



"See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him." Isaiah 40:10

I thank the Lord for allowing us to bring to fruition our 2nd Merida Regional Summer Bible Conference in 2016 entitled, "Jesus, Mighty Savior," through which we could see the hand of the Lord at all times: in the preparations, in the invitation of guests, and during and after the conference.

At the beginning of May, P. Jaime and I talked and began a period of prayer to determine if both chapters could do the Summer Bible Conference together. In the middle of that month, we made the decision, and on Sunday May 24 we let the brothers know the title of our Summer Bible Conference.



We organized a prayer vigil on Friday, May 27, prayed all night, and could intercede for our RSBC. Gradually our conference was taking more shape and we continued our weekly campus ministry in the College of Engineering (Blessed Fellowship) and in the College of the Humanities (Soldiers of Jesus Christ Fellowship).

The Lord put it on my heart to prepare as a pre-conference activity something like a Bible seminar/school, for which we would choose a particular topic. Such activity would have a message, dances, music and the life testimonies of our members. Through this, all the brothers would be motivated even more to labor in the work of God and for our conference. This activity would be presented throughout the month in different locations; the only thing that would change would be the brothers and sisters who would deliver their life testimonies.

To the glory of God, all the brothers received the proposal with pleasure and with great enthusiasm. A few days after this, I set the title and date; it was titled, "Today salvation has come," based on the story of Zacchaeus. We prepare the activity for a month. Because the activity was in a format that we were not used, the first location we chose was in the community where we congregate for worship service, in the El Soler borough, with the purpose of using it as a pilot and being able to correct any issues for the following presentations. This was how, on July 1st, this somewhat adventure started, walking hand-in-hand with the Lord, in order to bring his word to every creature, without forgetting our mission field, the university.



07-06-2016



07-16-2016
College of Engineering (LUZ),

College of the Humanities (LUZ), 07-19-2016
Raúl Leoni Borough 07-22-2016



In the university, we obtained new students' contacts and in the communities several college students' contacts from the area. We have congregated in the Raul Leoni borough, and the Gutiérrez sisters live there. That borough has a large number of buildings, and there are many young people there, so we opted to present our seminar there as well.

The month of August came and with much energy and with only a few days left for the conference, we put together a new seminar, which



we titled "Come Follow Me," based on the story of the rich young man. For it, we followed the same methodology mentioned above: a message, praise, dance, music and life testimonies. God gave us a lot of dynamism and practice preparing the previous one; so for this one, we were much better prepared. Unfortunately the University was on its vacation break, so we opted to do the presentations in the communities and chose two: El Soler and Felipe Hernandez. A fellowship had been working in the latter one for several months, so we decided to include it in our agenda.



El Soler Borough, 08-05-2016



Felipe Hernández Borough, 08-19-2016

In the case of the Felipe Hernandez community, there are several sheep there; some are finishing high school, but others are already college students. A disciple named Florinda, who was raised in the most recent cohort, lives there and has been very influential for these young people. A few weeks before the conference, I decided to carry out some special services there on Wednesdays. Those sheep had been faithful in attending the Friday group Bible studies of Florinda's fellowship for about three months, but few were attending our worship services on Sundays in El Soler borough, due to the distance between the place of our services and the community. Florinda accepted my proposal and for three Wednesdays we met from 6 pm to 8 pm. It had to be at that time, because it takes me two hours to get home. The sheep were faithful those Wednesdays, glory to God!



Felipe Hernández Borough, 08-10-2016
Felipe Hernández Borough, 08-17-2016



We forgot to take a photo on Wednesday 27, because we left in a hurry at almost 9 pm; we got home at almost at 11 pm. ☺

Despite all these activities, we did not neglect prayer. I must confess that at various times I was distressed by the fact that very few people had confirmed their registration for the conference, even the core members themselves. Unfortunately the economic situation affected us this time. Although it is true that 20,000 bolivars (more than \$ 2,000) was not an unattainable amount for sheep; however, because of the issue of food scarcity, many could not start paying their conference fee due to the fact that they depended on the little money they did possess to buy food.

