

Zorzoli urges Baptist women to take a leap of faith

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LUBBOCK—When faced with obstacles, Alicia Zorzoli challenged Hispanic Baptist women to take a “leap of faith.”

Zorzoli was the keynote speaker at the 103rd annual meeting of Unión Femenil Misionera de Texas, held March 6-7 in Lubbock. Women from throughout Texas gathered to explore the implications of the conference theme, “Steppin’ Out in Faith.”

Just as the Apostle Paul experienced obstacles in his second missionary journey, Zorzoli recalled facing a roadblock at the beginning of a mission trip to Chile.

Just before she could board her flight, an agent told Zorzoli something was wrong with her documents. While everyone else accompanying her could board the plane, she had to find another way to get to Chile.

She reflected on the experience of Paul, as recorded in Acts 16-18. Paul wanted to visit Asia on his second missionary trip, but the Holy Spirit prevented it. When Paul, Silas and Timothy sought to enter Bythunia, the Spirit also turned them away. They went to Troas with nowhere else to go, “but God was showing he had other plans,” Zorzoli said.

When told she could not board the airplane to Chile, “the opportunity appeared for us to take a leap of faith,” Zorzoli noted. “But taking that leap also requires we make a decision first.”

Not free from problems, but blessed results

One of Zorzoli's mission partners informed her she could take a taxi across the Andes Mountains. After boarding the taxi, two other passengers joined her in the taxi—one who was sent back to Chile after legal issues in Argentina related to drug use and another who hoped to traffic prohibited items across the border.

"A leap of faith does not keep us from not dealing with problems," Zorzoli said. "That was the case for me and for Paul."

Both she and the first century apostle wanted to serve God, but they had been prevented from serving in the way they hoped to do it, she asserted.

"But while the leap of faith does not imply problems will end, a leap of faith does end with a marvelous result," she said.

In Troas, Paul saw a man from Macedonia in a dream who implored him: "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

Paul did not find the man from Macedonia, but he discovered a group of women praying by the river in Philippi, Zorzoli observed. One of those women, Lydia, listened closely to Paul and then invited him to her house. The group that met in Lydia's house grew into a church Paul deeply loved.

"We know because of what he wrote to them that he 'loved and longed for them with the compassion of Jesus Christ,'" Zorzoli said, quoting from Paul's letter to the Philippian church.

See the wonders of God

Most of the New Testament letters written by Paul served to help churches resolve conflicts, but Paul's writings to Philippi mostly show the joy he had for them, Zorzoli noted.

"My experience was similar," she said. "I do not know if God would have given me the ministry he gave if I had not taken that step."

Talking about faith at church seems easy until problems appear, she added.

Sometimes, faithfulness does not require a great leap. It may just require a believer to take a small step, she observed.

"But it will always require us to leave what is known and head toward the unknown," said Zorzoli. "It will cost us to leave our comfort zone."

As they obey God, Christians cannot expect an end to problems, but they can expect to see the wonders of God, she concluded.

"It will be more than what you and I could have ever dreamed," Zorzoli said.