

Rousseau, Gideon Jacques (1880-1969) was born in Steynsburg, South Africa. He was the son of Johann Heinrich Bruchauzer Rousseau and Aletta Johanna Elizabet Van Zyl. Rousseau's father was a teacher, and a rather passive man; his mother was uneducated, but driven. Rousseau was raised in abject poverty in South Africa. He worked at various jobs as a child and teenager, and received very little formal education. In October, 1899 in the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), he was commandeered to fight against the British. He was made a prisoner of war and was kept for over two years on the island of St. Helena. That time was spent reading and learning the English language from books sent over from America. Rousseau was now multi-lingual and learned to use the wireless. He actually met Marconi during his training. He served aboard Atlantic sailing ships and there met Christine McConnel, his wife to be. Her father was a Baptist minister, and served with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. After marriage, Rousseau was converted in a revival in Alliance, Nebraska. He and his family moved to Waco, Texas, where he attended college and became a student pastor. Rousseau served as a chaplain in World War I, and then became pastor at First Baptist Church, Norman, Oklahoma, and afterward First Baptist Church, Marshall, Texas. He served as pastor of First Baptist Church, Ocala, 1930-1933 and First Baptist Church in Pensacola, Florida from 1925 to 1930.

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Gideon Jacobus "Jacques" Rousseau VVeteran

Birth

17 Jan 1883

Steynsburg, Joe Gqabi District Municipality, Eastern Cape, South Africa

Death

30 Apr 1969 (aged 86)

Sacramento, Sacramento County, California, USA

Burial

Barrancas National Cemetery

Pensacola, Escambia County, Florida,

Military Information: US ARMY

Son of Johan Heinrich Bruchhauzer Rousseau and Aletta Johanna Elizabeth van Zyl.

Inscription

SOUTH AFRICA

1ST LT 722 INF

11 DIVISION

WORLD WAR I

Family Members

Spouse

Constance Christine McConnell Rousseau 1882–1967 (m. 1910)

Children Jacques McConnell Rousseau 1911–2004

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/1139285/gideon-jacobus-rousseau>

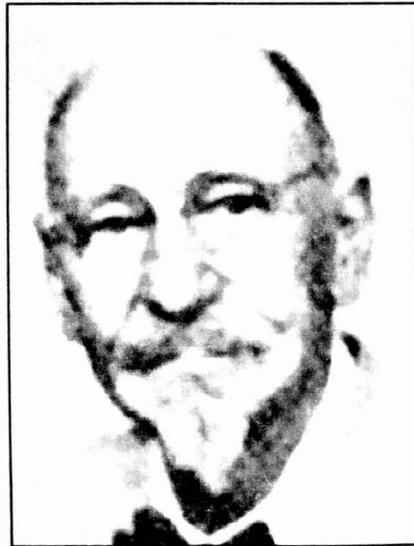
August 8, 2013 • Florida Baptist Witness

An editor from South Africa

Gideon Jacques "G.J." Rousseau, one of three regional editors of the *Witness* in 1930, was born Jan. 17, 1880 in Steynsburg, South Africa. His father was a teacher, but he was raised in abject poverty in South Africa. He worked at various jobs as a child and teenager and received very little formal education.

In October 1899 in the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), he was commandeered to fight against the British, he was made a prisoner of war and was kept for over two years on the island of St. Helena. Rousseau learned English there. He served aboard Atlantic sailing ships and there met Christine McConnel, whose father was a Baptist minister with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

After they married, Rousseau was converted in a revival in Alliance, Nebraska. The family moved to Waco, Texas, where he attended college and became a student pastor. Rousseau served as a chaplain in World War I, and then became pastor at First Baptist Church, Norman, Okla., and then First Baptist Church in Marshall, Texas. It was reported his "most satisfying ministry" was serving as pastor of First Baptist Church in Pensacola, Florida from 1925-1930.



G.J. ROUSSEAU

FBC, Ocala (Marion)

which is erected our present building. A portion of the lot purchased through the efforts of Dr. Chapman has recently been sold at a nice profit and the proceeds used in liquidating entirely the debt then remaining in building our present church home.

Rev. Bunyan Stephens came to us in 1912 and remained until 1918, when he entered the Y. M. C. A. work during the World's War. Perhaps no minister who had ever served us left more friends when he relinquished his work.

