

A Rancher's Rumbblings, September 23, 2009

TBC – MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF A NEW DAY

by David R. Currie

Executive Director, Texas Baptists Committed

For over a year, I've been talking with the Texas Baptists Committed Board about how to make some much-needed changes to our structure and operation. We are working on developing new initiatives that will enable TBC to carry out its historic mission more effectively.

In the 22 years since TBC was formed, communications have gone places most of us couldn't imagine back then. Getting information and staying connected is a whole new ballgame, compared to the 1980s. In that regard, Baptists are no different than anyone else – Baptists are communicating and staying connected in new ways, just as the rest of the world is.

TBC's mission in the 21st century is no different than its mission in the 20th – keeping Baptists informed about their Baptist heritage and historic Baptist principles, as well as alerting them to those who are determined to take away their Baptist freedom. But if TBC is to carry out its mission in the 21st century, then TBC is going to have to take full advantage of 21st-century technology.

That's going to mean things like blogging, podcasting, providing Web-based training on Baptist principles, as well as using different ways of networking, like Facebook and Twitter – and who knows what new technology they'll come up with tomorrow! (Keep in mind that I'm getting a little out of my "comfort zone" here – I can read email, surf the Internet for articles, and use it to play fantasy baseball. But that's about it.)

We also need to be more intentional about forging relationships with young people – both clergy and laypersons, including those who are still in college and seminary – and encouraging them to get involved in what we're doing. These young people are our Baptist future.

So our Board is working to develop new initiatives along these lines and will be announcing them when we have finalized those plans.

But I do have two major announcements I can make today.

I mentioned the importance of communications and staying connected. Much of TBC's work involves working with the Baptist General Convention of Texas . . . keeping folks informed about the work of BGCT institutions, agencies, and universities . . . and also acting as a watchdog in relation to BGCT policies and actions. BGCT offices are located in Dallas.

With that in mind, I am announcing that TBC will soon be moving its operations from San Angelo to the D-FW Metroplex. We have spoken to churches in the area about arranging to share office space in their facilities and hope to be able to announce our new location soon.

I am also announcing today that I have informed the TBC Board that I plan to step down as executive director.

Now don't get me wrong! I'm not going away. The Board has asked me to continue serving TBC as executive director emeritus. I will continue to write *A Rancher's Rumbblings*, as well as travel

and speak on behalf of TBC. However, I will give up day-to-day oversight of the TBC office and operations, and I am thrilled about this. TBC continues to have a vital ministry in Baptist life, but – as I said earlier – TBC needs to move forward on initiatives that meet the new challenges of 21st-century Baptist life, and much of that work is the type of work for which I don't have the training or – to be honest – even the desire to do it.

The TBC Board will soon appoint an Executive Director Search Committee to begin the process of seeking new leadership for TBC. I will continue as executive director until the new executive director is chosen and on the job. At that point, I will move to emeritus status, and the new executive director will then hire his or her own support staff.

I want all of you to know how much I love working to preserve historic Baptist principles and practices. This work has been – and continues to be – a joy and a calling for which I am grateful to God and always will be.

Through this work, I was able to spend nearly 20 years talking almost daily to my closest friend and mentor, Phil Strickland. Through this work, I got to know Herbert Reynolds, John Baugh, and Bob Stephenson; through them, I saw integrity and courage lived out daily.

Through this work, I have met many incredible Baptist laypersons and clergy all across America who love Jesus, love freedom, and are not afraid to stand against all odds for the Gospel of Christ, cooperative missions, and soul freedom.

I could go on and on – and I probably will in another *Rumbblings* before long, but for now, I just want to let you know about these changes that are in the works.

I also want to say a special word of appreciation to Charlotte Caffey, who has worked alongside me for 17 years now, and Carol Scott, who has likewise tolerated me for over 10 years.

Please be in prayer for our Board as we move forward on these strategic moves in the days to come.

And thank you for your years of support. I am very honored by your faithful support, and I hope that you will share my joy and excitement about the future and the work we still have ahead of us at TBC.