

# Editorial: What stories should we tell?

September 26, 2018

As a pastor, I always was thinking about what stories to tell. At least once a week, I was tasked with crafting a biblical story, a story that illuminated the Bible and connected with the people and communicated God's word on the matter and got us out by noon.

No pressure.

I'm an editor now, and journalism is different than pastoring—in certain ways—though some things remain the same.

As an editor, I always am thinking about what stories to tell. At least once a week, I am tasked with crafting a story, a story that considers the goings-on of our world from a Christian perspective and connects with readers and furthers the work of Christ's kingdom and doesn't rock the boat...too much.

No pressure.

## **We should tell our stories.**

Most of the stories the *Baptist Standard* tells are not stories I craft. They are stories crafted in the living out of many relationships with Christ, stories crafted all over Texas and beyond.

In the video introducing me to readers of the *Baptist Standard*, I said: "The *Baptist Standard* tells our story. It doesn't tell my story. It doesn't tell any one person's story. It tells our story, and our story is made up of lots of voices."

These voices come from the individual Baptist, the single local Baptist church, the local Baptist association, the Texas Baptist institutions and the work of Texas Baptists as a whole—locally, around the state, nationally and around the world.

As the *Baptist Standard* works to inform, inspire and challenge people to live like Jesus, we do so through the many voices crafting these stories.

During the recent Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board meeting, a question was voiced numerous times. It went something like this: There's so much incredible stuff happening! How do we get the word out?

I agree. There is a wealth of incredible stories being crafted in the lives and ministries of Texas Baptist people, churches and institutions. From those stories, I hear about the difference Jesus is making in lives around the world. More people need to know the difference Jesus is making. We need to get the stories out.

In response to that oft-repeated question, [send me](#) your stories. Not all at once, though, please.

Now, to a more difficult question.

## **Who is part of our story?**

Ah, this is where I rock the boat ... but not too much, hopefully.

Some of you will say: "Now, Eric, you didn't need to go there. You could have stopped by asking us for our stories, and it would have been a fine editorial ... and short, too."

But you know us editors. We can't leave well enough alone.

So, back to the question: Who is part of our story?

We would do well to consider and answer this question, as in spending more time on it than I will in this editorial. I'm trying to get you out by lunch, after all.

Baptists in Texas are a very diverse bunch. Even within the group we call Texas Baptists, Baptists in Texas are a diverse bunch. Who is part of our story? How do we come to understand and appreciate our diversity? Before understanding, do we even know the breadth of the diversity?

## **Many stories pointing in one direction**

We begin to know the breadth of our diversity when we hear and read and see our stories.

Individually, we come to know we are men and women, boys and girls. We come to know we are black and brown and white. We come to know we are from more countries and ethnicities than I can list here.

Corporately, we come to know we are big churches and little churches, established churches and new churches, wealthy churches and impoverished churches, struggling churches and healthy churches, city churches and country churches.

If we are willing to listen, we come to know we have differing political, social and even theological positions.

Above all these differences, though, we come to know we have [one thing in common](#). This one thing overcomes the challenges of race and gender, the difficulties of demographics and economics, the debates of politics and theology.

This one thing is not a thing at all but is the one in whom all things hold

together (Colossians 1:17), the one in whom “we live and move and have our being” (Romans 17:28).

What stories should we tell? Our stories of Jesus Christ, before whom the countless multitude from every nation, tribe, people and language stand and cry out in praise (Revelation 7:9-10).

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