Dr. W. H. Wrighton came to the church in 1918 and served for about a year, and the church was richly blessed in many ways under his leadership.

Dr. W. P. Himes next served the church for a short while; and was succeeded by Dr. C. M. Brittain, the present capable and beloved secretary of our State Mission Board. Under his leadership the church responded liberally in the seventy-five million dollar campaign of Southern Baptists.

Dr. C. L. Collins came as pastor October 1st, 1920, and continued for almost ten years. Our present beautiful edifice was erected during his pastorate.

Dr. G. J. Rousseau began his ministry here October 1st, 1930. The church was dedicated during his ministry, and the Skinner organ was purchased and installed. The church adopted the Budget system, also at this time. Dr. G. J. Rousseau served the church 3 ½ years. A leave of absence of 3 months was granted him to return to Cape Town, Africa to visit his aged mother, who was hopelessly ill. During his absence, Drs. Ed. Solomon and Tinnan served as supply pastors most acceptably. Within a year after his return, Dr. Rousseau's health failed and he resigned.

Dr. Grady Wheeler began a nine year pastorate. He was especially interested in departmentalized Sunday School work and during his pastorate the lower floor was divided into assembly and class rooms. A pastorium was built on Lake Weir Avenue.

Dr. Crutcher followed as supply pastor for several months until Dr. Hoke Shirley was secured. For 3 years he shepherded the flock and saw to it that the auditorium had a coat of paint and a red carpet.

Dr. Bowers supplied until Dr. Malcolm Knight was secured as Pastor some four years ago. Being especially concerned for the young people, Dr. Knight began early to emphasize the need of a youth building and money was contributed to that end over a period of three years. The church also became more mission minded and began to support partially two missionaries, J. H. Ware and Charles W. Knight. Last year Mary Catherine Adams volunteered for the Foreign field. Dr. Knight is most evangelistic in his preaching and the church has prospered greatly during his pastorate. We now have some 1465 members and the budget for 1949 was \$64,000.00.

Pastors

July 3, 1850	Rev. Isaac Newton
March 1851	Rev. William Royall
	Rev. Charles. B. Jones
	Rev. F. C. Johnson
	Rev. R. W. Perry
1868-1873	No Pastor
1873	Rev. P. P. Bishop
	Rev. G. T. Gresham
	Rev. M. W. Sams
	Rev. J. A. Crompton

Rev. T. J. Murphy
 December 1882-1891 Rev. C. H. Nash
 Dr. A. W. Lamar
 Dr. L. D. Geiger
 1895 Rev. T. J. Davenport
 Rev. J. E. Oats
 Rev. J. L. Rogers
 Rev. W. E. Bogart
 Rev. W. J. Williams
 1902-1905 Dr. L. B. Warren
 1905 Dr. C. C. Carroll
 1909 Rev. Henry Gaby
 1911 Dr. J. D. Chapman
 1912-1918 Rev. Bunyan Stephens
 1918 Dr. W. H. Wrighton
 Dr. W. P. Himes
 Dr. C. M. Brittain
 October 1, 1920-1930 Dr. C. L. Collins
 October 1, 1930-1933 Dr. G. J. Rousseau
 October 1933-1941 Rev. H. Grady Wheeler
 1941 Dr. Crutcher, interim
 1941-1944 Rev. Hoke Shirley
 1944 Dr. Bowers, interim
 March 19, 1945-1950 Dr. Malcolm Buckner. Knight
 May 20, 1951-1961 Rev. Earl Stallings
 Rev. Ralph Crawford, Minister of Education
 Rev. John Senterfit, Minister of Education
 Rev. Hoyt Wilson, Minister of Education
 Rev. Marvin Spry, Minister of Music
 January 1962 Dr. Charles Millican, Interim
 April 1962 Rev. Hoke Shirley, Interim
 1962-1971 Dr. J. Connally Evans
 Rev. Veo Gray, Minister of Music
 Rev. Bill Simpson, Minister of Education
 August - December 1971 Rev. Billy N. Wolfe, Interim
 1972-1977 Rev. James Pharr
 Rev. John Sible, Minister of Education
 Rev. Glen Parker, Minister of Music
 Miss Carol Crawford, Director of Youth Education
 March 1978-1981 Dr. Donovan Davidson
 Rev. Bill Stephens, Minister of Education
 Rev. Tom Wells, Minister of Music and Youth
 Rev. Jim Van Matre, Minister of Music and Youth
 July 1981 - April 1982 Rev. Joey Hancock
 1982-1983 Rev. Dave Boaz, interim
 May 22, 1983 - December 2006 Dr. Edward Johnson
 January 2007 - December 2007 Dr. Glen Owens, interim
 January 2008 - November 2008 Dr. Mark Cummins
 January 2009 - May 2010 Dr. Jim Henry, interim
 June 2010 - present Dr. Darren Gaddis, Senior Pastor

