



# Arab Baptist Theological Seminary

## كلية اللاهوت المعمدانية العربية

August 2017

### The Ministry of Three ABTS Graduates in North Africa

Every time we witness what God is doing in the Arab world through our graduates, we cannot but rejoice at the work of His hands and for seeing our vision brought to life through them. We praise God that the impact of ABTS has extended to Arab countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Sudan, South Sudan, Iraq, Morocco and Algeria. Below, we share with you the updates of three graduates, living in North Africa, so that you can rejoice with us as you find out more about how they are being a light in their communities.

#### **Mouloud, born in 1976, Certificate in Theology, graduate of 2012 | Formal Bible and Ministry Training**

In the academic year 2011-2012, my wife and I studied for a Certificate in Theology at ABTS. After graduation, I returned to my country to serve in a discipleship and minister formation school. Today, I oversee the school and its annual program, which lasts from the first of October up until mid-June. My role includes looking for teachers because we need a new teacher for every week's suggested topic. I teach the students from the course content I took at ABTS. These courses include *Hermeneutics*, *Christian Doctrine* and *The Art of Public Speaking*. I ask the students to pursue research similar to what I did at ABTS, on topics such as *the Glory of God* [which is the first research all students pursue at ABTS]. Moreover, I oversee the school team through weekly meetings for discussion, prayer and a group Bible study.

The aim of our discipleship and minister formation school is to help every student to grow in God's love and knowledge and to prepare each student for serving God (how to be a witness for Christ, how to lead Bible study groups and how to begin working with home groups). The

majority of the students who studied at our school got involved in the ministry either at their local churches or by starting home groups in areas where there are no churches. Our role is to help local churches to start discipleship schools, and that doesn't require much financial support.



Because of the spiritual revival taking place through the work of the Holy Spirit, a great number of people are coming to Jesus Christ. However, our national church still lacks solid teaching, and this leads to divisions and a lack of spiritual maturity. That is why we successively opened three branches of our discipleship school with the help of local churches, respectively in 2010, 2014 and 2017. The school outlines an annual program that runs for five days

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a month. Students also do the required tests. After taking all the electives through the academic year, students get a degree from the school. Sister Tasaadit, who got a Master of Divinity from ABTS in 2015, is responsible for the third branch of the school, which we started this year.

Among the courses that benefitted me in ABTS is *Christian Doctrine*. It is basic for my ministry because some of the most important questions I am asked are those related to the Trinity, the Son of God and the 'twisting' of Scripture. The *Teaching* course helped me to present teaching and draw the attention of the hearers through tools such as posing concluding, thought-provoking questions.

The *Hermeneutics* course has helped me greatly in explaining God's Word to the believers through understanding the historical, social and cultural context of the text. This leads to sound interpretation of God's Word, which in turn leads to proper application.

Finally, the *Church and society* module has helped me to understand the culture of the other and to familiarize myself with it. This is especially important because I am an Amazigh serving in the Arab region. As Amazigh people, we don't share the language, culture, customs or traditions of Arabs. Despite the great friction between the Arabs and the Amazigh tribes, this module has helped me to love Arabs more and to serve them through sharing the gospel.

Please pray that the Lord would help foreign teachers receive visas, now that they need to request a religious visa in order to enter the country. This process is challenging. Also, pray that we would be able to launch a second level in our school because many have finished level one. Finally, keep our church in your prayers so that more spiritual gifts will be manifest in it and that it may be safe from harm.

#### **Tassadit, Master of Divinity, graduate of 2015 | Discipleship, Formal Bible and Ministry Training**

I enrolled at ABTS in 2012 and graduated with a Master of Divinity in 2015. I returned to my home country hoping to pursue further theological education in Europe, but God had other plans.

My first ministry upon my return was follow up with students who live and study in a city that is four hours

away from where I live. In May 2016, after time in prayer, I accepted a position to work with students in another region, and to assist the man who would become my husband in his ministry. I got married in 2016, and today, my husband and I are serving among college students. I follow up on female students and counsel them. Every Tuesday, I prepare a Bible study for the female students; sometimes I help one of the students to lead the Bible study.

My husband and I are seeking to provide greater theological knowledge so students can build their faith on a strong foundation, and so they are able to respond to the questions of their peers. ABTS courses on doctrine, hermeneutics and Old and New Testament surveys were indispensable in helping me choose what and how to share with the students.

