

Student Stories

Archived Stories 2008 – 2013

Equatorial Guinea, Africa

There were a total of 12 men and women, representing 5 nations (Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Congo, Ghana, Nigeria), that received GATS Certificates after successfully completing the certificate level of training. This school operates in three languages: English, French, and Spanish. It was an exciting ceremony, with a great attendance, including the Honorable Consular of the Republic of Congo and the General Secretary of the Minister of Justice of Equatorial Guinea. The service was very well organized, and served as a very positive witness of the United Pentecostal Church in Equatorial Guinea. To God be all glory! The service received coverage by national television and clips of the service were still being shown as of yesterday. One reason it drew so much attention is because our Bible school is one a very few in the country and the government has begun to press all pastors to receive training for the ministry.

Scotland

There were 12 graduates at Harvest Bible College 2013. . . truly a global group whose citizenship or parental land links with nine countries: England, Scotland, Zimbabwe, Ecuador, Columbia, Jamaica and Mauritius, USA and Canada. HBC does offer a program of excellence in training "Harvesters" to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

18 Bible School Graduates – Mission Senegal

We were privileged to preach the 2013 graduation of ACTS (African College of Theological Studies) in Accra, Ghana on June 15, 2013! On the same day, a graduation ceremony was held in Lomé, Togo for the Institut Biblique de Togo. What a blessing to be involved with these two great schools that continue to launch ministers of the Gospel into the harvest. Ten graduates in Ghana represent the next generation of leaders beginning their service to the Church! The eight graduates in Togo (where Bro. Sully has been teaching since our arrival in Africa) represent 3 different nations. Togo, Burkina Faso and Central African Republic are all now better equipped to reach their populations with the Gospel!



Philippines Bible School

Again, it's with heartfelt appreciation and gratitude that the Staff and Faculty of the Apostolic Institute of Ministries at Davao City, Mindanao, Philippines would like to express their appreciation by saying, Thank You (Salamat ka-ayo) so very much for this coming years allocation! Since we have been here in the Philippines, the Ladies Ministries have faithfully supported the propagation of the Gospel through the efforts of the missionaries and the training programs (especially Bible Schools) that have been established. And, as a missionary to the Philippines for the past 33 years, the ministry of my wife and I would not have been as fruitful as it has been, without the financial contributions which the Ladies have extended to our training program here. This past year (2012), we had a total of 58 full time students. There were 25 men and 6 ladies studying in the First Year and, 22 men and 5 women who studied in the Second Year Class and graduated! Thank You, is all we can say! As the oft use phrase goes, "words are really so insufficient" to express our gratitude for the support you and the Ladies so faithfully give. Only Eternity will reveal the results of the souls that have been reached through the efforts and sacrifice of the Ladies in North America. Thank you ALL, again!!! And may the Lord richly bless you as you have blessed the Philippine Church!



Nigerian Bible School – Gerry & Darla McLean

As always, we are very grateful for the Ladies Ministries Bible school student support offerings for the two Bible schools in Nigeria. They really do meet a very specific need, namely the training of ministers. Consider that four of the five Nigerian national executive board members are UPCI Bible school graduates and ten of the fifteen national board members are Bible school graduates. Bible school not only prepares pastors, but over time it provides leadership for the entire fellowship. Our Bible school graduates also have a great love for truth and they help us to maintain doctrinal purity in the fellowship. Following is a testimony regarding the Bible school that took place recently: Christian Tabansi enrolled in Ministerial Training Center in September of 2012. Christian is the pastor of a denominational church that includes in its articles of faith a belief in a triune God and baptism using the titles, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. After being in class for a few weeks, Christian realized that he had to be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ. He was

