



Richard L. Barclay, senior minister of Hillcrest Church of Christ, is a man of many talents. The Texas-born evangelist is a scholar, writer and editor, a teacher, lecturer, preacher and a dedicated church builder. And the type of building he develops is more than piling brick on brick. It is the work of growing congregations of faithful, informed, and God-fearing believers in Christ.

His profound devotion to learning and close examination of the Scriptures, is the driving force behind his Bible teaching. In his manner of instruction and substance of teaching he tries to imbue students, young and old, with the desire to get a deeper understanding of the Word.

Richard Barclay, who has been minister of Hillcrest since April, 2006, began his ministerial work in 1977. Since then he has been an evangelist in congregations as widely separated as Boston and Los Angeles. His searching, often provocative sermons have been carried through broadcasts, journals, lectureships and evangelistic meetings of many kinds. He is innovative in his presentations, using the latest technology and contemporary parables to clearly convey the messages of the Lord.

Having worked over the years with many congregations in various stages of development and size, Brother Barclay says the Hillcrest fellowship is special in several ways. Its strengths, he says, are a history of "sound doctrine and biblical teaching that has been consistent through the years." Moreover, he said, he finds the members to be "resourceful, talented, loving and friendly people" --- a good foundation for growth.

Time and again in his sermons he has said the environment of any church, especially if it is friendly and caring, can only provide healthy, nurturing fellowship. And in the process it can also make the church attractive to would-be new members.

While he echoes the message of the elders, who want a stronger foundation of teaching and more outreach, Brother Richard says there are urgent short term goals. These include improving the church administration, strengthening the teaching program, doing more effective evangelizing, and improving the retention of members.

Administration can be made stronger, he says, by devising and implementing clear policies, and helping leaders of ministries to improve. Education can be made more effective through classes that address the needs of each category of members, including the age groups from grade school through adult. Evangelism efforts can be made better through more training and stronger commitment.

Brother Barclay believes Biblical and practical education is important. He underlines his interest and emphasis on excellence in education by pointing out student achievements from the pulpit, as opportunities arise. He asked the students to stand

and be recognized. And he makes a point of praising both the youngsters and their parents. Under his ministry no honors or awards to youngsters go unnoticed.

Hillcrest, like all churches, he says, can and should work to retain members and help them be more committed --- through better communication with them, closer shepherding in order to know real needs, cultivating fellowship, and providing the services members need.

Much of this work, he says, can be accomplished through the three-dozen ministries, as well as by encouraging members to stay in touch.

"Building a people of purpose, power and praise is also our vision, our mission and our focus," says Brother Barclay.

Richard L. Barclay, who was born in Woodville, Texas February 16, 1952, is married to Shirley Brooks Barclay, a teacher and counselor, and they have two adult sons, Christopher and Reginald.

Richard is an avid golfer, and unlimbers his clubs at every opportunity, especially in the company of his many ministerial friends and members of the congregation.