

# Glenn Ward: 'We can always do more working together'

December 20, 2017

Since 2011, Glenn Ward has served as the director of missions for the [Paluxy Baptist Association](#) in Granbury, Texas. From deep in the heart of one Texan, he shares his background and thoughts on church and ministry. To suggest a Baptist General Convention of Texas-affiliated leader to be featured in this column, or to apply to be featured yourself, [click here](#).

## Background

### **Where else have you worked, and what were your positions?**

Previously, I was pastor of Acton Baptist Church, Granbury, Texas, from March 31, 1974, until October 31, 2011.

I served as pastor of Cherry Heights Baptist Church in Clyde, Texas, from October 1, 1968, until March 31, 1974.

I was pastor of Ft. Griffin Baptist Church from May 1, 1966, until September 30, 1968.

I was associate pastor/youth minister of Second Baptist Church in Anson, Texas, from November 1964 until May 1, 1966.

### **Where did you grow up?**

I was born in Abilene, Texas, but lived in Snyder, Texas, from August 1954 through high school graduation in May of 1964, so I call Snyder my hometown.

### **How did you come to faith in Christ?**

My parents were members of Colonial Hill Baptist Church in Snyder. Our church was having a weekend revival at Easter the year I was 12 years old. On that Sunday, I made a profession of faith and was baptized by Dr. Jimmie Nelson, our pastor.

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

I received a Bachelor of Arts from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene and attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth.

## **Ministry/Profession**

### **Why do you feel called to your particular vocation?**

The Lord has blessed me with a deep sense of his calling to ministry. After serving as pastor for 47 years, he led me to my current position. I've always enjoyed and been involved in associational work, so it has been a joy to get to serve multiple churches and their pastors and staff in this capacity.

### **Please tell us about your association—where it's located, the key focus of its work and ministry, etc.**

Paluxy Baptist Association covers primarily Hood and Somervell counties, with one church just across the county line in Erath and two just north toward Ft. Worth (one in Parker and one in Tarrant County). Our area is growing, and we are seeking to start new churches to reach the new residents coming into our area.

We have a strong emphasis on missions, encouraging churches to be involved, as well as providing opportunities for those who may not feel that they can do mission trips alone.

As has often been said among Texas Baptists, we can always do more working together than any of us can do alone!

**What do you like best about leading your association? Why?**

The things I enjoy most are seeking to be an encourager and giving support for our pastors. Being a pastor can be a lonely position, and, unless you have been one, you really don't understand the struggles, frustrations and the needs. Because I have been a pastor, I do understand and empathize with pastors and church staff people.

Another special blessing to me is to lead mission trips to Juarez, Mexico. When I was a pastor, we took mission trips at least once a year from 1979 until I left that position for this one. It is a great way to involve people in serving the Lord and looking outside themselves to the needs of others.

**What aspect(s) of associational ministry and/or its mission do you wish more people understood?**

It would be a blessing to have a greater sense of cooperation and participation in working together within the association.

**How has your association and its mission changed since you began your career?**

The association has streamlined our purpose and added six new churches in five years.

**How do you expect your association and/or its mission to change in the next 10 to 20 years?**

Most likely I will not be leading 10 years from now—or especially 20 years from now! However, with the growth of this area, there will definitely need to be more new churches if we are to have an impact on the new residents.

**Name the three most significant challenges and/or influences facing your association.**

As mentioned earlier, we will need additional churches to minister to the growing population of our area. It will be important to help existing churches to be cooperative, rather than feeling a competitive spirit, about new churches. Communication throughout the fellowship of churches is always critical.

**What one aspect of your job gives you the greatest joy or fulfillment?**

Being a “people-person,” I love fellowship with the pastors and getting to preach for them when they need to be away or need a supply. Most of our churches have members that I know personally, and that is always a blessing to see them when being in the churches.

## **About Baptists**

**What are the key issues—opportunities and/or challenges—facing Baptist churches?**

Somehow, we have to discern how to communicate with an unbelieving culture the truth of God’s word without always appearing to be judgmental and condemning. “Speaking the truth in love” is still so vital in being effective in reaching lost people. We have to create a way to be positive instead of negative in our presentations and messages.

**What are the key issues facing Baptists as a people or denomination?**

The same basic message of the previous question fits here as well.

**What would you change about the Baptist denomination—state,**

**nation or local?**

Accepting people without condoning unbiblical lifestyles is critical at every level.

## **About Glenn**

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

My pastor growing up would have to be number one: Dr. Jimmie Nelson. Once in my first ministry position, and later in my first on-the-field pastorate, it would be Bro. Lawrence Trott, former district superintendent, associational missionary and then director of missions. Bro. Jimmie was influential in showing how to be a pastor. Bro. Trott demonstrated and fostered a love for association mission work.

**Other than the Bible, name some of your favorite books or authors, and explain why.**

The Gospel of John and 1 John are two of my favorites because of simplicity/clarity of the truths John presents. He shows the importance of living the life of Jesus, walking in his light. John was obviously very close to Jesus—Jesus entrusted John to care for his mother as he was dying, and he evidently was the last of the twelve apostles to die, having given his life in preaching, teaching and making disciples for the Lord.

**What is your favorite Bible verse or passage? Why?**

There have been different verses that were special at different times, depending on circumstances or situations, as the word always is living and meets needs wherever we are and whatever that time may require.

Paul's statement, "My God shall supply all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19) has often been special.

The prophet Jehaziel's reply to King Jehoshaphat's prayer has helped many times: "Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's" (2 Chronicles 20:15).

**Who is your favorite Bible character, other than Jesus? Why?**

John has always been my favorite, especially in the New Testament.

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

As a boy, my initial desire was to attend the US Air Force Academy and become a pilot.

**If you could get one "do over" in your career, what would it be, and why?**

The "do-over" I would like to do is a better job of being a husband and father. I missed out on some special events with my children, and I often allowed church stuff to take priority when, in the long run, family suffered.

**Write and answer a question you wish we had asked.**

Are there things you have learned that were not taught in college or seminary? Give some examples.

Absolutely! Relationships within a congregation, dealing with difficult people, struggling through situations that should not happen within the family of faith (also called "church"), balancing home and church responsibilities, the necessity of having "a tough hide and a tender heart," pastors are to be shepherds and not trail bosses, lovingly leading rather than dictatorially driving a congregation—to name a few.