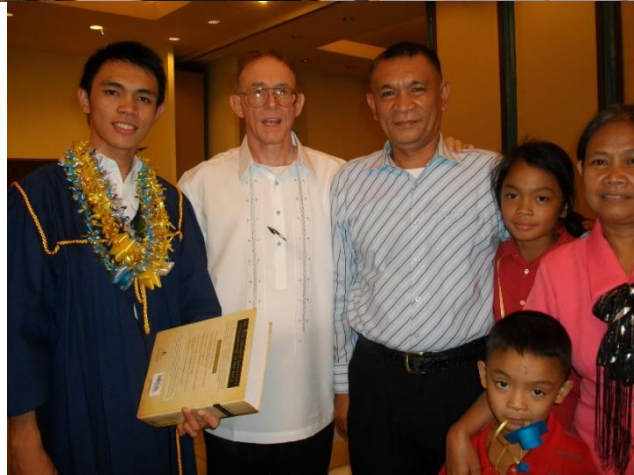
buried in the Name of the Lord Jesus on December 5th. I was invited to come to his church for a two day program. Christian wanted me to teach on the Oneness of God and the New Birth according to Acts 2:38. I warned him that to do so would put him in jeopardy of losing his church. The leaders of the denomination would likely expel him for endorsing these two Bible doctrines. He said that it didn't matter. The program held on December 15-16. At the end of the day 17 received the Holy Ghost and 18 were baptized in Jesus' Name. There are about 20 more of his members that are ready to get baptized. Christian's love for truth is greater than his love for a denomination. God will surely honor his faithfulness. Bible school does make a difference. Thank you for all you do on behalf of international Bible schools.



Zambia Bible School



Philippines Bible School



Madagascar, Africa Bible School – Chris & Paula Richardson



Thank God for the Mud – by Bennie DeMerchant

God called us to take the whole gospel to the whole world. I received a Cessna seaplane to help facilitate travel. My home base was in Manaus, 1000 miles away. Flying along the crooked, muddy, Jurua River for safety, the green rain forest, stretched to the horizon on all sides. My destination was Cruzeiro do Sul, the far west of Brazil near Peru. If all went well, tugboats with barges from Manaus would ply rivers for 40 days and nights in rainy season to bring heavy cargo to this remote city with no outside roads. I wanted to plant His name there and splashed down the first time on this tributary of the upper Amazonian in 1973. Taxiing along on the water and looking for a safe place to tie up, huge dugout canoes noisily plowed the brown waters on each side of the seaplane. Their four-cycle engines turned on a transom pin under a long shaft with a propeller. They delivered passengers, livestock or groceries to or from dwellings along this crooked river. Upriver, I spotted larger boats with their high oval roof canapés tied side by side. They blocked any possibility that my “boat with wings” could also join them in their tight-fitting “parking lot”. Seaplane pilots soon learn to tie up in sheltered areas to protect their fiberglass-tipped wings. Further ahead lay a low flat beach with high bushes nearby that seemed the ideal choice to tie up my Cessna seaplane to weather any night storm. I was downtown below the river bank and curious folks stared from the high bank. Three plane lengths from the shore, I pulled the mixture. The idling propeller came to a stop. The floatplane slowly coasted to a slow “soft” stop. With current pushing on one side I had to move fast. I quickly unbuckled my safety belt, grabbed the coiled rope, opened the door, stepped on the pontoon, hurriedly ducked the wing strut, ran to the front, dropped a loop of rope around the pontoon’s front rope cleat and with the other end of the rope in hand, jumped for the shore. Wow! What a surprise! The “shore” I saw was quicksand! When I stopped sinking it leveled with my belt. The crowd on the upper bank roared with laughter! Now I knew why no boats docked in this sand-like muck. The river bank was lined with hundreds of curious spectators. They stood like toothpicks trying to figure out who had come and had never seen an airplane maneuvering on the water by a turning propeller up front and behind, lowered water rudders that guided it to avoid the debris in the river’s fast-moving current and reversing eddies. It seemed I was on television. Every time I moved in this mud the deeper I sank. The suction of pulling one leg higher only lowered the other that much and more. The bank crowd with every move I made, laughed again and again. I have learned to talk to myself positively when in trouble, so I consoled myself of worse situations. At least I am not up flying, in bad weather, nearly out of gas and night coming on. Something seemed to whisper in my ear, “And you are going to start a new church in this city? It will never happen! Go home! You are the laughing stock of the town!” A dugout canoe slowly eased up alongside of me. The owner dropped a flat wide board under my arm pit and in Portuguese told me to work myself out of the mud and up onto it. It seemed like an eternity, but I made it and rolled into his canoe. He dug out my shoes and washed the muck off. We now fast forward thirty nine years to September 2, 2012. I do not personally fly a seaplane where I can go faster, and cheaper on commercial air lines. Cruzeiro do Sul is now connected to Brazil with daily jet flights and a paved road hundreds of miles. I landed on Gol flight 1939 at 1:30 in afternoon thirty nine years later and walked with baggage to airport reception area. When I came through the glass airport door to reception I was surprised and embarrassed to see a plastic banner welcoming “The Bishop of UPC of Brazil” held by many church people and

