

Developing Courageous Leaders

Teachings from Joshua highlighted at Southwest area conference

Story by Valerie Davis

Photos by Geraldine Wilkins, unless otherwise noted

“Have I [God] not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:9

Before Joshua could lead the tribes of Israel into the Promised Land, he needed to be equipped, strengthened, and closely attuned to God’s voice. His task would be challenging, but the Lord assured Joshua of His continual presence and ultimate victory. For attendees of the 2013 Southwest Pastors and Leaders Conference, courage was again the resounding theme, and each guest speaker taught from the Book of Joshua.

“Our vision for the conference was twofold,” explained Assistant Pastor Adam Parsons of Calvary Tucson, AZ, who organized the March event. “One objective is to equip the saints by teaching about topics that we view as pertinent to the challenges church leaders confront. We strongly believe that if we are faithful to teach through the selected Bible passages, the Spirit of God will move on individuals’ hearts and accomplish the work He desires to do.” The Q&A session featured controversial subjects, including abortion, homosexuality, and church territorialism, that required courage to discuss openly and honestly.

The second objective was for fellowship among pastors. More than 1,300 Christian leaders representing 163 churches and organizations from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico received spiritual enrichment through the event. “God moved and we saw the need for fellowship met,” Adam continued. “A lot of leaders who come are from smaller churches. They sometimes experience discouragement when they don’t have anyone to talk to about the difficulties they face. The conference gives them the opportunity to interact with other pastors. They pray with each other, encourage one another, and leave refreshed.”

Supplemental to the conference but open to all was the Southwest Teachers Convention.



Exhibitors such as Gospel For Asia provided resources for conference attendees.



Pastor Pat Lazovich of CC Sierra Vista, AZ, teaches the event’s final session.

Developed primarily for Christian school teachers and administrators, the topics of technology and teens were also applicable to small group and youth leaders.

“This conference,” commented Calvary Tucson’s Senior Pastor Robert Furrow, “was an incredible opportunity for Calvary Tucson to live the encouragement expressed by Paul in Ephesians 4:11-12: ‘And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.’ It is my prayer each year that leaders from churches around



Pastor Skip Heitzig from Calvary Albuquerque, NM, teaches on Joshua 1. Photo courtesy of CC Tucson

the country would come, be edified, and find a time of refreshing.”

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