

DR. WAYNE ALLEN

a message for tomorrow's leaders

by Tim Gingrich

How does he do it? A seasoned Christian servant approaching the sunset of a distinguished pastoral career reinvents himself as a relevant servant leader for the next generation. "That's how you stay young!" responds Dr. Wayne Allen. Among the Baptist community, he is most widely known for his legendary service at First Baptist Carrollton and leadership at the local and state level. But recently, he has been serving tomorrow's leaders at Dallas Baptist University.

Dr. Allen represents DBU by building strong ties with the Dallas Baptist Association, an organization of Baptist congregations throughout Dallas and Rockwall County. "As students are graduating from DBU, some are taking leadership positions in these churches, some already have positions in the youth groups, and DBU's reputation is taking hold," said Dr. Allen.

Perhaps no one understands both DBU and DBA better than Dr. Allen, who has served at First Baptist Carrollton for nearly 35 years. After becoming pastor in 1965, he watched the church and surrounding community take off in continual growth. In 1997, DBU President Dr. Gary Cook invited Dr. Allen to become the university's DBA liaison. He continued serving concurrently at DBU and First Baptist Carrollton for two years. Now, in true servant-leadership fashion, he supports First Baptist Carrollton's head pastor from behind as pastor emeritus and teaches future ministers in DBU's College of Christian Faith.



Dr. Wayne Allen and his wife, Theresa

Demonstrating his lifelong commitment to the Baptist community, Dr. Allen has held leadership roles on the state missions committee and stewardship department and as a board member at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also served on DBU's board of trustees for nine years, with two years as chairman. He was awarded an honorary Doc-

tor of Divinity by DBU in 1978. Today, Dr. Allen shares the lessons he has learned throughout his career with DBU students. "I have a lot of future preachers in my class," he shared. "I tell them if they want the Lord's blessing, they need to support missions, preach and teach the

Word of God without apology, and have a church full of agape love." Students seem to like what they hear because 54 enrolled for Dr. Allen's class last spring.

Dr. Allen realizes the critical need to mentor future church leaders. "Some of today's college students are so disillusioned by church splits," said Dr. Allen, "but I tell them the church is still God's plan and will be until Jesus Christ returns." As part of his lecture on the book of Ephesians, Dr. Allen requires teams of students from different backgrounds to create their own church plan. "At DBU, I don't just teach. I also have the ability to apply the lesson to students' lives," he explained.

Dr. Allen and his wife, Theresa, are especially interested in the future of international leaders. Mrs. Allen, a professional counselor, volunteers her time to help DBU's international students deal with culture shock. Some students have also joined them in ministry, such as Sanjay Purushotham, a DBU alumnus from India. The Allens offered pre-marital counseling to Sanjay and his fiancé, Amy Tan, a DBU graduate from Taiwan. Sanjay is now pastor of the Asian Indian Fellowship, a mission of First Baptist Carrollton. "Dr. Allen and his wife have attended our morning service every single Sunday, except when he has had other speaking arrangements," shared Sanjay. "Just the ministry of presence—showing us his example while giving us the freedom to do what we need to do—that has spoken volumes to us."

Dr. Allen has a message for the leaders of tomorrow in the classroom and the leaders of today in the church. "As a pastor, I have seen students return from a university where some professor delighted in destroying their faith," he lamented. "Some would never come back to church." That is the reason he can represent DBU so effectively to Dallas-area pastors. "I tell pastors that at DBU, students can get a high-quality education, and faith will certainly be emphasized," he said. "It's worth whatever sacrifice needs to be made." [†]