Bible school students and singing the national church song with airport security watching. I was ushered to their shiny vehicle that took me to their pre-paid first class hotel down town. Looking through the back window of the car I tried to hide my weeping as I looked at a motorcade of Bible school students and church members. The city is district headquarters for west Acre whose already divided area still has 30 churches. I spoke to our local ABI group of 45 Bible school students and college trained teachers. I signed and gave all a copy in Portuguese of my book, "Full Throttle". I love and appreciate all who sacrifice for His cause and His Name. In church service that night there was standing room only. I value the low valley experiences that He has turned around. Satan is a liar! To God be the glory! Thank God for the mud!

Honduras Bible School



ACTS Bible School – Manila, Philippines



Former Trinitarian now Pastoring Oneness Church!

The Picture is of Bro Harrison, a recent graduate of MTC, baptizing one of 31 of his converts in May 2012. He is a former Trinitarian who graduated from our Bible School in Feb 2012 and has since been teaching the apostolic message with great success. He now pastors a group of over forty people most of whom he has rebaptised in Jesus name.



Subrat from Scism Christian University

Subrat (pronounced Soo-braht) Singh used to be a drug addict. He had a vision, was reached by people won to apostolic faith by HY Paul, SCU principal, who co-founded with Tsathvu Thuvuri the work in Odisha state, where Subrat lives. Subrat came to Christ, got rid of his bad habits, came to Scism Christian University. While studying with us, between school years, whenever he visited his brother's house, his sister-in-law would sprinkle him with 'holy' water from the Ganges River, saying, 'You are a Christian. You pollute our house. Therefore I must sprinkle you with Ganga water.' But one day her daughter was facing medical school exams, so she asked Subrat, 'Every time you ask Jesus for anything, he gives it to you, so please ask Jesus to give my daughter good marks in her medical school exam.' Subrat replied, 'It's true that if we totally believe Jesus when we ask, he'll supply. But this is YOUR daughter, so you need to pray to Jesus in YOUR house while I pray in mine.' Their daughter got good marks on her exam, is now in medical school, and the sister-in-law now prays to Jesus consistently. As soon as Subrat graduated (at the top of his class), he started a church in his home city. The church is growing. The second photo is of him recently baptizing a guy named Sunil.



Lesotho News & Update

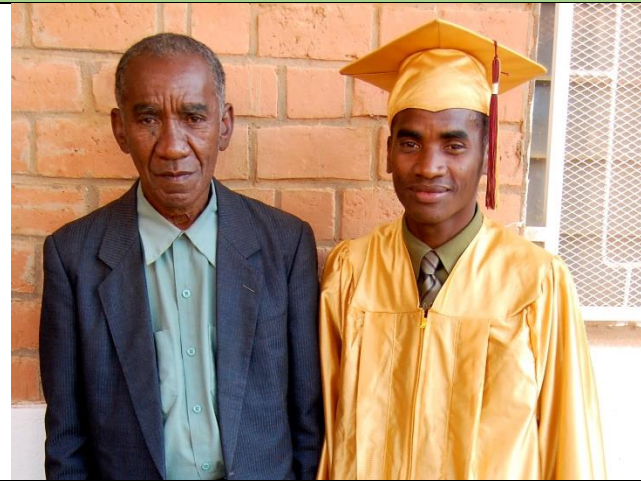


Recently we brought some LSO Bible Students & leaders to attend South Africa-UPC Gen Conference. Bro. & Sis. Bernard was the Special Guest Speakers! The Lord richly anointed and blessed their ministry! Bro. J. Smith & the RSA brethren are doing a good work. We have 14 new students enrolled in Bible School, Pray for their ministry!

A Special Thank you to Bro. Cox & Bro. Harper, LA Dist. for the project offering to assist our field in completing some major projects that we intended to complete before our next deputation! To all of our Faithful Partner-In-Missions; Thank You & God bless you for your Prayers & Sacrificial Giving! It is your dedication and commitment to building the Kingdom of the Lord, which allows us to reach Lost Souls in Africa! We pray that the Lord richly blesses you for your SUPPORT! Please pray the SUPPORT continues!

Rev. & Mrs. D. A. Kline

Man Filled with the Holy Ghost While Attending Son's Grad



This man came to see his son graduate -- and was filled with the Holy Ghost during the General Conference!

