



THE EASTERN SUMMIT 2017

EMPOWERING OUR INTERNATIONAL BODY



in this edition

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TEARS OF JOY AT THE EASTERN STAFF SUMMIT



The Eastern Staff Summit 2017

It was awesome to see all of the staff who came to the Eastern Staff Summit. The joy of seeing over 100 staff from around the world in one room was overwhelming for me, and a great encouragement!

It literally brought tears to my eyes.

- The reports from around the world were inspiring. God is doing great things among us in Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Africa, Zambia, Kosovo, the USA, and of course the MENA region (Lebanon, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia).
- The summit affirmed for us the core values and foundational distinctives the Lord gave us 27 years ago when Horizons was founded on May 7, 1990. It affirmed God's calling for us to remain

faithful to the gospel and not let the current trends in missions divert us from preaching Christ and him crucified. We are more committed to a biblical missiology than ever before.

- A challenge of growth is that it has a tendency to widen our work *for* God, but not deepen our walk *with* God. There is a risk of depending more on funds and strategies than on God. Faith in the Lord must be at the core of all we are and do. We praise God that we are committed to being Christ centered.
- On a practical level, the Summit helped us organize ourselves according to our various gifts and callings. The organizational structure of Action Teams was presented and action teams met together to discuss their particular areas of ministry.

– Georges Houssney,
President, Horizons International

The Way Forward:

- Let us continue to persevere in the ministry God gave to each one of us.
- Let us work together more closely and not be islands by ourselves.
- Let us pray the Lord would protect us from drifting from an organism to a corporate structure.
- Let us keep the Gospel at the forefront of all our activities.
- Let us keep Christ at the center of our lives and ministry.

THE SCHOOL OF HOPE

The School of Hope (SOH) first started with 19 kids in March 2015, to respond to the huge educational needs of Syrian refugee children from Muslim backgrounds who had no school to go to - many of whom had already accepted Christ! The subjects taught are: Math, Science, Arabic, English, and Bible!

Since then, the number of the kids has grown to 76, with an age range of 5 to 13 years, almost all from Muslim backgrounds! The teachers ministering at SOH report that the things they see there are nothing short of miracles!

One of the teachers said: "The first things we teach them is love." She continued saying that through this love of the Lord which they experience, their hearts become open and connected to ours. In this way, we are able to introduce them to Jesus Christ.

When Muhammed joined SOH, he objected and refused to pray and participate in the Bible class and stood outside of class during the prayer times, echoing the words he hears at home; "Our god is different than yours." Now, Mohammed is the first one to raise his hand when the teachers ask: who wants to pray?

In the beginning of the year, the parents are sometimes concerned about the Christian material their children are being taught. At the end of the year, the same ones come with immense expressions of thankfulness and gratitude for the change they have witnessed in their kids - who were often traumatized from the aftermath of war, all the symptoms of which are broken through the power of prayer and fasting for the kids, and the godly love they experience here at SOH.

– Fatima Mustafa, Lead Teacher

Sponsor a Child!

Your gift of only \$55 per month gives a student the gift of education and the gift of learning about Jesus Christ!

For more information, contact Annie Ostrander,
School of Hope Sponsorship Coordinator
schoolofhope@horizonsinternational.org



REACHING TURKEY VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

“WHY DON’T WE SEE THESE MIRACLES AND TESTIMONIES IN ISLAM?!”

Our team reports this same reoccurring question that they receive every once in a while: “Why don’t we see these miracles and testimonies in Islam?”

Jesus said: “THE FIELDS ARE RIPE.”

This reality is clearly apparent in the Turkish people today. There is a great move of God happening in Turkey, in the hearts of people; a lot of zeal and thirst for truth. However, the current state of the government is not making it easy to proclaim the gospel openly, as fear and terror have gripped the hearts of the public, due to the consequences and the harsh treatment of anyone professing Christ.

That is why the Lord has placed on our hearts to utilize social media as a potent tool to evangelize those in fear, who can access this content from the comfort and the privacy of their homes. Our teams upload videos proclaiming the message of salvation, displaying the person of Jesus, and testimonies of lives changed and miracles lived!

As a result of this work, our team reports about **4,000 prayer requests** per month, many times accompanying with letters of thankfulness and exclamation to their prayers being answered!! There have been **2,500 to 3,000 documented reports of miracles and testimonies** of the Lord answering prayers in Turkey in the last 2 years alone! These incredible testimonies range from tumors being healed, cripples beginning to walk, to even financial provision and blessing through the Lord Jesus Christ!! Hundreds of people have called us to give their lives to Christ over the phone!

