

*A Rancher's Rumbblings, July 9, 2009*

**NORMAL PEOPLE PARTNERING WITH GOD TO CHANGE  
THE WORLD**

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**D**eath, often called “the great equalizer,” dominated the news last week. Farrah Fawcett and Michael Jackson died on the same day – two legends, to say the least.

Both of these celebrities certainly had a great impact on the culture of America, and even that of the world. Elvis may be the only entertainer to equal or surpass Michael Jackson’s impact on American culture. Farrah? Well, she was a stunningly beautiful Texas woman who, when given the opportunity, proved to be a serious and gifted actress.

But I was focusing on another death last week – that of Roy Currie, my Dad, who died on June 29, 1989 – 20 years ago – at the age of 81. In a way, I was prepared for his death, because he had struggled for many years. But we’re never fully prepared to lose someone whom we love and who has been so important to our lives. My life changed forever when he died, and – in his own way – Roy Currie had an impact on American culture, too.

I will never forget that day. We brought him home from the hospital on June 28. I carried him into the house in Paint Rock – he probably weighed only 110 pounds by that time. We knew we were bringing him home to die.

That night, I left for Dallas to spend the night with Phil and Carolyn Strickland. There is Baptists Committed history involved in all of this, and it comes to mind because of several email exchanges in the past week on the subject of who is going to write the history of Texas Baptists Committed.

In January 1988, I started work with an organization that had no name. But it had a purpose and a focus. Our main focus in January 1988 was to elect Richard Jackson as president of the SBC that year. At that time, John Baugh had his own organization in Dallas, called *The Laity Journal*, which Neil Rogers was running, working to turn out the Texas vote that year in San Antonio. My job was to work the states west of the Mississippi, while John Jeffers – retired pastor of First Baptist, Auburn, Alabama – was working the states east of the Mississippi.

According to SBC history, Richard lost that election, though I will never believe it or accept it. In the fall of 1988, the moderate effort reorganized and hired – as project coordinator – Oeita Bottorff. Oeita, a friend of Phil Strickland, had been with the Dallas Council of Churches. At the same time, they appointed me to serve as field coordinator of the nationwide effort.

Our office was in South Main Baptist Church in Houston. In the spring of 1989, we officially named the moderate effort “Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention.” To the best of my memory, I think I came up with the name, but please feel free to correct me if you remember differently.

Anyway, after I carried Daddy into the house in Paint Rock, I left for Dallas to stay with Phil. The next morning, June 29, 1989, Phil, Oeita, and I started meeting at Phil’s home – planning our strategy for electing Daniel Vestal as SBC president at the upcoming convention in Las Vegas.

Shortly after lunch, the phone rang. It was Uncle Charlie McLaughlin. Carolyn handed me the phone. Uncle Charlie said, "David, your Daddy is going to be with the Lord before you can get to Paint Rock, but your Aunt Jewette wants to ride with you as you go that way. I'm driving her to Phil's house."

As Aunt Jewette and I drove to Paint Rock, I told her several times that Daddy would wait to die until I got there. But, when I opened the door, Daddy and his bed were gone. But we had said goodbye many times in previous years, when doctors had told us he would not live through the night. He had surprised us all many times. So we were all prepared.

Uncle Charlie preached the celebration of his life. I spoke but have never listened to the tape of what I said. Maybe I will now. I do remember saying that my Dad never thought he was better than anyone else but never admitted he was worse than anyone else. He was who he was – very human, loving, and strong in a much quieter way than I am.

He loved God, his family deeply, his dirt we call a ranch, and baseball with passion.

I've often read such horrible stories about kids who had a father who never told them he loved them. That is not my story. Daddy told me he loved me over and over and over and over and over. Every time I left him, I kissed him on the forehead and told him I loved him.

Farrah Fawcett and Michael Jackson changed the world in some powerful ways, but so did Roy Currie in his own way. There is a lesson there for those who have ears to hear.

Dr. Nat Tracy, whom I often mention in this column, said frequently, "The real work of God takes place in the day-to-day activities and decisions of normal people partnering with God. God's work is not done only by the Billy Grahams of the world."

By loving me and investing his life in me, Roy Currie made a difference in my life, just as he did in the lives of others. How will you partner with God this week to make a difference in someone's life? Together, you and God can change the world.