Live as it Happens



News from Richard Smoak: James Crumpacker and I were excited today to be greeted by fifty-four students at the first day of the first GATS Bible school session to be taught in Burundi. Today and tomorrow we are teaching the first one-half of the book of Acts or twelve hours, six each day. The first day went very well. These are all licensed ministers of the United Pentecostal Church of Burundi. Kevin Borders, Pamela Smoak and I anticipate returning later in the year to teach the last half of Acts and start another course, too.

Building Our Future One Student at a time (Austria)



I am blessed and excited to spread the wonderful news about our Bible College, AMTC! There is nothing more important than the building, molding, and preparing of our young people for ministry. They are the future! They will one day take our places. And it is up to us to make sure they have a well laid foundation. This is why teaching in the AMTC, Apostolic Ministry Training Center, is such an honor and blessing! We have been having great classes over the past few months. During the month of April we were blessed to have many of our students reply that this month has been one of the greatest months for AMTC. The students are excited to learn about the gospel, about our Apostolic history, about Christian living, and to truly know why they believe what they believe, which is very important! May 7th will be an exciting day for our AMTC students and instructors. We will be blessed to take a trip to Nurnberg, Germany and hear some great teaching from Rev. Lee Stoneking. I know that God is going to have His way during this class in Nurnberg. Hearts will be touched, minds will be challenged, and spirit strengthened. Continue to keep us in your prayers! Your AIMer, Rev. Stephen M. Merritt

Pastor Bright Owiredu



Pastor Bright Owiredu graduated from African Center for Theological Studies (ACTS) in June 2005 with a passion for evangelism. In June 2006 ACTS Ghana partnered with Brother Owiredu and planted a church with the help of the missionaries. Brother Owiredu worked hard, believing God to give the increase. Five years later, they are in their own building with an average attendance of sixty. Pastor Owiredu was married on June 27, 2009 and is the proud father of Marvin-Praise Kwame Owriedu Frimpong. In addition to leading a growing, vibrant church, brother Owiredu serves as the national youth secretary and the zonal secretary. Because someone believed, because someone gave, someone has gone and now more can believe.

Rev. Jerry Hanson-Nortey



Vision is a powerful force, driving us into our divine destiny. Rev. Jerry Hanson came to African Centre for Theological Studies in February 1995 with a burning desire to make a difference. Already a hard worker brother Hanson transferred these ethics to extend into the ministry and has never looked back. After assisting at Bethel Temple from 1997- 2001, Rev. Hanson planted a church in January 2002 called Vision Chapel, beginning with eight people. In January 2010 Vision Chapel, which now averages 250 in attendance, moved into a beautiful rented facility. From here they believe that God will provide land for them to build a church. In September 2009 brother Hanson was elected national secretary for the UPCI-Ghana. The vision of impacting the world continues.

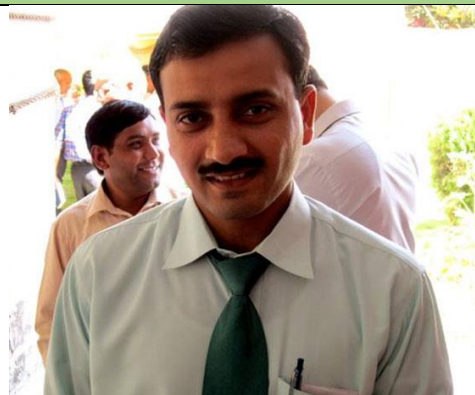
Pastor John

Yakubu Seidu Watono grew up in northern Ghana as a devout Muslim, quoting much of the Koran from memory. However, at the age of fifteen a teacher told him that without the Holy Spirit he would not make it to heaven. This statement challenged and disturbed Yakubu, ultimately leading his teacher and Yakubu to times of prayer after school. Graciously the Lord filled him with the Holy Spirit.

This led to great joy but also caused great alarm as his life was endangered. Escaping to the southern part of Ghana, Yakubu became known as John (not his real name) and continued his new life in Christ. In time, John enrolled as a student in our Bible school and graduated in 2006. Later that year he was sent to a Muslim town to revive the church which had all but died. Knowing God desires growth, Pastor John began to work diligently, utilizing all of his theological training and practical ministry experience. God blessed his efforts and the church grew in attendance from eighteen to over forty in the first year. Today the average attendance is one hundred and liberty is felt by all who attend.

