

How to Use This Booklet

This booklet has been dated and designed for a three to five minute presentation each week. It can be used in the following ways:

1. By adult Sunday School teachers at the beginning of the class period or by the Department Director or the General Sunday School Director in opening assemblies.
2. By the pastor as a feature in the Sunday morning worship service.
3. By WMU and Baptist Men's leaders in their meetings.
4. By Discipleship Training Directors and leaders.

BAPTISTWAY is a quarterly booklet. You can order additional copies for each quarter by calling 1-800-355-5285.

Baptists and Religious Liberty

On May 16, 1920, George W. Truett, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Dallas, stood on the steps of our nation's Capital and addressed a large gathering concerning Baptists and religious liberty. He noted:



George W. Truett

Baptists have one consistent record concerning liberty throughout all their long and eventful history. They have never been party to oppression of conscience. They have ever been the unwavering champions of liberty, both religious and civil. Their contention now is, and has been, and, please God, must ever be, that it is the natural and fundamental and indefeasible right of every human being to worship God or not, according to the dictates of his conscience, and, as long as he does not infringe upon the rights of others, he is to be held accountable alone to God for all religious belief and practices....

How is it, then, that Baptists, more than any other people in the world, have forever been the protagonists of religious liberty, and its compatriot, civil liberty? They did not stumble upon this principle. Their uniform, unyielding and sacrificial advocacy of such principle was not and is not an accident. It is, in a word, because of our essential and fundamental principles. Ideas rule the world. A denomination is molded by its ruling principles, just as a nation is thus molded and just as individual life is thus molded. Our fundamental essential principles have made our Baptist people, of all ages and countries, to be the unyielding protagonists of religious liberty, not only for themselves, but as well for everybody else.

Such a fact at once provokes the inquiry: What are these fundamental Baptist principles which compel Baptists in Europe, in America, in some far-off seagirt island, to be forever contending for unrestricted religious liberty? First of all, and explaining all the rest, is the doctrine of absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ. That doctrine is for Baptists the dominant fact in all their Christian experience, the nerve center of all their Christian life, the bedrock of all their church polity, the sheet anchor of all their hopes, the climax and crown of all their rejoicings.

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