

# GLOBAL EDUCATOR

## GATS DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAM

One of the most exciting projects being pursued by the Global Association of Theological Studies is the Distance Education Program. Digital technology is transforming education globally. The GATS Distance Education Program is utilizing these new technologies to train and equip people for Apostolic ministry. It is our vision to see many of our courses made available online and to create learning tools that can be used by teachers in the classroom.

### The Changing Landscape

The education landscape is changing at a very rapid pace with the introduction of new technologies. Rather than lecturing and creating assignments for student application, teachers are using digital technology to dispense information and taking on the role of guide, helping each student apply the knowledge at a pace fitting each student's needs.

### Digital Content

Digital textbook sales are projected to grow rapidly over the next several years. Due to the extremely low cost of creating multiple copies of digital books, this has the potential of greatly decreasing the cost of textbooks. This will be an incredible benefit to our schools and students globally.

Videos, blogs, and interactive presentations continue to increasingly play an important roll in education. As these forms of digital content are created for online learning, they can also be used in the classroom.

All of this digital content is changing the way that people learn and many experts believe that we are quickly moving into a post-literate oral culture. It is also believe that technology will usher the illiterate world (1/4 of the world's population) directly into a post-literate oral culture meaning that none of those people will ever learn as a literate.



Obviously, this presents unique challenges to teaching the Word of God. We must implement modern methods of learning if we are going to effectively train oral and post-literate oral learners.

### Personalized Learning

Due to increased access to learning tools and programs, learning has become much more personalized. By 2019, it is estimated that 50% of all classes taught, in all facets of education, will be delivered online, and many of these will be free. The old, one-size-fits-all model forced everyone through the same mold at the same pace. Today students can custom-design their educations to learn what they want to learn, when they want to learn, who they want to teach them, and the pace that they want to learn it.

### Digital Education: Today & Tomorrow

The current growth rate of digital education and online learning is really quite astounding. While higher education as a whole has seen a growth rate hovering between 1-2.5% in recent years, online learning is growing anywhere from 17-20% each year.

Of course, the classroom is not being eliminated in most cases. Most schools are blending the traditional classroom setting with online learning to create blending learning programs. This is extremely beneficial to students who can't

afford to live on campus for several years, have a family, or work a full-time job. It is projected that nearly half of all students will be taking a good portion of their classes online by 2014 and by 2020 almost all students will be involved in blended learning programs.

### **Digital Education & Ministry Training**

How does all of this affect what we are trying to do in training men and women for the ministry? How could online education benefit Global Missions? I'm glad you asked!

#### *1. No Geographical Boundaries - Access to the Best Content & Teachers*

Offering our courses online allows us to offer all of our content, to all of our students, in one web location. This makes it possible for our best content to be discovered and used all around the world. Courses can feature specialized content (books, presentations, video) from "experts" on that topic.

For example, Bro. Woodward has an excellent lesson on Holiness. We can digitize the content, make a video, and Bro. Woodward becomes a guest lecturer in Guatemala on Monday, Switzerland on Tuesday, Nigeria on Wednesday and he never leaves home.

#### *2. Reduce Cost of Attaining an Education*



How many potential students do we lose due to lack of finances or family obligations? Internet based training has the potential to reduce monetary costs, the sacrifice that families have to make, and the sacrifices that local churches have to make. How much time and money could we save our students and how many potential students could we add by offering courses online?

#### *3. Standardization, Collaboration, & Customization*

One of the notable aspects about the GATS program is the standardization of course content. The great thing about making that content available on the web is the opportunity it provides for our best and brightest teachers around the globe to collaborate on that content.

Making our courses available online also allows the local church leaders to customize material for local congregations and leadership training. The potential for training the lay minister, who may never attend one of our Bible colleges is tremendous. It's like a portable Bible college on the web—one that can go into every city, town, and village of the world!

#### *4. Potential Solutions for Oral & Post-Literate Oral Learners*

I previously mentioned the obstacles involved with post-literate oral



learners, also known as secondary oral learners. Seventy percent of the world's population consists of oral and secondary oral learners—people who cannot or will not read. Less than ten percent of ministry tools, evangelism programs, and discipleship resources are designed to meet the needs of the preliterate and post-literate oral cultures.

Further, as visually oriented electronic technologies become less expensive and spread globally, many non-literate peoples are moving straight from ancient to modern means of visual/oral communication without ever learning to read and write their own language.

How do we teach the Bible to these people? I believe that is going to be one of the greatest challenges of missions and training for the coming generation. We certainly do not have all the answers but I do believe that digital technologies will be a major part of the solution.

### **Conclusion**

For these reasons and others, we are extremely excited about the potential we have to create digital tools for education and an entire digital environment where we can train and equip the next generation of Apostolic leaders. We are utilizing new methods and new means to spread the unchanging message of God's Word



# PROGRESS REPORT

We have fully developed and tested three pre-evangelism mini-courses. Pre-evangelism courses focus on basic Bible doctrines and function as an excellent Bible study tool or course for new converts.