One person said, "Learning is defined as a change in behavior. You haven't learned until you can take action and use it." We thank God for the impact of our Bible School training program. Our students are learning! Thank you for your faithful support. Investing in Bible schools and Bible school students is a great investment as both impact their world for Jesus Christ.

Pastor Danish



The city of Peshawar, Pakistan is well known throughout the entire world as the hiding place for terrorists, the most famous one being Osama bin Laden. But last month, another "terrorist" moved into town, named Danish Nazir. This young man is a spiritual warrior and he is fighting on the front line of the front lines.

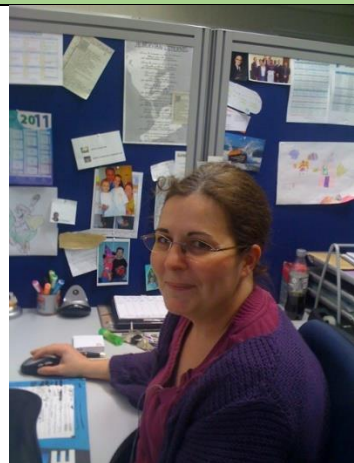
On Sunday, March 27, 2011 Pastor Danish, a graduate of New Life Theological Seminary in Lahore, Pakistan, was teaching a Home Bible Study to an unsaved Peshawar family of seven people. These are his words:

"I could see that they could not understand what I was teaching. Their faces showed confusion and I felt frustration. Then I remembered that we've been taught we have authority in the Spirit, so I stopped teaching and told them I was going to pray. I took authority over the blindness that was in their minds and spirits and I loosed a spirit of understanding. I finished the Bible Study, and at the conclusion, we baptized all seven in the Name of Jesus."

Andhra Pradesh

After he graduated from SCU-Delhi in 2009 February, Sathish began his evangelism in earnest, and in 2010 June baptized 10 pastors in Jesus name. In August, he baptized another 72 people, including 34 pastors—that made 304 pastors and 287 other believers since he graduated 18 months earlier. In September, Sathish baptized 16 young people in Saluru, a remote village. One lady in her ninth month of pregnancy walked 3 miles to be baptized. Some other people walked 10 miles.

Roselyne Despinoy



Roselyne Despinoy is a graduate of French Bible Institute. She has consecrated her life fully to God and today she is the administrator of the French Bible Institute and a teacher. Roselyne is also the Executive Administrative Assistant in the headquarters church in France. She is the web master for the French Federation, the administrator of the National Bible Correspondence Courses and so many other things. Everything Roselyne does is done with excellence and her desire is to see a great revival in the French speaking world.

SCU-Delhi Alumni Stories: Tsathvu Thuvuri



Tsathvu Thuvuri is from Nagaland state, India. When he graduated, he went to Kanpur city, Uttar Pradesh state (this one state has 170 million people), and started our first church there. He won three other pastors to Jesus name baptism. Now we had four churches. These four pastors had a crusade at which 43 Hindu priests had demons cast out of them and said, 'It is clear that Jesus is the one true God because we saw our gods leave us when you told them to leave in Jesus name.' The four churches became 25 churches, with about 2000 constituents so far. All by God moving through one SCU graduate.

SCU-Delhi Alumni Stories: Ramala Rebekah



When I first met Ramala, I thought she was apostolic--she was with the church people at Tukvar. When I found out she was Hindu, I witnessed to her. So did her cousin. She came to Christ, was baptized in Jesus name, came to SCU-Delhi, received the Holy Spirit and after her first year of college, went home and started a church in her house. Her town is on the Bhutan border, and her church in less than one year started international missions into Bhutan. She graduated from SCU-Delhi, is now vice-president of the college's registered society, pastor in her town, and I was recently there in a meeting when another four people were baptized--by her evangelism to her community.

SCU-Delhi Alumni Stories: Ajinbou Chatmai



Ajinbou Chatmai is from Manipur. His family moved to the Kanpur area, North India. There, he was witnessed to and reached by Scism Christian University-Delhi graduate Tsathvu Thuvuri. He came to SCU himself, and after he graduated, went to Varanasi, ground zero of Hinduism, where people worship the Ganga river and by the river. Today, he has six churches and preaching points and many, many testimonies of people coming from Hinduism to Jesus Christ by the power of healing in Jesus name.

