

## Latino Leaders Speak Out: Unity Needed to Prevent Injustices and Cultural Polarization —TAMPA, Fla., April 30, 2019

**"THE MINUTE YOU HIGHLIGHT YOUR CULTURE OVER CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES, YOU'VE BECOME PART OF THE SEPARATION. [DIVISION] IS NOT CAUSED BY A CULTURAL BARRIER; IT IS CAUSED BY AN IGNORANCE BARRIER."**

**—JULIO HOBAISH, ASSOCIATE PASTOR AT THE POTTER'S HOUSE OF FORT WORTH**

As more than 8,000 pastors from around the world gathered in Tampa for the 2019 International Pastors & Leadership Conference, Hispanic leaders assembled to explore cultural shifts, religious polarization and the unique challenges facing American Latinos for the inaugural "¡Dios Mío!" roundtable. As the religious landscape of Latinos continues to shift, global thought-leader and founder of The Potter's House **Bishop T.D. Jakes** brought Hispanic leaders together for the first-ever conversation to foster greater cross-cultural understanding. Immigration, politics and community solutions were trending topics during the enlightening conversation.

Moderated by Emmy-winning journalist Myrka Dellanos, panelists agreed, race relations and social injustice are complex issues. The recurring answer: it is time to speak up, not be led by any one political ideology and unite.

*"If you are in leadership in the community, it's vital to emphasize healthy relationships and healthy conversations,"* said Julio Hobaish, associate pastor at The Potter's House of Fort Worth. *"Your leadership has a voice. You can tell [about] your leadership by the dead bodies you leave behind. If you don't speak, you're leaving generations behind."*

Hobaish was joined by faith-based experts Rafael Sanchez, pastor at the House of Worship Ministries in New Jersey, and Diane Cortes, president of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Tampa Bay.

*"With border control and immigration issues top of mind, we [faith-based leaders and churches] find ourselves walking a grey line,"* said Sanchez, who expressed that many churches are afraid to engage due to lack of education. *"Sometimes the most valuable thing we can offer is information and training."*

Downloadable footage from the ¡Dios Mío! Conversation is available [here](#). Leaders have been encouraged to speak up and share their own tips for solutions to issues via social media, using #TPHDiosMio.

¡Dios Mío! was part of the 2019 International Pastors & Leadership Conference that took place April 25 – 27, at the Tampa Convention Center. At the conference, Jakes also unveiled his latest book, *Crushing: God Turns Pressure into Power*.

Visit [PastorsAndLeaders.org](http://PastorsAndLeaders.org) for more information on speakers, talent and next year's lineup. Continue to stay connected on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and Instagram by following @IPLEExcel and #IPLEExcel.

**About The Potter's House**

Founded in 1996, The Potter's House is a 30,000-member, nondenominational, multicultural church and humanitarian organization led by Bishop T.D. Jakes, twice featured on the cover of Time magazine as America's Best Preacher. It has global humanitarian outreach and 48 active ministries like its Texas Offenders Re-entry initiative. Consistently ranked among the largest and most influential churches in the U.S., The Potter's House has five locations: The Potter's House of Dallas, The Potter's House of Fort Worth, The Potter's House of North Dallas, The Potter's House of Denver and The Potter's House at One L.A. For more information, visit [ThePottersHouse.org](http://ThePottersHouse.org).