**How Do You Measure Up To The Word Of God?** by Bro. Jim Poitras

**Discover Wonderful Truths** by Bro. Tom O'Daniel

**Simple** by Bro. Raymond Woodward

We have also fully developed and are currently BETA testing one of our certificate level courses.

## **Pentecostal Doctrine**

Two of our certificate level courses are in the development stage and will be available for BETA testing in the fall.

## **Life of Christ Evangelism**

We currently plan to make all six certificate level courses available for open-enrollment early in 2014 by adding the following three courses.

## **Acts Bible Introduction Christian Living**



## **Getting To Know You**

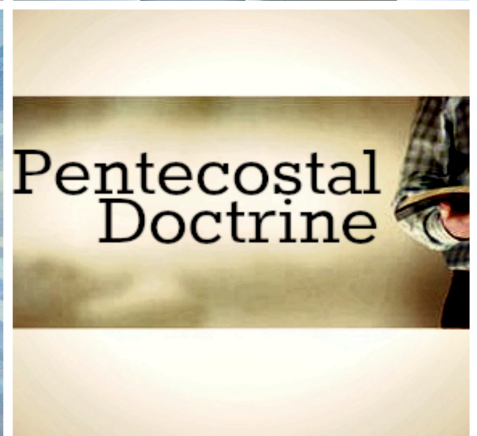
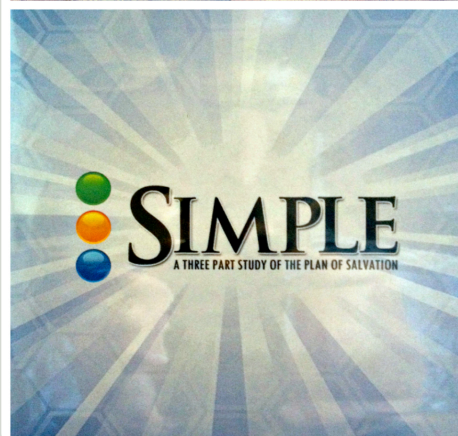
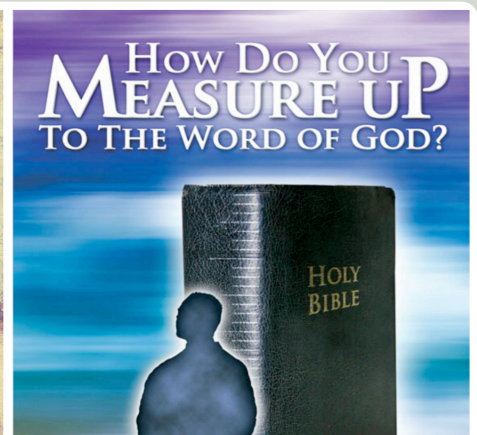
### **Tyler Bryant - Coordinator of Distance Education (GATS)**

Tyler Bryant is originally from Warsaw, Indiana. He attended Indiana Bible College for four years graduating co-Valedictorian of his class in May, 2007. After graduating, Tyler spent two months in the country of Ghana, West Africa with the Next Steps Program under the direction of Lloyd Shirley and Missionaries James Poitras and Nick Sisco.

Tyler returned to Ghana for a six-month AIM appointment in January, 2011. While in Ghana Tyler taught Spiritual Leadership and Writing Techniques at ACTS Ghana, assisted James Poitras with GATS, and ministered in local congregations throughout the country.

Upon completing his AIM term in Ghana, Tyler returned to Indiana for several months before moving to Marshall, IL and marrying a young lady he first met at IBC, Brittanie Donaldson. Brittanie works closely with the GATS program creating digital content for the courses. Tyler and Brittanie were installed as Co-Pastor of The Pentecostals: Church of Second Chances in Marshall, IL in June of 2013.

Tyler and Brittanie have a heart for missions and a burden for ministry training.



# GATSLEARN.COM

**Please take a moment to visit the GATS Distance Education website at [www.GATSLearn.com](http://www.GATSLearn.com).**

GATSLearn is still in its beginning stages. We currently have open enrollment for our pre-evangelism courses. Pre-evangelism courses focus on basic Bible doctrines and would be an excellent Bible study tool or course for new converts. We also have open enrollment for our certificate level course Pentecostal Doctrine.

We would love for you to test one of our courses! From the home page, you can click on the “New Student Application” icon. Fill out the form with your name, email address, country, and the course that you would like to enroll in. Complete the

form by clicking the submit button. You will receive an email invitation to enroll in the course. We hope to see you online soon!

From the GATSLearn site you can also connect with us through social media to be informed of our progress, download a free resource, or read an inspiring blog post.

If at any time you have questions, please email me at [admin@gatslearn.com](mailto:admin@gatslearn.com) or submit a contact form.



**Take a Course Online Today**

Thank you again for visiting GATSLearn where we are pursuing ministerial excellence by preserving the message, providing the methods, producing the ministry, and propagating the mission.

Questions: Email [admin@gatslearn.com](mailto:admin@gatslearn.com)

## GATS

Global Association of Theological Studies

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What It's All About

"Bible education is all about Learning & Doing, Knowing & Going, Understanding & Growing always closer to HIM." -Linda Poitras, Missionary

New Students Application

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