

## The Life and Contributions of Dr. Robert S. Magee

Robert Solomon Magee was born September 20, 1931, in Collins, Mississippi. A valedictorian at Collins High School in 1950, he earned the Bachelor of Arts degree from Mississippi College in 1954. He earned the Bachelor of Divinity degree (1957) and the Doctor of Theology degree (1962) from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Preaching was his major field of study during his doctoral program. His dissertation was entitled "A Critique of the Preaching of William Mackergo Taylor."

Dr. Magee was licensed and ordained to the gospel ministry at Collins Baptist Church in Collins, MS in 1949. He served five churches in over half a century as pastor of churches in Mississippi and Louisiana:

- Cold Springs Baptist Church, Collins, MS (1949-1952)
- Puckett Baptist Church, Puckett, MS (1952-1956)
- Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, Brookhaven, MS (1956-1960)
- First Baptist Church, Carthage, MS (1960-1964)
- Temple Baptist Church, Ruston, LA (1964-1998)

It was his thirty-four years of outstanding ministry as Pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Ruston with which his ministry is most closely associated. After his retirement, he served as Pastor Emeritus of Temple Baptist Church an additional four years (1998-2002). Dr. Magee led the church to tripling in membership over those decades, leading Temple Baptist Church to become among the largest Baptist churches in Louisiana. He also led the church in its relocation from its original campus to a sterling new location beside Interstate 20.

A gifted pulpiteer who typically preached without notes, Dr. Magee had opportunities to proclaim the gospel in a variety of settings:

- Preaching tours in Guatemala (1968, 1969) and in El Salvador (1978)
- Featured speaker at the Fifth Annual Baptist Pastors Conference in Seoul, Korea, with approximately 700 pastors in attendance (1988)
- Preached revivals in Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Alabama, Florida, Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas
- Featured speaker at Ridgecrest for Senior Chautauqua (1981, 1984), at Glorieta for Senior Adult Chautauqua (1987, 1994), and at the Senior Adult Chautauqua in Green Lake, Wisconsin (1988)
- Delivered the Founder's Day address at New Orleans Seminary (1988)
- Keynote speaker for the City of Ruston Bicentennial Worship Service (July 1976)

His sermons were published regionally, and he also published articles in Proclaim magazine and The Quarterly Review:

- "Courage for the New Year." Proclaim 10, no. 2 (January 1980): 26-28.
- "The Heartbeat of Patriotism." Proclaim 10, no. 4 (July 1980): 27-28.
- "Love for the Lost." Proclaim 8, no. 4 (July 1978): 28-29.
- "A Mother's Fight for Liberation." Proclaim 10, no. 3 (April 1980): 28-29.

- "The Purpose of True Religion." The Quarterly Review 40, no. 3 (April 1980): 80-87.
- "Resources for Special Occasions." Proclaim 12, no. 3 (April 1982): 39-42.
- "A Sermon Seed a Day." Proclaim 9, no. 3 (April 1979): 22-27.
- "Words That Fortify." Proclaim 6, no. 4 (July 1976): 22-23.

Dr. Magee also served the Southern Baptist Convention in a number of significant positions, including the following:

- President of the Louisiana Baptist Convention (1985-1987)
- Preached the Convention Sermon for the Louisiana Baptist Convention meeting in Lake Charles, LA (1975)
- Member of the Board of Trustees of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (1972-1982)
- Chairman of the Board of Trustees of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (1975-1983)

Dr. Magee received numerous honors and awards in recognition of his excellence in ministry, including the following:

- Received five George Washington Honor Medal Awards from Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, PA, for patriotic sermons (1971, 1973, 1981, 1994, and 1997)
- Received a plaque for an award-winning sermon from Southern Baptist Convention Pastor's Conference, Kansas City, MO (1977)
- Received the Outstanding Alumnus Award from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (1981)
- Received the J. D. Grey Preaching Award from the Louisiana Moral and Civic Foundation (1987)
- Received the Distinguished Service Award from the Trustees of Louisiana College (1995)

The son of Mr. and Mrs. C. G. Magee, Dr. Magee married Vivian Eve Spell, also of Collins, MS, who also earned the Bachelor of Religious Education degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. The Magees were blessed with two children and seven grandchildren. Their son, Dr. Bruce Robert Magee, also earned the Th.M. and Th.D. degrees from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, in addition to a Ph.D. from Louisiana State University, and currently serves as Associate Professor of Language and Literature at Louisiana Tech University. Their daughter, Vivian Gayle Magee Red, serves as Vice President of Crescent Systems of Richardson, TX, an electrical engineering consulting business which she jointly owns and operates with her husband, Clark Red.

After a fruitful ministry, Dr. Magee died on July 23, 2002. The Robert S. Magee Doctoral Fellowships at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary are named in honor of Dr. Magee in appreciation for his scholarship, dedicated ministry, and contribution to the Kingdom of God.