christian Education, 10.

⁹¹Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 143.

⁹²“The Preacher as a Man,” 1, TC 1916.

⁹³“The Preacher as a Man,” 1, 5.

⁹⁴The first lecture was delivered on Wednesday, February 18; the second on Friday, February 20; and the third on Wednesday, February 25. The fourth lecture was delivered on Tuesday, November 3. If a similar pattern was followed in the second set of lectures, the fifth lecture would have been delivered on Thursday, November 5, while the sixth lecture would have been delivered on Tuesday, November 10. Carroll passed away November 11.

⁹⁵Baker, *Tell the Generations Following*, 181–83.

⁹⁶“Funeral Discourse: Delivered by Pastor George W. Truett of Dallas, in the Meeting House of the First Baptist Church, Waco, Thursday Afternoon, November 12, 1914,” *Baptist Standard* (19 November 1914), 4–5, 21, TC 1692.

The lecture series itself considers the person and work of those who proclaim the Word of God. The first lecture began with the character of the preacher,⁹⁷ while the remainder concerned his most important works: in the study,⁹⁸ in the pulpit,⁹⁹ as a soul winner,¹⁰⁰ and as a shepherd.¹⁰¹ The outline for the fifth lecture was published as a *Baptist Standard* article a few years later. The sixth lecture apparently addressed personal evangelism. In a 1934 publication encompassing the same subject of the 1914 lecture series, Truett used many points introduced in the series. A new and longer section on personal evangelism, colloquially described as “Our Wayside Ministry,” was inserted at the end.¹⁰² Thus, evangelism from the pulpit, known as “soul winning,” and evangelism at a personal level, known as “wayside ministry,” were both important to the office of the preacher.

In his series introduction, Truett let the students know he was speaking from his heart as “a comrade, a brother” in the ministry, who shared a “common calling” with them but was merely “a little older than most of you.” He exhorted them to make sure they were “divinely called to such work.” One should preach only if he has the “firm conviction that he is called of God to it, and that he may not, must not, cannot put it aside.” The evidences for a call are “both internal and external.”¹⁰³ He shared his own experience of discerning God’s call.

After this, he introduced the subject of his first lecture. The preacher must have both “power and purity,” if he is to succeed.¹⁰⁴ The preacher must be “the right kind of a man,” because opposition will test his “habits” and “motives.”¹⁰⁵ The “two most insidious and constant and fatal” temptations a preacher will face are “the love of gain” and “the love of power.”¹⁰⁶ Other temptations to be watched

⁹⁷“The Preacher as a Man.”

⁹⁸“The Preacher as a Student,” TC 1917.

⁹⁹“The Preacher in the Pulpit,” TC 1918.

¹⁰⁰“The Preacher as a Soul Winner,” TC 1915.

¹⁰¹George W. Truett, “The Pastor as a Shepherd,” *Baptist Standard* (11 April 1918), 7.

¹⁰²*On Preachers and Preaching: Address of Dr. George W. Truett, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Dallas, Delivered at the Ministers’ Breakfast of the Pension Fund on Friday Morning, October 18, 1934 at the International Convention of Disciples of Christ, Des Moines, Iowa* (Indianapolis, IN: Pension Fund, 1934), 8–10, TC 1940.

¹⁰³“The Preacher as a Man,” 2–3.

¹⁰⁴“The Preacher as a Man,” 4.

¹⁰⁵“The Preacher as a Man,” 6–8.

¹⁰⁶“The Preacher as a Man,” 8.

against include idleness, commercialism, self-indulgence, formalism, pride, and worldly ambitions. The preacher must ensure that he is sincere in his motives, is not “seeking for emoluments,” and does not pursue sensationalism to gather a crowd. Speaking gravely, he concluded, “your main business is not to make an impression, it is to be a proclaimer of the grace of God.”¹⁰⁷

