

# 'Time Magazine' Highlights the Latino Reformation

In its April 15 issue, *Time magazine* reports on the surprising rise in evangelical Latinos in the United States and the implications it could have for both American religious practices and electoral politics.

With Pastor Wilfredo "Choco" DeJesús' praying hands and the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez's description of the Hispanic Reformation on the cover, *Time* brought to national attention the influence Hispanic evangelicals carry within America's religious landscape.

While more than two-thirds of the 52 million-plus Latinos in the U.S. are Catholic, that number could be cut in half by 2030. More than 35 percent of Hispanics in America now call themselves born-again. Additionally, the Southern Baptist Church—the largest evangelical denomination in the country—says they hope to more than double the number of Baptist Hispanic churches by 2020.

*Time's* Elizabeth Dias states: "The evangelico boom is inextricably linked to the immigrant experience. Evangelicos are socially more conservative than Hispanics generally, but they are quicker to fight for social justice than their white brethren are. They are eager to believe in the miraculous but also much more willing to bend ecclesiastical rules to include women in church duties and invite other ethnic groups into their pews. The new churches are in many cases a deliberate departure from the countries and the faith their members left behind—but they don't look or sound anything like the mega-churches of the U.S."

Carlos Campo, president at Regent University, said, "*Time's* cover story 'The Latino Reformation,' makes it clear that the

Latino evangelical church has embraced a 'vernacular' experience for their congregants. If we define *vernacular* as 'native or indigenous (opposed to literary or learned)' the Latino evangelical church is a modern version of the Septuagint and the Luther Bible: they are 'translating' religious experience in a way that honors and understands fullness of the individual person."

George O. Wood, chief executive officer of the Assemblies of God, said, "I am so grateful for the way the Assemblies of God is presented in the *Time* piece, and honored that we have this opportunity to contribute to the national dialogue about our compassionate Jesus. Our Hispanic pastors are reaching a growing demographic of people passionate about reaching the poor with the gospel and being the hands and feet of Jesus to this generation. It's a new day for the Christian community, and we're thrilled with the work the NHCLC and Rev. Samuel Rodriguez are doing to meet the needs of Hispanic evangelicals."

DeJesús, highlighted in the *Time magazine* feature story, is the pastor of New Life Covenant Church in Chicago. In addition, he is NHCLC's vice president, the NHCLC Illinois Chapter Director, and the author of the new release *Amazing Faith: How to Make God Take Notice*.

"As the vice president of social justice for the NHCLC I am humbled and honored to be featured by *Time magazine* as a representative of the Latino reformation in the United States and around the world," he said. "It's a great privilege to be a voice not only for the Latino Christian community, but also for the poor, disenfranchised and voiceless in our society."

DeJesús and Rodriguez, recently nominated to *Time's* 100 most influential leaders, and author of the new release, *The Lamb's Agenda*, have worked together over the last 20 years. Their collaboration has embodied what Rev. Rodriguez refers to as the Lamb's Agenda.

Albert L. Reyes, president and CEO of Buckner International, said, "The future of evangelical Christianity will be increasingly bicultural and bilingual, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and diverse. How churches, denominations, ministries, universities and seminaries prepare for this new reality will impact the future of Christianity in America for decades to come."