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ORLANDO MEETING WAS ALL ABOUT CHURCH PLANTING

REPORTS FROM BBFI OFFICERS



Eddie Lyons BBFI President

We had a great meeting in Orlando. I'd like to first thank our host, Pastor David Janney and staff, for doing such a great job hosting what was a very encouraging and inspiring time. There were several things that stood out to me.

1. We had over 30 church planters in attendance. The theme of the meeting was church planting. These men brought a new level of energy because of their sacrifice and commitment. Their hearts to reach their

cities, no matter what, was contagious. The starting of new churches is vital to the health of our Fellowship. We honor these men and I urge you to support and help them.

2. We launched a new name for the Fellowship church planting effort. We are now calling this initiative APEX.
3. All of the speakers gave us something to take away. Sean Sears challenged us about

church planting and illustrated how this Fellowship can make a difference to church planters. Rick Blackwood challenged us to think about our mission and vision. His big goal for his church in Miami was inspiring. David Nasser talked about the cost of church planting. His life story showcased the power and providence of God.

4. The fellowship that took place over meals and throughout the meeting illustrated the power of having friends in ministry.



I want to give a special thanks to all of the State Chairman, Representatives, and those who came as their proxies. These leaders of our state fellowships do a good work. It is the strength of the state fellowships that makes us strong. We are not a denomination that has a top-down power structure. The power flows from local churches and state initiatives. We, at the national level, are here to coordinate and serve the grass-root efforts that begin at the local level. It is a privilege to serve with you.



Lewis McClendon
First Vice President – Missions

Dave Janney and his staff put a great meeting together in Orlando. It was exciting to see the large number of pastors, missionaries and fulltime workers who attended. The workshops were very practical and I went away from every workshop with ideas that will be put into practice in my church.

To set up a future meeting, Mission Director Jon Konnerup promoted the March 14-17, 2016, meeting in Seoul, South Korea. The last meeting held outside the United States in the Philippines had a big impact on national pastors who were saved and trained by BBFI missionaries. The meeting in Seoul will be another chance for everyone to see and to be encouraged by the worldwide impact the BBFI is making.



Rob Hoffman
BBFI Treasurer

We do not have final statistics but I was encouraged by the large group of pastors, fulltime workers, and their wives who attended. I was able to meet several new church planters whom I had only known through social media. There was a good balance between older and younger leaders present.

The theme of the meeting was “Compelled,” and the focus was church planting. I was impressed by the compassion and determination of the planters that I met. We have a great young group of men who are compelled to plant churches in significant areas of our country, and they are succeeding.

Pastor Janney and his team did a great job of balancing the worship and media. Everything was done with excellence, and I sensed a passion to do things right. The choice of speakers was balanced, biblical, and challenging. There was no controversy or negativity from the meeting. Those I spoke with were blessed by the morning seminars, the attendance, and the youthfulness of those who attended.

I was challenged in two specific areas. I was blessed by the excellence displayed in the buildings, the media, the worship, and the preaching. Second, I was challenged to lead our church to focus more on evangelism.

Paul Foster
BBFI Secretary

To me, there are three things imperative for an outstanding meeting: great preaching, great fellowship, and, although not as important, a great location. The meeting in Orlando met all three criteria. The preaching was phenomenal, and the breakouts relevant and helpful. And the fellowship was great, seeing so many new faces both young and old. The highlight for me was the fervor of church planting throughout the week. We saw younger men on fire with a passion, enthusiasm, and energy that gives a shot of spiritual adrenalin which I believe will result in hundreds of new churches.

Sean Sears’s message moved me Monday night. (If you missed the meeting, download the message). As he preached, my mind went back a few years when we planted RiverWest Baptist Church. I understood when he talked about the concern for support, and when he talked about eating and sleeping church planting. He wept as he confessed he was a sinful man with a sinful heart who has a great task before him. What a convicting sermon as the Holy Spirit made us search our hearts.

The ship is turning, and the momentum is evident as we move forward to the May meeting at BBC and then High Street in September.





BREAKOUT SESSIONS



Doug Cox
Second Vice President – Education

The Orlando meeting showcased the need for a cause to drive us. By definition we need a cause to drive the engine that empowers our movement to achieve Godly impact in the world today. In recent years, the cause has been diminished by a variety of secondary issues. The Orlando meeting was focused on church planting as were the original energies of our founders. This past week we embraced many styles of ministry in the excitement of building young church planters into successful and God blessed pastors. The cause was back.

The need for our passion to be directed to church planting (the cause) was graphically displayed when President Lyons mapped our Fellowship across the 50 states in a media presentation during the directors’ meeting, and we were forced to look at glaring holes in our structure. Orlando lifted the whole movement of rebuilding and increasing the outreach of our Fellowship onto the next level by welcoming men on the fringe to join in the mainstream.

It was noted that church planting isn’t measured by loan values but eternal values. Our flagship school announced that the strenuous efforts of the past two years resulted in some very good news from ABHE (an accrediting association). However, the meeting allowed us to see the benefit of having a meeting focused on one area — church planting. We had committee meetings and breakouts, but the day belonged to the church planters and the momentum grew.

Looking ahead, would it be too much to assume that on our 65th birthday, the May meeting could be focused on the value of our educational entities? And could we begin even now to fuel the excitement of missions in Korea for March 2016.

Dan Greer
Third Vice President – Church Planting

I think Dave Janney and his team did a remarkable job putting the program together. The music was a great mix of classical hymns and contemporary worship with a massive multi-church choir on the first night. The speaking format was ingenious with ten-minute testimonials representing various age groups in the evening followed by a great sermon, and then morning sessions coupled with breakouts before lunch.

One of the most exciting things for me was to see the large number of young pastors, church planters, and prospective church planters at the meeting. We even had a few young men attending from the SBC with interest in our network. Younger pastors and potential planters from all over the country were engaging John Gross and me in conversations about networking, information sharing, fund raising, mentoring, regional organization, and training. It seems that issue-oriented fragmentation that has caused considerable damage in the past is on its way out and these young men want to reunite in an effort to make a major impact in our country for the cause of Christ.

Our business meeting was conducted on a positive note with good reports from all the subcommittees. One of the highlights of the business meeting was a report from the church planting office that, over the past six months, we have seen a reduction of nearly a million dollars in our exposure to mortgage liabilities associated with NCPO.

I personally think we accomplished much in Orlando. The atmosphere was great, the preaching challenged us, and I left encouraged. I want to thank Dave Janney and Orlando Baptist Church for hosting the winter meeting and making it such a pleasant experience.