



It is my pleasure to introduce you to the Global Association of Theological Studies. Our journey began with a Global Education Network meeting at World Evangelism Center in October 2006. Two of our visionary Regional Directors, Rev. Robert K. Rodenbush and Rev. Jerry Richardson had presented a proposal for such a gathering. At the invitation of the Director of Education/AIM, Rev. L. Shirley, an educational representative from each region joined our Regional Directors for three days of meetings to discuss various aspects of improving the way we go about theological training globally. In that get-together the Global Education Committee, Global Association of Theological Studies, and the Global University of Theological Studies were envisioned. They were later approved by the General Director of Foreign Missions, Rev. Bruce Howell; Planning for Progress and finally the Foreign Missions Board in February 2007. That was the easy part. Of course, I may be biased in my analysis. Undertaking the global educational advancement program is a gigantic task, and is not accomplished overnight. It is an ongoing process. It evolves!

Let me share a story about a lady I've worked with. Her name is Sister Else Lund. She symbolizes a host of dedicated Bible school teachers across the globe. Where would we be without them?

Arnold Cook once said, "Those that live in the past are blind in one eye. Those who never consult the past are blind in both eyes." As we look at the future let us pause to look at the past.

"The true test of Bible school relevance is like a well. Someone has said, 'It's only what is in the well, that will come up in the bucket.'"

Bryan D. Abernathy
Director of Promotion

The odds of success were against Sister Lund but could not stop her—childhood polio, a lady in a man's world; she walked on despite coups, church problems, and tropical diseases. She has climbed hills to mission stations, and walked miles down jungle paths to preach and teach hungry souls. She spent over forty-two years teaching on foreign soil. She has sometimes been on the last plane out of a war-torn nation. What kept her? What were her weapons?

Armed with the assurance of a still small voice, she held two weapons in her hands—in one, a tattered Bible—and in the other, a set of notes—not the recent release of the newest resource—no, a set of notes, treasured for nearly a half a century.

She has stood in front of eager to learn students and whispered; "They can take anything from me, but please not my Bible."





“You need a study Bible of your own. Underline that Bible verse. It is very important. Have you underlined it?”

What caused her, and Bible school teachers everywhere to go on?

“Brother Richardson,” she once respectfully remarked, “I still have a lot of TEACH in me.”

**“A student... who is fully trained will be like his teacher.”
(See Luke 6:40)**

Is not that the reason why Bible school teachers spend a lifetime in preparation for the classroom? That same burden grips the heart of every one of them. They all have one thing in common—their strong belief in the training of laborers for the worldwide harvest. They are pursuing ministerial excellence.

A Bible teacher’s greatest joy is to leave the trace of eternity on the hearts of men and women—the privilege of investing in the future. They take what they have been taught and pass it on to others. What is it that we see in this lady—Sister Else Lund? It is passion, a passion to teach. The same passion can be seen in every Bible school teacher. Their passion to train and love for the best for students guarantees success in life’s classroom. There is some TEACH left in the soul of every teacher. But there is another side of passion and the willingness to teach.

We cannot teach unless someone is willing to be taught? God has placed within the human heart the natural desire to learn. It is also a spiritual thirst, a desire to know God. We see the passion to be taught in the eyes of countless people. It is seen in each of our students in our overseas Bible schools.

“Teach them to WIN them. Teach them to SEND them.”
James Poitras
Missionary

That passion was manifested in village pastors—untrained—who walked fifty-five kilometers to attend a short-term training program. It was seen in a young man who begged for a copy of a Bible school textbook, and then clutched and treasured it close to his heart when he received it. Our passion to teach is only equaled by their passion to learn. They deserve our best—a quality training whether they are in a poor nation or a rich one, regardless of how developed or undeveloped the church in their nation may be. And that summarizes the quest of the Global Association of Theological Studies.



There is a lot of TEACH left in us—me and you. Let us just say, “We’ve been brought into the classroom for such a time as this!”

Enjoy the GATS Journey,

James G. Poitras, Coordinator
Global Association of Theological Studies

