



From Paul W. Powell

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2005  
GEORGE W. TRUETT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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## THIS WE BELIEVE

Baptists are people of the Book. The Bible is the rule and guide for our faith and practice. We have a Baptist Faith and Message, but it is not a creed. No one has to sign it; no one is forced to subscribe to it. It is simply a statement of what Baptists generally believe.

We claim no creed but the Bible. Several years ago Richard Jackson gave me a Bible that had embossed on the front of it in gold letters, "The Baptist Faith and Message." He had it right.

Southern Baptists had no statement of faith at all in their first 80 years of existence, from their inception in 1845 until the formation of the Cooperative Program in 1925. In 1925, after much debate, the convention narrowly approved its initial statement of faith. In 1963, a few minor word changes were made, and it served as a guide until the takeover of the convention. In 2000, it was altered more radically and became an instrument of "doctrinal accountability." Missionaries and employees of Baptist institutions were required to either sign it or resign. That requirement was tantamount to making it a creed, regardless of what people say, and is contrary to historical Baptist practices.

The fact that we have never had a creed does not mean that a person can believe anything and still be a Baptist. Our creed is the Bible, and we gladly subscribe to it. In fact, I have signed every page of my Bible.

We believe with the apostle Paul that "All Scripture (every single part of the whole) is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished into all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). At Truett we stand on the authority of scripture. Don't believe anyone who tells you otherwise.

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## LEADERSHIP: MARKS OF A GREAT LEADER

From *The Way of the Shepherd* by Kevin Lemon and William Pentak; Zondervan Press, 2005

- Integrity. He is the same man in private as he is in public. It doesn't matter whether he is at church, before the school board, at home, what you see is what you get.
- He sets a high standard.
- He deals compassionately with people when they mess up. His job is to protect, inspect, and correct.

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## QUOTES FROM THE 2005 PARCHMAN LECTURE SERIES

The Rev. Eugene Peterson, professor emeritus of spiritual theology at Regent College, presented three lectures in October for the 2005 Parchman Lecture Series under the theme, Follow the Leader: Discernments in the Way of Jesus.

- Religion is one of the best cover-ups for sin there is (speaking of Caiaphas, the high priest who sought to have Jesus put to death).
- The devil often does some of his best work behind stained glass windows.
- Jesus wasn't after the best, but the worst. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.
- Jesus didn't call the rich, the powerful or the religious and wound up with a bunch of losers who wound up being saints.
- The American way is not the Jesus way. I love the American way but it is not God's way. America's way is not the same as the Kingdom of God.

Dr. Peterson, a recognized authority on spiritual theology, is the author of 27 books, including *The Message* paraphrase translation of the Bible, and *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work*.

The Parchman Endowed Lectures bring world-renowned theologians to the Baylor campus and enable Truett Seminary to make a significant contribution to the realm of theological dialogue and the life of the church. The lectures were established in 1999 by Leo and Gloriana Parchman to encourage dynamic discussion on topics related to theological studies.

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## I-TERMS

We will offer four special I-terms classes January 2-7, 2006. The course selections are: The Art of Persuasion taught by a practicing attorney and preaching professor, Joel Gregory; Entrepreneurial Leadership and Business Management taught by leaders from the business community; What Baptists Believe taught by Bill Pinson; and Studies in Mission Theology and Practice: China taught by Scott Harris. A course may be taken for credit or audited for \$175. To enroll, contact us at 254-710-3755 or email Gear\_Howard@baylor.edu.

PASTORS CONFERENCE AND FOUNDERS DAY

Our fourth annual Pastors Conference is scheduled for February 6-8, 2006. We expect an attendance of 500 this year, so make your plans now to be a part of Texas Baptists’ finest pastors conference. Look at our website for more information: [www.truettseminary.net](http://www.truettseminary.net).

Our third annual Founders Day begins at 9:30 a.m. January 24, 2006, in Truett’s Powell Chapel. Dr. Levi Price, professor of Christian Ministries, will bring a message on George W. Truett, the pastor, and we will present honorary alumni awards to several individuals. If you are interested in becoming honorary alumni of Truett Seminary, please contact Nancy Floyd at 254-710-6089 or [Nancy\\_Floyd@baylor.edu](mailto:Nancy_Floyd@baylor.edu).

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Kirby Godsey, retiring after 27 years as president of Mercer University, was asked how he survived the presidency that long. (The average tenure for higher education presidents is now about five years at public universities and about seven years at private universities, according to the American Council on Education.) He replied, “Don’t get crucified on six-inch crosses.” Every leader must choose his/her battles well. Some things aren’t worth dying over. Don’t get nailed for little things when there are big issues at stake.
- Scott Podsednik of the Chicago White Sox hit the winning homerun in the ninth inning of the second game of the 2005 World Series on October 23. Amazingly, Podsednik, who hails from West, Texas (near Waco), did not hit a single homerun in 507 regular-season at-bats for the year, although he has 22 career regular-season homeruns and it was his second homerun of the postseason. The moral is never give up. In the words of Winston Churchill, “Never give up. Never! Never! Never! Never!” The next time up you may knock it out of the park.
- Michelle Wie, a 16-year-old who made her debut as a professional golfer on October 7, 2005, was disqualified for signing an incorrect scorecard at the Samsung World Championship. The events unfolded after Wie apparently had finished fourth in her pro debut, but then a reporter questioned Wie’s ball drop on the seventh hole in the third round. According to Wie, she mistakenly dropped the ball three inches closer to the hole, and the error cost her \$53,126 or \$17,909 an inch in prize money.

The Scriptures warn that “Little foxes can spoil the vines” (Song of Solomon 2:15). Watch the little things. They can provide big openings through which Satan gains a foothold in our lives.

PASTORING

The late Bill Henson, pastor of First Methodist Church in Houston, tells of a time when he was so worried and distraught about his church that he couldn’t sleep. He would go right to sleep and wake up about two o’clock in the morning and be wide awake and couldn’t sleep the rest of the night. He got to where he was not only worried about the church, he was worried about himself. Then one night he woke up, and he said the Lord spoke to him and said, “Bill, this was my church before you were born. And it will be my church when you are dead and gone.” And he said, “I rolled over and went back to sleep, and when I got up the next morning, I said, ‘Lord, is there anything you want me to help you do with your church today?’ And from that day on, I have been the associate at the church.”

SERMON STARTER

Title	Getting on with God’s Work
Text	Acts 1
Introduction	The last words of the risen Lord to his church were, “Ye shall be my witnesses.” So...
I	Don’t stand around watching for His return. It isn’t for us to know.
II	Don’t sit around waiting for orders. He’s told us plainly what to do.
III	Don’t laze around wondering if we can do it. He has given us His promise and power.
Conclusion	Don’t be a declining church or a reclining church. Move out in obedience to His orders.



George W. Truett Theological Seminary  
Baylor University  
One Bear Place #97126  
Waco, TX 76798-7126

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