One day before this writing, he got married to another SCU graduate, who is also a pastor: Pradipa Patricia Ghatani. She'll now move to Varanasi, and an SCU student will succeed her as pastor in her home town, Chamong.

SCU-Delhi Alumni Stories: Priscilla



Priscilla graduated from Scism Christian University-Delhi, in February 2009. When I asked if she would be returning to her church in North Bengal, she said in her little voice, 'I think I will stay here'. She witnessed with relatives and friends in a booming city where we had no church, and ten days after graduation brought three of them to be baptized. I said, 'You can start a church with these people. Gather in a house and start services.' She said, 'I think I will do that.' Two weeks after graduation, she had started a congregation.

In Search of Truth – by Sister Selina Mhlanga

Life is a journey; we come from somewhere going somewhere. To understand where you are going you need to know where you are coming from. The world has so many conflicting answers to this and in the end you will find yourself in a whirlwind of confusion. I was in this whirlwind of confusion when I realized that the answer I was looking for was in the Bible. I needed to know what life is all about, what was my purpose in this world, and why things happen the way they do... So I decided to study the Bible. I started on my own. I was not happy with the pace of my understanding so I decided to go to Bible College. I attended a Catholic College for two years waiting for the Bible study to start. For two years we were taught traditions, history, administration and anything else but the Bible. Not one day did we open the Bible or let alone refer to the Bible. The only reference to the Bible was when we were told that we needed to buy 'The Jerusalem Bible' being sold at the Church. It is difficult to just walk out of what you believe to be the things of

God; you fear God and what He would do to you if you shun the things concerning Him. That's the reason I lasted two years, otherwise I truly felt like walking out after the first week. It was referred to as a Bible College but there was no Bible Study. My desire for Bible Study was not quenched and in the end I just walked out despondent. I don't know why. I just had had this great hope and expectation of what would be the outcome of going to Bible College I gave up on Bible College and considered it useless. I was really disappointed. But my desire to search the Scriptures did not die. I continued on my own but there was still something missing and I just could not figure it out. That's what happens when you do not have the Holy Ghost in you. Some things you just cannot figure out; some things just take too long to figure out. But God is a faithful God, He knows our heart's desires and always makes a way when we do not realize it. From nowhere, at work I was transferred to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe where there was the UPC Bible College. The need for Bible College started building up in me again but this time I tried to suppress it because: I. My previous experience – two years is a lot of time to commit oneself in doing something only to achieve absolutely nothing – it's not easy to recover from such. II. At work we were working overtime and travelling a lot within the region. There was no way I could have managed to attend the minimum hours of attendance required at Bible College. I had enquired about the possibility of studying through correspondence but was told that was not possible. But something kept on probing me inside that I should go to Bible College. Yet, I no longer had the time for it because of work commitments. The push was too much so one day I just went to the Bible College in the middle of the term and asked if I could register. I told God if they chase me away that's it, I am not going to bother myself again. But when I got there I was accepted as a student and started on the same day, - but the I do not have time for this siren was still ringing in my mind. At work I started manipulating things so that my Bible College days were not affected. But God was not in favor with this because it proved to be stressful and most of the time I was caught unawares. In the meantime, God, through the teachings at the college, was working on my prayer life and I realized I needed to pray about time for my college studies.

As a result of my prayers, all the overtime at work came to an end. We were given the go ahead to employ more people and somehow the business trips started falling on days which were not Bible College days. When God calls you to do something, He knows just how busy you are! Do not answer the call by using your own means. Do what He wants you to do. Turn to Him in prayer and ask Him to make it possible for you, otherwise you will find it burdensome and stressful. At the UPC Bible College we studied the Bible itself all the way and other topics around it in reference to the Scriptures, not to other people's opinions from 'wherever'. I went to Bible College just to learn and understand the Word of God better but God gave and taught me more and I came to understand the hope and expectation that I had in the beginning as it came to fruition: • Peace of mind • Prayer life • Commitment – I would not have learned this if my studies were through correspondence because I learned from my teachers from the way they applied themselves to their work against all odds. • Saved time - What I learned in four years would have taken me up to thirty years doing it on my own. • A heritage, a treasure, is priceless and no one can take it away from me. And that is just to mention a few because the list is endless. Now my journey continues, the ship has no rudder, but I have the peace of mind of knowing that the one who holds my tomorrow is the one driving it. Sister Selina Mhalanga now resides in Botswana, Africa where she works with Sister Grosbach as a National Ladies Instructor traveling throughout the country. She is leading women into all truth. Thanks UPCI LADIES DIVISION for funding Bible Colleges. Your giving has brought this wonderful woman our way here in Botswana.

