

Commentary: It was a kingdom gathering

July 19, 2013

“This just feels right!” and “This is Texas Baptists!” are two of the many positive comments people made to me as I stood in the Baptist University of the Américas’ booth during the Texas Baptist Family Gathering in San Antonio.



René MacielI agree but would expand and expound to note it was more of a kingdom gathering: “If my people, who are called by my name, humble themselves and pray” (2 Chronicles 7:14). Maybe we should take Jesus’ prayer a little more seriously: “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done” (Matthew 6:10).

Family reunion

It was kind of surreal to see Texas Baptists’ different cultures and languages together as one—mixing, mingling, conversing. It felt right, and it was a wonderful experience even for children to be a part of this family event. Just like at a biological family reunion, it was great to see and meet family members we had not been around in a long time. It was great to hear their voices and to learn about their lives, to feel the connection of being related by the bond of love—Jesus’ love.

Is this what God intended for his body, the church? Was this a dress

rehearsal?

Personally, I loved it, and I would like to have more practice—more practice to be one, to embrace my brothers, to embrace the different cultures, the different languages and the different styles of worship.

Spirit of unity

Another person said to me: “There is just a great spirit here. Can you feel it?” I did, and it was a wonderful spirit of unity, and it is the spirit I would like to see each year, a spirit of one, and a spirit of Texas Baptists gathering.

“After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” (Revelation 7:9-10)

-René Maciel is president of Baptist University of the Américas in San Antonio