

Tribute to Charlie Blanchard

October 21, 2021: NC Supreme Court Historical Society

Good evening to all of you. I am honored to be with you this evening at the Annual Meeting of the NC Supreme Court Historical Society to warmly remember our beloved Charlie Blanchard with this special tribute. My thanks to the Historical Society for its decision to honor Charlie and my thanks for giving me this opportunity to participate.

Charlie has an incredible list of outstanding accomplishments – beginning with being an Eagle Scout and later serving as president of Duke University’s student body. He was a devoted husband and father and a member of his church for 65 years. Charlie is perhaps best known for his successful law practice of 60 years. He was a visionary and took his ideas for the future and turned them into realities.

This organization is a grand example of Charlie’s exceptional vision. Charlie was the founder and the president of the N.C. Supreme Court Historical Society;

There are many other organizations in Raleigh and across North Carolina that benefitted over the years from Charlie Blanchard's abilities and support. Charlie was a co-founder and later president of the NC Academy of Trial Lawyers – now the NC Advocates for Justice. My first opportunity to meet Charlie was in 1973 when he advocated for a 23-year-old young woman lawyer right out of law school to serve as the first Executive Director of the Academy of Trial Lawyers. He went the extra mile to include and welcome me to Raleigh and to the Trial Lawyers. Whenever I needed advice or someone to lead a new program, Charlie was always ready to help. I was grateful for Charlie then and was honored to learn from him throughout my career – not only learning how to become a good trial lawyer but how to be a good person – one of life's highest goals.

Other groups Charlie led included serving as president of the Wake Co. Bar Association; and he received the Association's highest honor – the Chief Justice Joseph Branch Professionalism Award. The Campbell Law School's Blanchard Legal Clinic was named in his honor, but at the dedication just a few years ago, when accolades were bestowed on him, he wanted to focus not on himself, but on what the clinic would mean to others – that was Charlie.

Charlie had a lively, engaging face and he would often tilt his head, give you a smile and a slight nod, then ask with genuine interest what was happening in **your** life. You felt valued and appreciated in

his presence. It says a lot about someone when everyone feels comfortable in calling him by his first name – Charlie was that special someone.

He was always learning – looking to the future and trying new things. In 1950, Charlie began his law career that culminated in him becoming Of Counsel about 10 years ago to the law firm of Blanchard, Miller, Lewis and Isley Law, whose offices we are fortunate to be enjoying this evening. Our thanks to everyone in the firm for their generosity in providing the Historical Society this fitting -- this perfect location to honor Charlie Blanchard this evening. (Applause)

I especially thank Philip Miller, who was Charlie's longtime law partner, wonderful friend, mentee – and followed in his footsteps to expertly lead this Historical Society, which made Charlie very proud. (Applause).

I expect that Charlie believed that being a lawyer was a “calling” and that lawyers should follow the three requirements set out in Micah 6:8, requiring that we **do** justice, **love** kindness, and walk **humbly** with our God. Charlie followed these requirements throughout his many years. He met his responsibilities with joy – standing up for what is right. Charlie sought justice when he spoke on behalf of those who were being taken advantage of; when he eased people's burdens when they were hurting; when he fought to ensure the law protected our society's weakest members. Charlie also loved

kindness, when he cared for others and when he believed everyone was worthy of respect.

Charlie Blanchard made a difference in life – a difference that continues to benefit all of us who strive to **do** justice. Our thanks and love to you, Charlie.