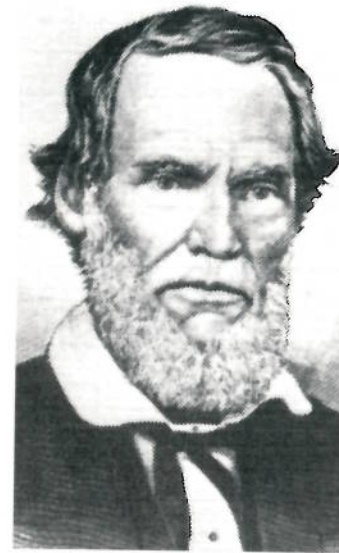


# Defining Texas Baptists

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R.E.B. Baylor

**Presentation Idea:** Give each member of your group a small piece of paper. Ask members to write down a job they were employed to do that was most "unlike" them: Dog sitter, McDonald's fry girl, snow cone maker, or some other job from their youth. Tell them not to let anyone see what they write. Collect the cards and call out the various employments, asking the group to guess which person did each job.

**W**hat do people in Texas think of when they hear the term *Texas Baptists*? Who do they say we are? Christ asked a similar question of His disciples. Like Jesus, we are often defined by what we do.

Many people recognize Texas Baptists by what they do. They are familiar with Baptist Children's Homes, Disaster Relief Vehicles, and of course, Baylor. Baylor hospitals and Baylor University are institutions most Texans associate with Baptists. Yet many Texas Baptists, even those who devoutly attend a Baptist church, probably do not know about R.E.B. Baylor. They probably do not know the impact he made during the early years of Baptist work in Texas.

A former congressman from Alabama, Baylor was born in 1793 and reborn in 1839. He journeyed to Texas "to assist a people struggling in the great cause of humanity for religious and civil liberty." He was one of the first recorded ministers to observe the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper on the banks of the Colorado River. Not much is known about the founding of Travis Baptist Church in Travis, Texas in 1839, yet many name Baylor as one of the two ministers responsible for forming this church.

Next time you see the Baylor name, thank God for those who came before us—those who helped to give Texas Baptists a place and a name.

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