As a result of this, and other work that the Lord is doing, the Turkish public today has a much greater openness and respect for the Bible and the person of Jesus.

– Brother Olcay
Director of Media Distribution and Marketing

NO BOUNDARIES TO THE GOSPEL

Jimmy Smith, speaking at the Eastern Staff Summit, 2017

In this world, each country has boundaries that separate the kingdoms that mankind has built, but **the gospel must transcend** these wordly, geographical boundaries. When Jesus visited the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter 4, we clearly see that Jesus wanted to show his disciples that there should be no boundaries to the gospel.

When Jesus went through Samaria on his way to Galilee, he broke all the rules and cultural norms. By simply taking that route, Jesus indicated he had no room for perceived boundaries. In addition, he socialized with a Samaritan and if that were not enough, this Samaritan was a woman! By cultural standards Jesus was in the wrong place, at the wrong time, with the wrong people. “Jesus, we are Jews! What are you doing?”

The disciples with Jesus were very uncomfortable and only concerned with getting food and getting out of town – down to Galilee where the real ministry was to be happening. But it is in this instance that Jesus shares the iconic statement about the fields. “Look around you, the fields here, right here, are ready for harvest!” – then he could have said, “Look, the woman from the well and her entire village are coming to hear about my living water.”

I think the disciples learned a valuable lesson that day from the Master: Cultural boundaries have no place when it comes to the gospel. Then and today, boundaries are overcome by boldness, calling, and creativity. What boundaries have you erected? What boundaries are you allowing to limit your reach with the gospel? **What are creative and bold steps you can take to remove boundaries to the gospel?**



Jimmy Smith

I Must Go

If we are going to reach the unreached, we have to go to the places no one else is going and do the things no one else is doing. Jesus was a great example of this. His own disciples didn’t want to go to, spend time with, or share the good news with the Samaritans. Jesus said, “I must go through Samaria.”

Jimmy Smith
Training Coordinator,
Director of Operations, Boulder



New converts being baptized and disciplined in Turkey



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MINISTRY - BOULDER, CO

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." – John 13:35

Diego had been attending our meetings for 3 years, always curious and asking questions, but resistant and skeptical in his heart. After hearing the gospel from yet another friend of his, he finally gave his heart to the Lord, was baptized, and has been walking with the Lord ever since! It is vital for us as Christians to reflect the image and character of Christ to everyone around us, to be the aroma of Christ within a dying world, and to make the most of every opportunity. For it is the kindness of God that leads people to repentance. This is what we do in our International Student Center in Boulder, Colorado, where we have access to about **2,000** students yearly, ranging from all across

the world. These students will return to their home countries to **positions of influence and authority**. Most of these students come to us not knowing a single word about who Jesus is. It is our heart to reach these students for Christ, and enable them to be lights for God in their home countries.

The way we engage them is to simply be, interact, and live with them, to open up our lives to them as Jesus did with his disciples. This gives them the opportunity to see and experience Jesus, living in us. Over the course of 2-3 years, we develop genuine friendships with these students and use every opportunity to introduce them to their savior and creator – the lover of their souls.

– Dwain Upton, House Dad,
International Student Center

GOSPEL TREASURES IN ZAMBIA

After Pastor Barry met Georges Housney about 20 years ago, they became partners in the work of the Lord and started collaborating toward a specific goal: to mobilize the churches in Zambia to be active and effective, and play a major role in global evangelization, from Zambia to other parts of the world!

A couple years later, André Housney met Pastor Barry as well, and he was deeply impressed by the largely **untapped spiritual and natural treasure** and potential he found inside the people and the land. The Lord put on his heart as well to invest in this potential, so Zambia may truly be a blessing to all the nations of the world.

Noticing that one of the major barriers to this vision is financial insufficiency, Pastor Barry and André started a local business together,

investing in the God-given richness the Lord has placed within the people and the land of Zambia, with the sole purpose to **finance the proclamation of the gospel** in and through Zambia, and all across the world!

Pastor Barry even plans to plant a missionary in Lebanon within the upcoming year!

Photo: André Housney and Pastor Barry Illunga
at the Eastern Staff Summit in Lebanon



HORIZONS LEBANON - DEVELOPING LOCAL LEADERS

When we established Horizons' first ministry center in Lebanon in 2012, The Lord provided funding in order to operate the center, and to bring two Lebanese couples on staff. Since then, it's been a rip-roaring ride, as the Lord began to bless the ministry in ways we never expected! Just about every year we've added ministry center facilities, and we've continually added staff members and interns from many local partner churches of many denominations.

