

Report on the 2013 ICEC

June 14-16 was our seventh annual International Christian Evidences Conference. It was held on campus at San Diego State University. The conference was co-sponsored by the Apologetics Research Society and the San Diego Church of Christ. The theme was Christianity and Culture. All the classes as well as the public lecture were on the general topic of the interaction between biblical Christianity and the wider culture. Our goal was to ask in what sense the Christian message is counter-cultural in the modern context and in what ways the Christian message can resonate with the spirit of the age. How can we borrow from the discoveries of the world—from science and psychology, for example, and in what ways should we be a city on a hill, showing why Christianity offers much better answers to human concerns?

We were blessed to have guests from as far away as New Hampshire, New Jersey, Mexico City, Guadalajara and Nova Scotia. Total attendance was 125, which was approximately twice our previous conferences. We had a balanced attendance, including singles, marrieds and college students.

The keynote address was given by Dr. Dyron Daughrity, a professor at Pepperdine University. The title, naturally, was Christianity and Culture. Dr. Daughrity applied his extensive research to challenge disciples of Jesus to stay on the cutting edge of where world culture is headed. There were many visitors at this evangelistic event. We were blessed to have Guy Hammond, an evangelist for the Halifax Church of Christ. He gave three different classes on the Christian approach to same sex attraction. Guy is fast becoming a nationally-known leader in helping Christians find a rational, compassionate and biblical response to this issue which is at the forefront in our culture. Joey Harris, a teacher from Augusta Georgia gave a thought-provoking class on Christianity and Race. Robert Carrillo, lead evangelist for the San Diego Church of Christ handled one of the most controversial questions of our age with his class on Christianity, Warfare and Pacifism. One of the most practical classes, Christianity and Psychology, was given by Jennifer Konzen and Todd Spath, professional counselors from the San Diego church. They suggested in what ways mainstream psychology is counter to the Christian worldview, and in what ways we can learn from and use what psychology has to offer.

A number of the classes were taught by ARS board members. Dan Conder gave a class on the Intolerance of Tolerance. Our modern culture takes as a given that tolerance of all views is an ethical imperative. Is there a place for morality and truth in the marketplace of ideas? Kedron Jones gave a devastating blow to the “pro-choice” view with his class, The Moral Question of Abortion. Dr. John Oakes handled two key questions with classes on Christianity and Bioethics as well as on Christianity and Postmodernism. A highlight of the conference was the Saturday evening banquet. Conference participants discussed difficult questions such as environmentalism, assisted suicide and dealing with addiction and presented their findings to the group. A CD with all the classes from the conference is available from Illumination Publishers at www.ipibooks.com.

Special thanks to the San Diego Church Board, to Robert Carrillo for his support and vision for the event, to Chris Maness for handling technology, to Peter Chacon for interfacing with SDSU and, above all, as usual, to Jan Oakes for doing the lion's share of the work of organizing this wonderful event. Right now we do not have a plan for the 2014 ICEC. If anyone would like to sponsor the event, let us know.

John Oakes
President, ARS
6/20/2013