In September 2016, my church, Jesus Prince of Peace, proposed that I become the coordinator of a newly established branch of a national discipleship school. After some time in prayer, I accepted this position, in which I teach courses and invite lecturers to teach. Forty students enrolled in the nine-month program, and thirty successfully completed it this year. To some extent, this program is inspired by ABTS's curriculum. I used many courses I took at ABTS, including the *Art of Teaching* and other courses from the *Communication* module.

I praise the Lord for His faithfulness and His hand in my life, in years that seemed like Russian mountains. Since I had enrolled at ABTS in 2012, I have been hearing His promises as in Joshua 1:5-9.

Please pray for the health of my husband. Also pray for the Lord to open doors for me so I can pursue my education in the future. And please lift up my church, which needs people and resources, in prayer .

#### **Abu Sami, Master of Divinity, graduate of 2000 | House Churches and Pastoral Care**

I enrolled at ABTS in 1997. I graduated with a Master of Divinity in 2000, back when Dr. Ghassan Khalaf was President of the seminary.

After returning to my country in 2001, I got involved in the ministry of follow-up and home visits with an organization that is quite active in the area. My ministry soon

developed into discipleship, teaching and church planting in areas that are deprived of home churches. Because of the lack of spiritual resources, the Lord allowed us to open a Christian bookshop in 2006, which we named "The Life Bookshop". Since then, we have been importing Bibles and Christian books that are useful to the local church.

I praise the Lord because I now pastor a church in my city. Our church also trains and disciples leaders and sends them out to other cities, runs a Sunday school ministry for children, and my wife leads both the women's ministry and the young ladies' ministry.

As a minister and as a church, we care for every individual who is looking for the Truth. Along with a group of believers, who were trained at my church within the past few years, we do home visits and follow-up. When someone believes in Christ, we move on from meeting in public places such as coffee shops to houses in which discipleship lessons take place. There is a team that has been trained for the purpose of discipleship and preparation of new believers. After the period of discipleship and growth, we prepare a gathering or a camp for all those who request baptism. After baptism, there is the period of teaching and training to bear responsibility inside of the church or to be sent to plant a new church in an area where there aren't any churches.

In collaboration with other churches, our church has begun to teach theology to the brothers and sisters who desire to learn. Through the diligence of our home church and the rest of the churches who share our vision, direction and doctrine, we were able to establish a school. I do not wish to call it a theology school but rather a discipleship school since the focus is on teaching and discipleship rather than getting a degree. Therefore, we present an individual with teaching according to his or her educational level. For instance, we give a person with a humble education a brief overview without delving deep and going into the different theological theories and schools. In addition to class material, we refer a college level student to other comprehensive resources in order

to increase his (or her) knowledge and exposure to different theories.

I have taught New Testament Survey, Old Testament Survey and Christian Apologetics for ten years. I have presented the contents of these courses in visits to new believers. Our school also offers the following courses: Inductive Study of the Bible, The Book of Acts, Church History, Systematic Theology, Doctrines of the Bible, as well as Spiritual and Practical life of a servant.

Before, the school used to be mobile. We would travel to reach far-away people and teach them in their areas. Then, we saw that it would be good to establish a place for teaching, especially for those who have a desire to plant churches. Now, we have two students who are living at our home because teaching isn't only theory but showing them a lifestyle, my lifestyle with my wife and kids. These two brothers will stay with us about a year and a half. Then, they will return to their city, and we will welcome another two students coming from a faraway area. The non-residential students – or those who return to their homes, jobs and schools after taking the lessons – are two women, a married couple, a married man and a single young man.

I have benefitted greatly from the courses I learned at ABTS, especially the *Homiletics* course taught by Dr. Ghassan Khalaf. I always refer to this course, and I present it at the end of the term within October and November of every year. Another course I benefitted from is *Spiritual Gifts*, taught by pastor Riad Kassis. I present its material in the *Spiritual and Practical Life of a Servant* course that we give at the school. Moreover, whenever I need additional information, I refer to the Bounian [an online theology portal developed by the Middle East Association for Theological Education for the use of seminaries and Bible schools in the Arab world].

Please pray that the Lord would protect His servants who are present in the field. Also, pray for us that the Lord would lead us to those who are seeking the Truth. Finally, pray that we may be faithful in the ministry.

Would you consider supporting the equipping of future leaders for the Arab Church?

We invite you to partner with us in fulfilling our mission of serving the Church in the Arab world. Contact Development and Partner Relations Manager [Wissam al-Saliby](#) to learn more.