



From Paul W. Powell

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GEORGE W. TRUETT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## A WORD ABOUT TRUETT

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At Truett our goal is to train servant-leaders who minister in the spirit of Jesus. Our churches already have enough tinhorn dictators and petty tyrants without our adding to the number.

Adolph Hitler, Führer of Germany from 1933 until his suicide shortly before the end of World War II, lived by this credo: "My will decides. Others are to obey." He expected obedience, not criticism: acceptance, not explanations. In analyzing Hitler, the commentator said, "Humanitarianism was his weakness and coldness was his strength." (*Hitler: Tyrant of Fears*; The History Channel, Jan. 17, 2006)

Some pastors seem to act more like Hitler than they do like the Savior. Note this additional statement from the commentator: "Hitler hated on principle anyone who thought different from him." I guess dictators are the same wherever you find them.

Peter admonishes pastors to lead, not as "lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock." (I Peter 5:3)

We need to remember whose heritage it is — God's, not ours. And we're to lead by example, not as "lords" over the church.

## A WORD TO PASTORS

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A prominent minister once suggested that two of the most important rooms for any minister are the "study" and "prayer closet." In the study, the minister connects with God through deep reflection. In the prayer closet the minister connects with God through heart-felt petition. What are the dangers of a minister visiting only one of these rooms to the exclusion of the other? What are the benefits of the minister spending ample times in those rooms?

The Importance of Prayer:

- A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.
- It's hard to stumble when you're on your knees.
- God is not moved by people standing but by people kneeling.

The Importance of Reading:

- John Wesley once challenged preachers, "Either read or get out of the ministry." Did you ever wonder when a circuit-riding preacher like Wesley found time to read? He developed a saddle where he could ride backwards and place his books on the back of the horse. And when his daily sermonizing ended, he requested a bed with a candle placed nightly beside the bed for reading.

## QUOTES

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- On U.S. Interstate 35 between San Marcos and New Braunfels in Texas are two huge billboards that advertise the community of Gruene. They read, "Gently resisting change since 1872."
- "Never mistake motion for action." Ernest Hemingway
- Many a false step is made by standing still.

## ILLUSTRATION

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In June 1940, Hitler's armies were poised to destroy the cornered British Army stranded on the beaches on Dunkirk. As the British people anxiously awaited word of their fate, a three-dash word message was transmitted by the besieged army: "And if not..."

The British public instantly recognized the message as a reference to the words of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego standing before King Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace (Daniel 3:17-18). "Our God is able to save us...and if not, we will remain faithful to Him anyway." The message galvanized the British people. Thousands crossed the English Channel in boats to rescue their army.

## LEADERSHIP

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Leaders and wannabe leaders should read *Leadership: Inspire, Liberate, Achieve* by Tom Peters. He suggests that the best leaders are best at motivating and building relationships through trust, respect, communication and vision. Three things mark a good leader:

- Leaders develop leaders. That means they manage less and coach more. If you fear hiring people smarter than you, your performance is already suspect. Hire the best and turn them loose; they will make you look great.
- Leaders take an “if-it-ain’t-broke-break-it” approach it because sticking to old ideas won’t get you past point A. Mistakes will be made getting to Point B, but good leaders won’t place blame.
- Leaders create work that energizes people and projects that employees will brag about. Listen to ideas and say, “Yes, and ...” not “Yes, but...”.

## SERMON IDEA

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**Title** Let There Be Light

**Text** Isaiah 42:6; Matthew 4:16; Luke 1; Psalm 36:9

**Preacher** James Thompson, retired

**Introduction** We are the light of the world. How can we be that?

I We must know the Light. I John 1:5-7 (God is Light)

II Absorb the Light. John 11:10; Ephesians 5:14

III Reflect the Light. Ephesians 5:8; I John 2:8

**Conclusion** No man lights a candle and hides it under a bushel. Let your light shine before men so that they see your good works and glorify the Father in Heaven.



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