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Online Hispanic gathering asks 'Are These the End Times?'

by Keila Diaz, posted Thursday, April 09, 2020 (18 days ago)

NASHVILLE (BP) -- While churches everywhere are adapting and learning how to disciple and evangelize in a post-COVID-19 world, the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee created a space for Hispanic Baptists to ask questions and discuss ideas.

Julio Arriola, executive director of Hispanic relations and mobilization with the Executive Committee, hosted a Facebook Live conference call Tuesday (April 7) asking "Are These the End Times?" He was joined by Bobby Sena, director of Spanish studies at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Evis Carballosa, author and speaker; and Efrain Salcedo, director of Hispanic initiatives and professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

More than 300 Hispanic Baptists joined the livestream. In two days, the recording had been viewed approximately 7,400 times.

Kicking off the livestream, Arriola asked the panel if the ongoing pandemic indicates we are living in the end times. Carballosa said that while in his opinion these are not yet the end times, the COVID-19 pandemic is a sign that they're drawing nearer.

"While the church remains on earth, we will not see the Antichrist nor the judgments," Carballosa said. "The next step in God's plan according to His Word is to move His church out of this world."

Asked if the COVID-19 pandemic was punishment or trial, Salcedo said it was neither but rather a sign of what is to come and an opportunity for the church to mirror the love of Christ to a lost world.

"This is that the face of the earth may know that there is one God and that they may recognize how close He is," Salcedo said.

Questions poured in during the session from Hispanic pastors and believers. Some were concerned with their current financial situation after being laid off from work.

To encourage the participants, Sena shared his story. He grew up in a low-income family; many times he didn't know where his next meal would come from. Still, he said, his family never lacked anything, and his father taught him to always trust in God's providence.

Salcedo closed the question-and-answer session reminding pastors that the most important action they can engage in is to love.

"There are many people who are afraid, and as pastors we have to be the hands and feet of Christ and love on people," he said.

Arriola then shared the Gospel with viewers and invited them to pray to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.

To view a recording of the stream click [here](#).



Julio Arriola (top left) with the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee hosted a live video chat for Hispanic Baptists to ask questions and discuss ideas.

Photo from Facebook