

# Obituary: Darrell Tapley

May 2, 2014

**Darrell Tapley**, 86, died April 24 in Coleman. A graduate of Howard Payne University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, his first pastorates were in Eldorado and Early while still studying at HPU. While he attended seminary, he and his wife, Fredalene, were house parents at Buckner's Orphan Home in Dallas, and he also was pastor of a Spanish-speaking mission in West Dallas. As his ministry continued, he led congregations in Houston, Seminole and San Antonio before moving to New Mexico, where he was pastor of churches in small communities. He also served two New Mexico associations as director of missions. He returned to Texas after retirement and became pastor of Leaday Baptist Church. He enjoyed describing his call to ministry. While he knew God was calling him, he wanted to be a farmer instead. His father set aside 40 acres of cropland for him after his high school graduation, and he planted watermelon, corn and peanuts. That growing season, those 40 acres yielded not one watermelon, not one ear of corn, nor a single peanut. He surrendered to God and enrolled at Howard Payne. He was preceded in death by his wife of almost 58 years. He is survived by his daughter, Nancy Whitworth; sons, Jim and Gary; six grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.