In the second lecture, Truett congratulated the students on “the privileges that are yours here in this Seminary.”¹⁰⁸ These privileges should both humble the student and prompt diligence. “I come to remind you, my friends, that all your lifetime you are to be earnest students. These are not the ending days of your study: these are the beginning days.”¹⁰⁹ There are three “text books” requiring ongoing study. First, “the Word of God, the book divine, *the* book.” “The men who are going to have power in this world are the men who have saturated their very heart with the word of God.” “Your supreme text book is the Word of God.”¹¹⁰ The second text includes all “general literature,” for “the broadening and heightening of our general culture.” But only “the best books,” “the masterpieces,” such as *Pilgrim’s Progress*, should be read, as you compile your own illustrations rather than depending on some collection.¹¹¹ The third text is “the book of human nature.” The minister must learn about living humanity by engaging “with sinning, suffering human hearts.”¹¹² All three should be read together: “Knowing the people and the Bible we are in position to apply its unfailing help to their needs. The book of human nature needs to be illumined by the flood-lights that shine from the Book divine.”¹¹³

In the third lecture, Truett addressed the pulpit; “Every preacher should have a high estimate of his vocation,” for through public proclamation people are saved.¹¹⁴ Even before approaching the pulpit, the preacher should read Scripture well, pray with great care, and

¹⁰⁷“The Preacher as a Man,” 9–14.

¹⁰⁸“The Preacher as a Student,” 1.

¹⁰⁹“The Preacher as a Student,” 2.

¹¹⁰“The Preacher as a Student,” 3, 5–6.

¹¹¹“The Preacher as a Student,” 7–9.

¹¹²“The Preacher as a Student,” 11–12.

¹¹³“The Preacher as a Student,” 13.

¹¹⁴“The Preacher in the Pulpit,” 2.

choose appropriate music.¹¹⁵ The most important part is the message, which should incorporate the “two great themes running through the word”: sin and salvation. Sin is a painful truth with both individual and corporate aspects.¹¹⁶ Salvation is the only answer to sin. We are to preach “on the salvability of every sinner in the world however desperate” through the gospel of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The gospel should happen in every sermon.¹¹⁷ We must guard against “misplaced emphasis,” which can make one just as much “a false prophet” as a Christological heretic.¹¹⁸ The gospel emphasis is misplaced through “catchy themes,” the “debauching” of “reverence,” and “sensationalism.”¹¹⁹ As for pulpit manner, the preacher should deal in dogmatic certainties, speak with clarity, preach with hopefulness, emphasize the coming Kingdom, and preach for a verdict. Moreover, “you are to be God’s fine gentleman” and avoid becoming a scold.¹²⁰

In the fourth lecture, after Scarborough’s introduction, Truett replanted the marker for Southwestern’s ethos: “The first and greatest work done by Christianity is winning souls to the saving knowledge of the Gospel of the Grace of God.”¹²¹ To win souls, the preacher must have “certain living convictions,” the first being that evangelism is “the aim and object of his ministry.” Theology and cultural knowledge are right and necessary, but they are not “the major note.” The same must be said of social ministry.¹²² The second conviction is that without Christ people are lost. The third, that Christ is not merely interested in rescuing people from hell. “Christ’s gospel is to save the life in its totality.” All of life must submit to Christ’s lordship. While social ministry is not first in importance, it remains necessarily part of the Christian’s calling.¹²³ The fourth living conviction is that the gospel remains sufficient for all the world’s needs. It will change both individuals and cultures. The fifth, that churches of every size

¹¹⁵“The Preacher in the Pulpit,” 3–4.

¹¹⁶“The Preacher in the Pulpit,” 4–5.

¹¹⁷“The Preacher in the Pulpit,” 6–7.

¹¹⁸“The Preacher in the Pulpit,” 7–8.

¹¹⁹“The Preacher in the Pulpit,” 8–9.

¹²⁰“The Preacher in the Pulpit,” 10–14.

¹²¹“The Preacher as a Soul Winner,” 3.

¹²²“The Preacher as a Soul Winner,” 4–5.

