

Importance of discipleship emphasized at Hispanic Baptist Convocation_61404

June 11, 2004

Posted: 6/11/04

Importance of discipleship emphasized at Hispanic Baptist Convocation

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

AUSTIN—Men of faith follow God's word and take to heart Christ's commandment to make disciples, speakers told participants at the Hispanic Baptist Convocation of the Laity at Betania Baptist Church in Austin.

Christians should follow the example of Hebrew patriarch Abraham, said Jose Luis Sanchez of Goodwill Baptist Church in Temple.

Abraham believed God would provide for all of his needs, and he obediently followed God's will, Sanchez explained.

Under God's guidance, Abraham moved from his home to Canaan, and he demonstrated obedience even when he was commanded to sacrifice his son, Isaac, he continued.

"Men of faith are characterized by action," Sanchez said during the Texas

Baptist Men-sponsored event.

Several hundred Hispanic men have attended the regional meetings this year, with what could be the largest still to come in conjunction with the Hispanic Baptist Convencion meeting, June 23-26 at South Padre Island.

Action should follow God's "primary plan" of making disciples around the world, said Roland Lopez, pastor of Northwest Hispanic Baptist Church in San Antonio and professor at the Baptist University of the Americas.

Believers need to pour their biblical knowledge into others as someone once gave it to them, Lopez said.

Christian ministry is not evangelism alone, but building the faith of younger believers, he emphasized.

And for that to occur, pastors must stick to their biblical calling of "equipping the saints," feeding "the flock" and guiding believers, Lopez continued.

"If you're not discipled, how is it you're going to be a disciple-maker?" he said.

Pastors should help Christians understand their calling to strengthen the faith of others, Lopez said. They must know they are to share their knowledge with believers and nonbelievers.

Ministers must continue feeding their congregations biblical knowledge for them to pass on, Lopez added. Believers must build their knowledge pool that can be poured into others.

"If they are going to work, they need to eat," he said.

Finally, pastors are called to guide Christians in discipling efforts, Lopez said.

The pastor cannot reach everyone, so the minister has to steer church members in their efforts to spread the faith, he said.

If Baptist men remain committed to faith in action and pastors follow their calling, God will move mightily, Sanchez and Lopez said.

“God wants to do great things through Texas Baptist men,” Sanchez said.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.