

## *The Upward Direction*

Dr. George W. Truett (1867 – 1944), a native of North Carolina and founder of Hiawassee Academy in Towns County, Ga., became one of the most prominent preachers of his time. He was pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas, for 47 years, served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention from 1927 to 1929, and addressed the Allied Forces in Europe during World War I at the invitation of President Woodrow Wilson.

He was entertained on one occasion in the home of a wealthy oil man in Texas. After dinner, the man took Dr. Truett up on the roof of his house and waved toward huge fields of oil derricks, saying, “Dr. Truett, that’s all mine. I came to this country 25 years ago penniless, and now I own everything as far as you can see in that direction.”

Then he turned to the opposite direction, where fields of grain were like waves in a sea, and said again, “It’s all mine. I own everything as far as you can see in that direction.”

Next, he turned to the east, where huge herds of cattle were grazing, and said again, “It’s all mine. Everything as far as you can see in that direction is mine”

One final time he turned toward the west and pointed to a great virgin forest, and said again, “It’s all mine; 25 years ago, I was penniless, but I worked hard and saved, and today I own everything as far as you can see in this direction, that direction, that direction, and this direction.”

The oil man paused for a moment, expecting praise. But to his astonishment, it didn’t come.



Dr. Truett laid his hand lovingly on his shoulder, pointed upward, and said, “My friend, how much do you own in that direction?”

The man dropped his head in shame and said, “I never thought of that.”

The Bible is clear about laying up treasures in heaven “for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:20).

And as believers in Christ, we have opportunities every day to invest in a heavenly bank account through the acts of love and service we perform for others.

– Beecher Hunter