The hand of the Lord helped us at many times, because the activities we organized had their logistical expenses, and it was difficult for me and for the church to cover them. There were several times when we received financial support almost a day before the activities, and the Lord always provided in some way or another. The situation was no different in the days leading up to the conference. Members of our ministry, mostly students, who had for months been trying to pay for their conference fee but had not been able to, miraculously received answers to their prayers and were able to pay their registration.

Of the nine members from our chapter, only one could not pay their registration. This was Nevis, a sister who had financially supported three sheep to attend the 2015 International Summer Bible Conference of Venezuela. This time she did not have enough even to pay for her own registration. Seeing the heart she has had, I paid for her conference fee. By faith, I even told several invited guests to try to obtain as much of the conference fee as they could, and I would finance the rest, even though I had many doubts about whether I could keep my promise to those people.

Two days before the conference, God manifested his provision in many ways; Caracas UBF gave us financial support, to which was added financial support from Msn. Juan Beck and from Msn. Juan Seo. I am grateful to God, because we even had a portion left over which we can use to cover the expenses of the Discipleship program and post-conference ministry work.

THE DAY OF OUR REGIONAL SBC HAD COME

Currently we have nine members; there were ten but given the economic condition, Sister Yadira Bello made the decision to leave Zulia and go to the state of Vargas to work, and now she attends Caracas UBF. She left her son Rayner because he is studying at the university. In addition to the members, the following guests attended the conference:

1. Mayreth Vilchez (20 years old) (university student).
2. Yosimar Urdaneta (20 years old) (university student).
3. Neidi González (19 years old).
4. Angie Ramírez (18 years old) (university student).
5. Yanexi Castañeda (20 years old).
6. Sheila Boscán (23 years old) (TSU university student).
7. Yeisy Carrullo (15 years old) (university student).
8. Neilimar González (20 years old).
9. Maria Vilchez (14 years old) (high school student).
10. Any Tin (14 years old) (high school student).
11. Gabriela Coronado (15 years old) (high school student).

In total this chapter brought twenty participants; if you count the six children who accompanied us, twenty-six participants went. In the case of Merida UBF, there were thirteen participants, including the members and four children, for a total of seventeen participants. From Caracas UBF three participants and one child visited us, in total four participants. To the glory of God, our conference was attended by forty-seven participants.

Both chapters met in Mérida on Friday morning, Aug 26, and at 2:00 pm we began our conference. The opening message was given by disciple Mary Gutierrez who, through a seminar, showed us the need to take up our cross daily and follow Jesus. Then we studied the word, and in the evening P.

Jaime Delgado preached on the main message of conference, "Jesus, Mighty Savior." At the end, the recently-raised disciples shared their testimony, and we closed the day's program with a video on the sacrifice of Jesus.

On Saturday morning, P. José (Caracas UBF) started the day's program by sharing the Daily Bread message, then we study the passage of the crucifixion, and finally disciple Maritza Gutierrez delivered the message of the cross. There we experienced a precious time, because absolutely all our guests rose and accepted Jesus as their savior. After lunch, we shared testimony, and at night disciple Nathaly Ramirez shared a message about the faith of the four men who took their paralytic friend to Jesus. Subsequently, other disciples shared their life testimonies, and the day's program ended with the special activities prepared by both chapters.

On Sunday, Aug 28, I was in charge of the worship service, and around 11:00 am we left the place of conference. Because our transportation was scheduled for 10:00 am, we had to accelerate the closure of our activities, so in the short time allotted for the call to discipleship, only one sister from Merida UBF stood up, for which we thank the Lord.