As we have grown to meet the huge needs and opportunities presented by the Syrian refugee crisis, our need for capable and godly leaders has also grown quickly! God has been so faithful in providing faithful men and women to step up and take responsibility in numerous areas of ministry.

In June 2015, we appointed 5 indigenous National Directors for Lebanon, who, over the past two years have grown to the point that they are now supervising about 90% of the ministry on the ground in Lebanon! They are running our 4 ministry centers in Lebanon, plus our media studio and guest houses, and helping me supervise our team, which has now grown to 69 staff and interns!

In 2017, we have asked Boutros, who was Director of Church Relations, to take on a new role as Director of Field Ministries in Lebanon.

Boutros is loved and respected by the entire team, and by taking on this role has relieved me from a lot of coordination and supervision of the field staff.

Also this year we have appointed a new staff member, Mireille Kattar, to the role of Director of Operations in Lebanon. She brings a wealth of administrative experience from her business background, and yet also has much experience serving in her church, and has the kind of godly and humble character that we at Horizons value so much. Mireille has already helped a lot to bring consistency and organization to our administrative operations and human resources, which is helping our field staff to be more efficient and effective!

It brings joy to my heart to see indigenous leaders like Boutros and Mireille trained, empowered, and thriving. We so appreciate your support as we continue to develop local leaders!

–Pierre Rashad Housney
MENA Regional Director



Boutros Wehbe
Dir. of Field Ministries, Lebanon



Mireille Kattar
Director of Operations, Lebanon

"...and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men [and women], who will be able to teach others also." - 2 Tim. 2:2

“TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH”

“As we end our gathering I want to close by sending you off just as Jesus launched his disciples in Matthew 28. This commission isn't for the select few but it is a commission for everyone that calls themselves a follower of Christ. When we take up this mantle we don't just receive earthly benefit, but instead we become partakers in an eternal redemption. You see, God didn't simply want to save. If that were the case he would have taken his disciples with him upon ascension at the Mount of Olives. Instead, Christ specifically beckons us to be the tools in his hand on this earth. In the same way we join His family, it's our task to invite others.

As we gather together here in Lebanon, I am struck by the fact that God didn't send his son to Europe or America. God chose to send his son to a location only two hours away from here. This great commission isn't just for the West – it is for everyone. In our lifetime, we have seen the church make an extraordinary shift in pursuit of this Great Commission. In 1985, the majority of missionaries were no longer sent from the West, but instead the majority came from places like China and Korea. Just like Christ did, I want to issue this same challenge to our brothers and sisters here in the Middle East. For the disciples in Acts 8, it took persecution to send them out. Will it take persecution for us to honor the great commission and for us to take the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth? Scripture ends in Revelation, painting the picture of all creation in heaven and earth worshiping the name of the Lord. This is the story we live out and this is our end goal.

I am fortunate. God gave me vision to share with my neighbors at an early age. And as I obeyed, he gave me a larger and larger vision for the world. What started with my village then led me to preach the gospel to neighboring cities and then, in 1971, on

my first mission trip, to Yemen. This led to countless trips around the globe. Sadly, many of those sent as missionaries are caught in fear and thus do not proclaim the gospel. With that, I encourage you to be absolutely bold. Proclaim your faith even amidst persecution. Let's not forget that even Jesus, our model, faced persecution. But with that, we have to remain absolutely confident that God, in His sovereignty, is the one who decides whether we will live or die. So we must trust that in the face of persecution, God will keep us safe in His hands.

So as I send us off, I want to remind you that I will be praying for each of you. Yes, Horizons is technically an organization, but I hope we will emulate the body of Christ and thus be more of an organism than an organization. Within this organism we each have a responsibility to the Great Commission, and thus to proclaim, disciple, and equip. As you internalize this Commission I pray that we will not give in to laziness or fear. I pray that God's strength will propel us, that we might grow in faith, fearlessness, and focus.”

– Georges Housney

(Text transcribed from his final message at the 2017 Eastern Staff Summit)

Want to
do more?

PRAY: sign up for daily or weekly prayer updates! main@horizonsinternational.org

GIVE: help Horizons proclaim, disciple, and equip! horizonsinternational.org/give

GO: attend or host a training event! Engagingislam.org