¹²³“The Preacher as a Soul Winner,” 7.

and shape are “Christ’s definitely appointed agents” for winning the world.¹²⁴ The final living conviction is “that every member of the church is to be a soul winner,” which means “every man, woman, and child in the church.”¹²⁵ “Oh, brothers and sisters,” Truett pleaded with the mixed student body, “if only we and our fellow Christians will take Christ at his Word and witness for him in season and out of season even as we are prompted and empowered by the Holy Spirit we can and we shall win immortal souls to Christ’s side and service.”¹²⁶

In the rudimentary notes we possess for the final two Holland Lectures, Truett exalted “the work of the pastor” as “the most important work in all the world.” “This is not to minify the work of the evangelist, the teacher, the editor, or anybody else.” Rather, its truth depends on the pastor’s calling to mimic Christ’s own ministry to the church. In the last two lectures, Truett turned from the pastor’s public proclamation to his personal interactions. He first described the pastor as a “shepherd of souls,” who seeks out his people to counsel them with the life-changing truths of the gospel. “There can be no substitutes for this close, personal, intimate face-to-face attention to souls.” The pastor who engages in such work will inspire his people to disciple yet others.¹²⁷

In the final lecture, Truett planned to address “the wayside ministry” which Jesus exemplified. Like Jesus, pastors should engage lost people one-on-one during the six days they are not in the pulpit. After all, Jesus’s “great sermon on the new birth was preached by Him to one man.”¹²⁸ He then recounted stories of how people may have expressed their faith during an altar call, but personal witness necessarily occurs before public profession.¹²⁹ Through the first series of formal lectures delivered to Southwestern Seminary, Truett laid before faculty, trustees, and students the ethos of church-oriented theology that its founding fathers deemed necessary for theological education.¹³⁰

¹²⁴“The Preacher as a Soul Winner,” 10.

¹²⁵“The Preacher as a Soul Winner,” 12.

¹²⁶“The Preacher as a Soul Winner,” 14.

¹²⁷“The Pastor as a Shepherd,” 7.

¹²⁸Preachers and Preaching, 9.

¹²⁹Preachers and Preaching, 10.

¹³⁰The various lectures were introduced by Scarborough, and the roll call of those who prayed the benediction included other leading founders, such as J.B. Gambrell, J.D. Ray, and W.W. Barnes.

V. CONCLUSION

Truett encouraged Carroll in the founding of Southwestern Seminary while it was merely a dream in the old man's mind and supported his mentor in all the fundamental decisions. He served as a trustee for the institution from 1907 until his death in 1944, electing her first three presidents. Truett preached the opening session of the seminary in Fort Worth Hall in 1910 and continued to preach here often, not just during the first two Holland lecture series. He served as the chairman of the trustees from 1931 to 1944, raised funds for the Seminary, and chaired the search committee which chose E. D. Head as our third president. That same committee included a young trustee by the name of Robert Naylor, who later became our seminary's fifth president. The seminary's characteristic ethos of practical theology was certainly captured in Truett's ruminations.

We could continue rehearsing the legacy of Truett in its relation to the seminary, alongside his passions for ministry to the lost, for fortifying the churches, for building the largest church in the Southern Baptist Convention, for leading the Baptist World Alliance, for reinforcing Baylor University, and for founding the Baylor Hospital system. All of these are integral to an appreciation of who Truett was. However, he was only able to do these things because he yielded his life completely to Jesus Christ. He totally committed himself to preach that everyone should "Come under to the Mayster" in every aspect of their life, as the west Texas cowboys he led in annual revivals liked to say.¹³¹ The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary memorialized his leadership of the Baptist World Alliance through the globe adorning the floor of our Rotunda and his soul-winning preaching through our Truett Auditorium.¹³² The penetrating gaze of George Washington Truett's portrait still follows me every time I lecture on systematic theology in the Truett Conference Room, as if saying, "Christianity is incomparably more than a creed—it is a life. Any other conception than that Christ's Church is to be a soul-saving army is a caricature."¹³³

¹³¹James, *Truett*, 102.

¹³²"Administration—Library Building to Memorialize Truett," *Southwestern News, Extra Issue* (October 1944), 1.

¹³³"The Subject and the Object of the Gospel," 217.