

Reflecting on Hispanic Texas Baptist life

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Reflecting and reminiscing is a privilege I haven't taken for granted many times. It could be that you have experienced this as well. Recently, however, I did just that as I was surrounded by Baptist family, and in particular, Hispanic Baptists at the *Convención Bautista Hispana de Texas* annual meeting.



Moises Rodriguez *Convención*, part of Texas Baptists, celebrated its 106th year of existence in the beautiful facilities of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas. As I looked around, I was surrounded by elderly pastors who have left their footprints in Baptist life, and I witnessed the young pastors eager to be part of this Baptist history.

I felt privileged to be amongst this great crowd of witnesses and pastors who have served many churches throughout Texas, and what a wonderful history has been interwoven between *Convención* and Baptist University of the Américas.

As I reflected on my past, I was reminded of those men who served as pastors with their faithful wives alongside them and ministered to my family and me. I was reminded of the sacrifices many of them made; some of them paid with their lives, as did Pablo Jimenez and his family.



I was a young boy, but I still recall the day my sisters heard of the death of several members of the Jimenez family. My sisters were in shock because the girls were to celebrate the Easter weekend together and had talked about the dresses they would wear that Easter Sunday. That occasion never took place because the majority of the Jimenez family perished in a car accident.

I also am reminded of the young pastors that were trained in our small congregation and how each one of them moved on to serve in another part of the state or in another part of the United States. And I remember that most of these pastors came from BUA, formerly *Instituto Biblico Bautista* (Baptist Bible Institute) or the *Seminario Teológico Bautista Hispano* (Hispanic Baptist Theological Seminary).

If you were to ask me how this wonderful institution impacted my life personally, I would have to tell you about every one of my pastors, their families and how each of their lives interwove with mine. Nevertheless, the greatest impact is the legacy that BUA built within my own immediate family.

I come from a small town, Carrizo Springs, and all the pastors I knew as a young man and as an adult studied at the *Seminario*. Two of my uncles, Elpidio Rodriguez and Esteban Arellano, studied at this institution and served churches in the Panhandle of Texas before moving to Chicago to help start Baptist work in that area. However, the closest this institution has come to my heart is through my father-in-law, Eli Dominguez, and my mother-in-law, Jesusita. Both graduated from the *Instituto*, one in the 1950s

while the other finished in the 1980s. And now, many years later as a university, my son and his wife have been added to the list of those who have been impacted by this great institution. What a great and wonderful legacy many Baptists around Texas and I have gained from Baptist University of the Américas.

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