

David Blomstrom: Firmly committed to local autonomy

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David Blomstrom is a member of Sugar Land Baptist Church in Sugar Land. At age 84, he still practices as a certified public accountant, having passed the CPA exam in 1962 and started his own firm in 1969. He also has been a health insurance broker since 1990.

From deep in the heart of one Texan, he shares his background and thoughts on being a follower of Christ in the marketplace. To suggest a Texas Baptist leader in the marketplace to be featured in this column, or to apply to be featured yourself, [click here](#).

Background

What other businesses have you been in, and what were your positions there?

I always have practiced accounting. Over the years, I added certified financial planning and became a licensed securities broker, insurance agent and real estate mortgage broker. These services were available to my tax clients or referrals from my clientele. Today, my practice is limited to tax work and some health insurance.

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Houston in 1936. I spent my first seven years in Highlands, Texas, and still have the cradle roll certificate from First Baptist Church in Highlands.

My dad, Gunnar Blomstrom, surrendered to ministry when I was 7, and we

moved to Fort Worth for two years so he could attend seminary. He served three tiny churches over five years in Oklahoma, before we moved back to Texas in 1949.

How did you come to faith in Christ?

Dad was doing supply ministry during his seminary days at a small church near Milano, Texas. I surrendered my life to Christ at about 9 years of age. I was not baptized until my dad had his own church a couple of years later in southwest Oklahoma near Hobart.

Where were you educated, and what degrees did you receive?

- U.S. Navy, 1954-57
- University of Houston, 1957-61, Bachelor of Business Administration degree in accounting with honors

About life in the marketplace

Why do you feel called into the marketplace?

When I graduated high school, I thought the best job I had ever had was selling ladies' shoes. In the Navy, I worked all three years as a storekeeper. When my supply officer could not get me to reenlist, he said I should go to college and become a CPA. He explained a CPA was very similar to what I did aboard ship—ship's budget, payroll, supplies, inventory, etc.

How does being a Christian influence your decisions in the marketplace?

I always have put my clients' needs ahead of my own. I tried to prepare every tax return as if it were my own. Many lower income individuals got reduced or free rates.

From the mid 1970s onward, I always had an integrated staff. I am proud of the success of my staff over the years, and many formed their own CPA firms. I had Black, Hispanic, Chinese, Indian, Jewish and Muslim employees.

What is your favorite aspect of the marketplace? Why?

I always am pleased when I can help a client pay the lowest legal tax and see their satisfaction with the result. I have had employees and clients consult with me on very personal matters, as they know my Christian faith and felt I might be of help. Often, this was just lending a listening ear.

What one aspect of the marketplace gives you the greatest joy?

I have a number of clients who have been with me over 50 years. Their insistence that I not quit before their death keeps me going.

What one aspect of the marketplace would you like to change?

As a CPA, I have seen the tax laws change over 50 years. There is an imbalance in how these changes have benefitted higher income persons, as compared to middle and lower-class taxpayers. I'm a Warren Buffet fan and believe the wealthy should pay a higher rate than their secretary.

How has your place in the market or your perspective on the marketplace changed?

I don't think it is as important to me today to have a high income as when I first started with a family. I am not a good timekeeper and often undercharge clients, especially for consultations. Today, I still am active because I enjoy my work, not because of the income.

About Baptists

Why are you a Baptist?

I always have been Baptist, but not without reservations two or three times in my life. In 1968, when Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, my Baptist church on that Sunday morning had no mention of him, the burning of America, nothing.

My wife and I discussed this and called the pastor to visit with us. He came over that same day, and we discussed that morning's service and our dismay. He said if he had mentioned King, the deacons would have had his resignation before sundown. We did not attend any church for over two years after that.

I have been through two church fights and/or splits, and both times, I dropped from church for a year or so.

I have often said it is hard being a Baptist, but there are many positives, one being local church control—although this is under threat today.

What are the key issues facing Baptists-denominationally and/or congregationally?

Baptists have a historical sin against Black people they need to face fully. We are all God's children. We need to develop real friendships with Black people as we do with others and really listen to—not just hear—their concerns, which are justified.

I also feel we do not treat our pastors fairly. Most are very lonely people and truly do not have very many friends they totally trust. Many get stabbed in the back when some issues come up. I have tried with each of my pastors to be that friend and have lunches often and try to be a listener. It is not easy and maybe not possible. There are too many suicides among

our ministers.

What would you change about the Baptist denomination—state, nation or local?

For starters, I've felt for years the Southern Baptist Convention certainly should change its name. It's too Confederate and does have the history to go with the name.

I mostly like the Baptist General Convention of Texas but was dismayed when a couple or so great churches were expelled over their personnel policies. There goes local control. Our local association—Union Baptist—has done well and offered support to the local churches.

I can't remember how far back I've been a fan of the *Baptist Standard*. I loved Marv Knox. I like that the *Standard* is independent of denominational control and hope it stays that way. I pray for the editor same as I do for my pastor.

About David

Who were/are your mentors, and how did/do they influence you?

When I returned to church a couple years after King's assassination, I was fortunate that my next pastor was Jim Ranton. He conducted a Wednesday night study over several weeks on shaping your faith. Some called it *shaking* your faith. Many concerns and questions I grew up with were dealt with and explained and discussed during this study. Unfortunately, that church had a horrible split, and Dr. Ranton left the ministry—for good.

Each of my pastors since that time has built on the foundation Dr. Ranton helped me with—Ken Corr, Phil Lineberger and, now, Taylor Sandlin.

What is the impact of the marketplace on your family?

My career has supplied a decent living for our family. Our children are highly educated. In fact, my wife, Eugenia (Ginger) Ybanez Blomstrom holds a Ph.D. as a nurse practitioner and has served on the executive committee of the BGCT. Our son, David Jr., is a medical doctor, and our daughter, Debby Volek, is a physical therapist.

What is your favorite Bible verse or passage? Why?

Study to show thyself a worker approved by God (2 Timothy 2:15).

Name something about you that would surprise people who know you.

I was a heavy smoker from age 15 to 30, when I quit cold turkey after my doctor said: "You're getting emphysema, and if you don't quit, you will die. I will not watch that; so, you will need a new doctor." I quit.