Planting People, Growing Giants – By James Poitras

I'm often asked, "What business are you in?" I sometimes ponder what reaction I'd get if I said, "I'm in the people-growing business." Ministers are grown. Students don't arrive in our Bible school classrooms as spiritual giants. They come with willing hearts and pass through a spiritual formation and maturation process. Effective Bible school programs enable students to reach their maximum potential. We're equipping others for works of service in God's kingdom (Ephesians 4:12) and in apostolic ministry. Like Robert Dale once said, we're "sowing seeds of ministry and growing believers toward leadership." That is the sole purpose behind the Global Association of Theological Studies. Like a sign I saw, "We build Pentecostal leaders to grow Pentecostal churches." Spiritual growth is one of our four core values. We value helping people grow! GATS is made up of six academic programs, in multiple languages, with a growing edge: certificate, diploma, associate degree, bachelor degree, distance education, and faculty development. It's a gigantic project encompassing nearly one hundred subjects that need to be revised, written, and translated into major world languages. I used to think of it as a mountain to chip away at; an obstacle. Now, I'm changing my attitude. It's an opportunity; a mighty tree that we are growing. Its encircling shade provides a global education covering. GATS causes us to stretch heavenward to our supplying God; outward to a waiting, wanting world. It calls us to continuously improve. In classes and among staff we must create a "culture of growth." It's the way we do things around here. Involvement with the Advance Educators Series (GATS) provides eighteen to twenty-four opportunities to grow. A new lesson is available most every month. Other faculty education courses are planned for the future. Instructors only truly help others reach maximum potential when they have attempted to reach it ourselves. I sometimes lament when I see other churches with more developed educational programs than ours. We can make a difference. John Maxwell in Go for Gold mentions a nursery in Canada that displays a sign on its wall: "The best time to plant a tree is twenty-five years ago... The second best time is today." We hope you will avidly support GATS and its programs. Come, grow with us! Our work will affect long after we're gone. A Greek proverb says, "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in." Be deliberate at leaving a mark on this planet, to do something that imparts seeds of truth to the next generation, and impacts eternity for our world. Someone once said, "If your vision is for a year, plant wheat; if your vision is for a

decade, plant trees; but if your vision is for a lifetime, plant men." Because of your help with GATS, when a friend asks, "What have you done today?" thankfully respond, "I saw someone grow today and I helped. I've been planting people; growing giants!"

From Nigeria and West Africa

Nigeria, West Africa: Two of the Bible school students baptized thirteen while visiting their home town. Another student had a breakthrough in his village church and baptized four and one received the Holy Ghost.

Jaromír Žumár (Prague, Czech Republic)

Jaromír and his twin brother were born in Slovakia and soon moved to Prague, Czech Republic. Raised by his father from the age of seven as a result of his parents divorce, he finished his basic schooling and began studying civil engineering. It was during his final graduation year that Jaromír's life turned completely around as he started to attend the church in Prague as a result of a co-workers kind invitation. Even though the Žumár family followed suit with most Europeans with placing great importance on higher education, the fine arts and culture, Jaromír's life did not follow in the footsteps of his world traveling concert piano playing mother, nor that of his wood handcrafting violin / cello maker twin brother. God responded to the intercessory, earnest prayers of the pioneer missionaries to the Czech Republic. When God saw Jaromír Žumár, He not only saw a brilliant young man with a Bachelor Degree in Civil Engineering, gifted with languages, computer skills and leadership qualities, more importantly, He saw a tender heart. In simple response to the preached Word, kneeling on the old stone floor of the Prague chapel, he quietly bowed before His maker, yielded, and received the marvelous life-changing gift of the Holy Ghost. Immediately, Missionary Roger Buckland proposed he enroll in the newly formed Prague Bible School (Apostolic Center of Theological Studies). In Jaromír's own words, "After I started studying in Bible School, the whole image of the Bible and complete concept of Bible teaching opened up to me. We were so blessed during our study years as we had the possibility to be taught by several guest teachers who always strengthened us with their testimonies and their experiences. Year by year I was lead deeper into the Word of God. My Bible School studies gave me the basic knowledge and a foundation of Truth. It showed me the importance of study in the ministry and was my entrance into Bible doctrines." Following his three years of study and graduation from Bible School in November 2005, Jaromír Žumár accepted God's call upon his life into the ministry and became the very first licensed United Pentecostal Church minister in the Czech Republic in November 2008. He and his fine wife, Michaela (also a Prague Bible School graduate), now serve as Assistant Pastor to Missionary Roger and Becky Buckland, assisting with and fulfilling many administrative and ministerial duties, using his skills and giftings to bless the work of God. He also serves as worship leader, translator, Discipleship Course instructor, Bible School teacher, as well as developer and maintainer of the Prague church web-site. Only God knows the future and to what width and breadth his ministry will go, especially in regards to propagating the Gospel and Apostolic ministry throughout the nation of the Czech Republic and borders beyond into the remaining nations of Eastern Europe.



