

Women at Texas WMU annual meeting urged to pursue Christ

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GEORGETOWN—God wants Christians to pursue a close relationship with him to bring others to faith in Christ and to edify all God’s people, speakers stressed at the Woman Missionary Union of Texas annual meeting and missions celebration.

What is inside a person spills out



Linda Cooper, president of national Woman’s Missionary Union, speaks to the WMU of Texas annual meeting in Georgetown. (Photo / Ken Camp)

Linda Cooper of Tompkinsville, Ky., president of national Woman’s Missionary Union, challenged the Texas women to pursue a fresh relationship with God in Christ, because whatever is inside a person is what comes out in day-to-day life.

“People need to see Christ in us—not only in our lips but in our lives, as well” she said.

Cooper—who works as a dental hygienist in a Christian dentist’s office—talked about the importance of making the most of opportunities God provides to tell other people about Christ.

“I have sharp instruments and a captive audience. People are going to hear about my Jesus,” she said.

She described encountering a truck driver from Texas whose rig was broken down near her workplace. When she saw the man standing in a parking lot, she invited him into the dentist office to join the staff in their morning prayers.

Although he acknowledged he was “not a churchgoing man,” he listened as employees shared prayer requests, and he joined hands with Cooper and another worker to pray.

He left the office after the prayer meeting in tears, overcome that Cooper had chosen to “welcome a stranger” into such an intimate gathering.

“Love others so they are open to hear the good news” of Christ, she urged.

‘We are servants’

God’s people need to understand their identity before they can accomplish their assignment in his kingdom, said Michael Evans, senior pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Mansfield.



Michael Evans, pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Mansfield, speaks to the Woman's Missionary Union of Texas annual meeting in Georgetown. (Photo / Ken Camp)

"We need to know who we are. We are servants," he said.

God calls all Christians to serve, but he does not call them to serve alone, Evans stressed.

"We are workers together," he said, emphasizing the changes that must occur before God can use his people effectively.

"Pettness and denominational skirmishes cannot be tolerated," he said. "We don't have time for that. It's a new day now. ...

"Old stereotypes must die. Distinctions must no longer matter. We are full partners in the mission. ... Old habits need to change. Mouths that criticize must start to encourage."

Discipleships grow from relationships, and Evans challenged Christian women to pursue those discipling relationships with intentionality. God shapes the character of his people as they serve him together, he emphasized.

“We cannot do it alone,” he said. “When I am working for God, God is working on me.”

Move beyond personal fulfillment

Christians should not see the pursuit of godly lives through devotional times and spiritual disciplines simply as beneficial to themselves, said Shirley McDonald of Greens Creek Baptist Church in Dublin, who was elected to another term as Texas WMU president during the annual meeting.

“Our Bible studies and prayers must lead us out of ourselves,” McDonald said.



Nelda Hoffman (right), past president of Woman’s Missionary Union of Texas, prays for newly elected officers (left to right) President Shirley McDonald, Vice

President Elida Salazar and Secretary Susan Morgan, joined by Earl Ann Bumpus with the Texas WMU nominating committee and outgoing Vice President Charlotte Watson. (Photo / Ken Camp)

As Christians grow in their relationship with God in Christ, it should spur them to “be a light to shine for Christ” as they engage in missions service, she stressed.

In addition to McDonald, other officers elected at the annual meeting were Elida Salazar from First Baptist Church in Carrizo Springs as vice president and Susan Morgan of Tallowood Baptist Church in Houston as secretary.

Tamiko Jones, executive director-treasurer of Texas WMU, emphasized discipleship means more than accumulating biblical knowledge.

Rather, it means “taking on the character of Christ” and “continuing the cycle of redemption” as other lives are transformed, Jones said.

“We are called not only to learn the teachings of Jesus Christ but to live them,” she said.

Quoting German theologian and martyred pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Jones emphasized the cost of discipleship.

“The cost of following Jesus Christ is your life,” she said. “It will cost you everything. ... Who is your guide? Who directs your steps? Who is your compass?”

‘Join in what God is doing globally’

Jair Campos, director of Texas Baptists’ Missionary Adoption Program, challenged Baptist women to lead their churches to sponsor indigenous missionaries.

“Today, 140,000 people will die without Jesus,” he said, pointing out missionary-sending agencies cannot provide enough non-native missionaries to reach all the spiritually lost. However, God is working through Christians who have the cultural and language skills to reach their own people with the gospel.

“Join in what God is doing globally,” he urged.

Jalil Dawood, executive director of World Refugee Care and pastor Arabic Bible Church in Dallas, spoke about the plight of refugees from his personal perspective as a refugee from Iraq.

“Nobody wants to leave his family and go to an unknown place and start at zero,” he said.

Dawood encouraged the Baptist women to recognize refugees as neighbors whom God has called them to love.