'Hypercritics:' Everpresent in every age

By Toni Clevenger

The following is excerpted from the memoirs of Gideon J. Rousseau, who was pastor of First Church, Pensacola, 1925-30. After writing a satiric article on the role of women, Rousseau found he had more critics than he could number. His response to them, printed here, perhaps has some relevance for us in a time when criticism seems more prevalent than wisdom. Rousseau's humorous account was written sometime in the late 1920s. Southern Baptists have encountered and overcome many conflicts, and still accomplished much for the kingdom of God, since the time the article was written. It is reprinted with the hope for the continued progress of Baptists, who traditionally have not always agreed.



G. J. Rousseau

A great debate arose in the Southern Baptist Convention on a resolution introduced by a brother based on Paul's dictum, "Let the women keep silent." The cause of it all was a wonderful speech made by that elect lady Mrs. Cox at the missionary hour the night before.

The debate lasted over two hours of precious time, and was as amusing and tragic as that other debate on another occasion, on a resolution against applause in the convention, which finally being adopted, was celebrated by a round of thundering applause.

This debate moved me to write a more or less facetious article on "Let The Women Keep Silent," and did I catch it! I was assailed from various quarters. My orthodoxy was questioned, even my integrity as a believer in the word of God. I was accused as being a modernist and even an atheist.

When after some weeks the brethren had relieved their feelings about me for writing such an article, I felt I needed to make some sort of feeble reply. The following on "Hypercritics" is it.

Hypercritics

There are some good brethren among us who take themselves so seriously that they are convinced were it not for them, the Kingdom would be on the rocks.

These brethren, by implication and even by statement in so many words, admit

themselves to be Elijahs, and that the safety of the worship of God in the Southern Baptist Zion is seriously threatened by the prophets of Baal. So they occupy themselves with tongue and pen, in private little papers, in calling down fire from heaven upon their brethren who happen to think somewhat differently from them on matters in which salvation, or any other vital principle, is remotely concerned.

I anticipated some reaction from them when I wrote that article on "Let The Women Keep Silent," which I admit was rather mischievous in its satire, but I did not anticipate that I would offend my brethren quite as deeply as I seem to have done.

Since publication of my article I have received quite a lot of information on my spiritual state, both in letters and articles published in such papers as "News and Truths" and other similar publications.

One editor deprecates the fact he had known me for years and admired my correctness concerning the Scriptures, but now finds I am not only irreverent, but also an ultra-modernist and in need of special prayer, and that my attitude bordered closely on rank infidelity.

Another brother calls me a blasphemer of the word of God (right out in print) and says I must have committed the unpardonable sin.

I write this to reassure all my brethren that they quite misinterpret both my heart and mind, even to the extent in which they misinterpret Scripture. I want to remind them that in apostolic times there were differences of opinion among brethren concerning interpretation, and I cite them to a rereading of the Acts and the epistles to the Corinthians.

What I want to urge upon my hypercritical brethren is a little more charity and brotherliness in the tone in which they take issue with me, or with other brethren with whom they don't agree. We are all just human and liable to err. It is simply impossible to assume

that I can have the faculties to attain the pinnacles of flawless perfection and revelation which my brethren have achieved.