Christopher Rock | The Church Under The Umbrella Tree

Christopher enrolled in Bible school in 1999 and graduated as the Valedictorian in 2001. God directed him to start a church. Christopher, young, inexperienced, and penniless relied on God to direct his footsteps. Since there were no finances for a building or even for chairs, he was led by God to start the church under a massive umbrella tree. The tree was remarkably functional for this purpose. Its branches protected the people from the scorching equatorial sun and the above ground root structure provided "chairs" for the attendees. In one of their first services a message in tongues and interpretation came forth. God promised that people would come from far and wide to worship with them under the tree. (Note: to date visitors have come from three different continents and several different countries, to this village church, essentially in the middle of nowhere!) God also warned them that they would have to endure suffering, hardship, and much opposition, but that God would fight their battles for them. Christopher ministered to his flock on the weekends and attended Bible school during the week. When he first brought the message of Jesus Name baptism to the people, they resisted. Soon after, about forty-five were baptized in the saving Name of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Mark records the

promise of Christ that signs and wonders would follow those that believe. During these early days of the ministry, God operated in the realm of the miraculous. Records indicate that at least sixty were healed or delivered from demons, and three were raised from the dead! God continued to pour out His Spirit and the waters of baptism were constantly being stirred as new converts received a revelation of the Mighty God in Christ. As prophesied, persecution came in many forms. One evening a gunman set an ambush for Christopher and his wife, Esther. While in prayer the previous day, Esther had been warned about the ambush. When she heard the man take up his position by the umbrella tree, she came out to meet him. Esther rebuked him in Jesus' Name and the man trembled so that he was unable to use the gun and fire a shot. Christopher joined the scene and the man fled in embarrassment. God had given Christopher and Esther another victory. On another occasion the enemies of the church set a beehive in the umbrella tree. The beehive was brought down during a Sunday worship service and the angry bees swarmed everywhere. But miraculously the bees began to fall to the ground as they dropped dead one by one. The next plague to befall the newborn church was a plague of snakes. On three different occasions a snake was set loose to attack Christopher or Esther. They managed to kill the first one, the second one slithered off Esther's bed and disappeared when God awoke her to alert her of the danger, and the third one actually bit Christopher, but the poisonous venom was no match for the Holy Ghost. Christopher walked away unharmed. Nigeria has a semi-tropical climate and a six month rainy season characterized by torrential rains. Considering this, the church under the umbrella tree experienced yet another miracle. From 2000 to 2006 they held services under the umbrella tree and they were never disturbed by rain. Imagine; a statistical impossibility. Christopher can testify that at times it rained up until service time and sometimes after service, but it never rained during the time they gathered for worship, prayer, or the ministering of the Word. Christopher won more than two hundred people under the umbrella tree! He lives in a small two room mud block hut about fifty feet from the tree. With no financial help from the missionary, district, or national church, he built a concrete block building that will easily seat three hundred. God can do anything in our lives if we will just avail ourselves to His call. Christopher Rock is a living testimony of God's abundant grace, supply, power, and love. And like the Book of Acts, there is no "amen" to this chapter. Christopher had a well dug outside the church that supplies water to many of the same villagers that opposed him for so long. He is pioneering a church in the capital city of Enugu State. He has brought several students to the Bible School. But that is another story! This article is an excerpt and slight adaptation of a chapter in a new book being written by Missionary Gerry McLean. It is a fresh testimony of what God can do because people gave to support a missionary because he was willing to go to a mission field. This resulted in a student being taught, and starting a church because the harvest is great and because God is faithful!