However, in the case of our chapter, upon reaching Zulia, some brothers made the decision to enter the discipleship program, including some who were unable to attend the conference, but had been faithful to Sunday worship service. Such was the case for Yosimar, Mayreth, Yosibeth and Ingilberth (Nathaly's husband). Ingilberth is a 31-year-old TSU student majoring in business administration and plans to continue studying in the future. The former three sheep are all college students. These sheep belong to the group that studies the Bible in the Felipe Hernandez borough.

And in the case of El Soler borough, Erick (college student) and Moreima (Yeisy's mother) who is 40 years old, decided to do the discipleship program. In short we have six confirmed candidates so far, and we are praying for Neidi and Neilimar Gonzalez, who attended the conference and are yet to decide.

It is very important that the Felipe Hernandez sheep congregate on Sundays, which is why I made the decision to search for a nearby place for brothers and sisters from the Felipe Hernandez borough, and opted for the Raul Leoni borough, in the Gutierrez sisters' house.

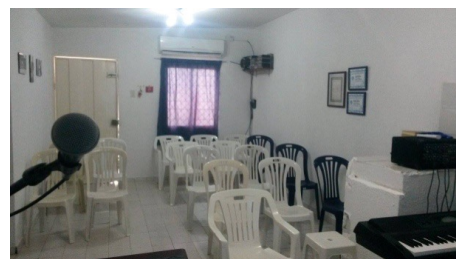
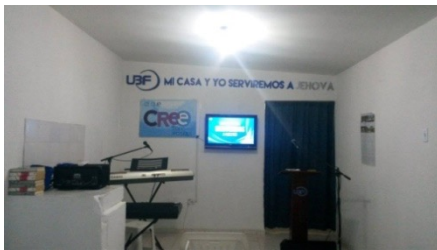


Thus, from Sunday 09/04/2016, we made two Sunday worship services. At 9:00 am in Raul the Leoni borough, and at 4:00 pm in the Soler borough. At the members meeting, we delegated what each member's participation in the two groups would be like. We made some decisions about the praise team, serving, Sunday school, etc.

We thank God that everything went well. I'm the only one who has to move, which minimizes the costs, and already know each member about which service to attend, waiting for the sheep from each place and encouraging them.

In parallel, we formed two committees, in order to find a new place equidistant to both groups and make a single worship service in God's time. One of these committees will focus on finding a place to rent, and the other on finding a place to buy. Before the conference, we had talked a lot about this issue and had prayed for God's direction.

In fact, there was a site about which we were able to inquire before our conference, and all members proposed to make a commitment and contribute their share to be able to buy this place in the future in the Lord's time. Amen. Despite the situation in our country, the brothers and sisters are very encouraged. We are leaving everything in the Lord's hands. The brothers and sisters know that ideally we would come together in El Soler, which is the place that has the appropriate set up for worship services. But they think about the distance from the sheep from the LUZ and Felipe Hernandez boroughs, so that they will not be



discouraged.

Lugar de los Servicios Dominicales en El Soler
Casa de los pastores

For now, we are at peace, serving the sheep, leaving our burdens before God. The discipleship program will be held on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm in Felipe Hernandez and El Soler, where four and two participants will attend, respectively. The discipleship program in Soler will be led by Shepheress Yolimar and me; and the Felipe Hernandez discipleship program will be led by the disciples Maritza, Mary and Nathaly, who will rotate every week. Once a month, I will visit as an auditor, to get to know and pray for the struggles of the discipleship candidates from that area. Sunday will be dedicated only for worship service.

I have planned with P. Jaime Delgado (Merida UBF) to put together an activity in October this year with several members to visit Merida and perform some activities during a work week. The idea is to share our experiences with them so that they can try to establish them at the University of Los Andes. We are all very excited to support the work that this chapter is doing at that university. We have also planned to do a seminar in the month of November in the LUZ(*La Universidad del Zulia*: The University of Zulia). in the format that we used before the conference.

Blessings from Zulia!

Hugo Hurtado
UBF Maracaibo