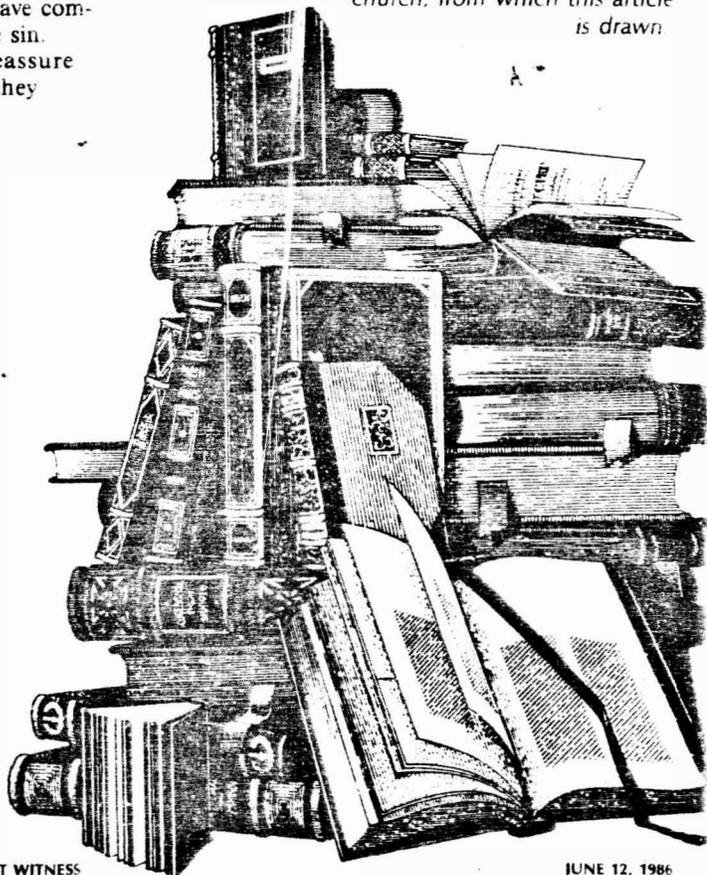
Meantime, I can still take nourishment, a full church still waits upon my ministry, we still baptize a few converts every month and my health is still good.

I have a feeling that if brother Paul could stand being called "weak in bodily presence and contemptible in speech;" and when such brethren as Truett, Mullins, McDaniel, Sampey, Robertson, Dodd, Masters, Freeman and even Frank Norris have at some time or another come under the lash of our brethren who are always right, that such a small fry as myself does not need to worry. In fact I am reminded that even our holy Savior was dubbed "a glutton and winebibber," a consorter "with publicans and sinners;" "a blasphemer," "a devil," and in general a pronounced profligate by the scrupulously orthodox of his day.

The Scripture says: "Herein do we know that we have passed from death into life because we love the brethren?" I want to assure my brethren that this is a real experience with me, within the limits of my imperfections. I hope they will also continue to love me in spite of my "heresy."

This is not a reply, but a grateful acknowledgement of all communications both personal and editorial on the burning question of "Let The Women Keep Silent." I will always vote for that proposition—at home.

Toni Clevenger, a member of First Church, Pensacola, and of the Florida Baptist Witness Commission, is writing a history of her church, from which this article is drawn.

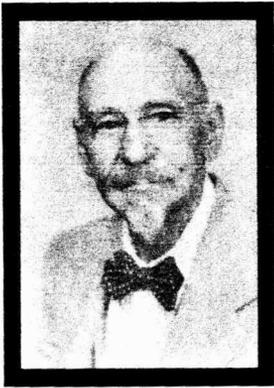


Owe No Man Anything But Love

Romans 13:8

G. J. Rousseau: 1925 — 1930

The varied experiences of his South African childhood, combined with those of war, prison, and around-the-world travel as a wireless operator, made Gideon Jacques Rousseau a fascinating speaker and one of First Baptist Church's most colorful pastors. Rousseau's personal adventures ranged from encountering savages and living in abject poverty to earning an extensive formal education and the esteem and honor of all who knew him. In between these extremes came experiences of the Boer War, British prison camp, jobs as a telegraph operator aboard ocean liners, and ultimately immigration to America.¹ From the day First Baptist Church announced that G. J. Rousseau would become its new pastor, Pensacolians watched with interest what was happening on the hill. If ever a Baptist preacher had charisma, personality, and mystique, Dr. Rousseau did.



G. J. Rousseau

Upon his arrival, First Baptist congregations began hearing sermons sprinkled with mentions of Hottentots, bushmen, and Zulus, and strange places like Venterstad, Steynburg, and Potchefstroom. They were captivated by their new pastor's reminiscences of Uncle Jurie and Cousins Louw and Jobert, and stories of Aunt Catoo, who had 26 children. "She was a little dwarf of a woman weighing less than 100 lbs.; her husband