

# BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL, Novi Sad, Serbia

## Vision Statement

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**A new generation of Christ-focused leaders in the Balkans.**

*Nova Generacija Balkanskih Vođa Fokusiranih Na Hrista*

### **Thoughts behind the vision statement:**

*Cultural context to consider – Since this school is in Serbia, we have to consider not only the business context and theological context, but the cultural context when developing our vision statement. Each word was chosen based on specifics for this culture.*

*„Generation“ – In the E European context, a generation is not 70 years, or an era, like we think of it. It's a year of students, a „class“. I.e., „The 2025 Generation“. When we say a new generation of Christ focused leaders, we mean that every year we want to produce a new class of students who will lead, focused on Christ*

*„Christ Focused“ – We could have said, „A new generation of theologically sound leaders“ or „world-changing leaders“ but in BTS we consider theology second only to character, but it is second. The most theologically sound person in the world is useless for the Kingdom of Christ without character. And a man or woman of character can move mountains with little comparative theological training. The best combination, of course, is both in that order.*

*„Balkans“ – „Serbia“ is restrictive. „Global“ is unrealistic and unattainable for most Serbs to consider.*

*„Leader“ – Because of cultural context, if I did this again I would change it. In a post or current socialist environment, „leader“ has mental images of a dictator, an authoritarian giving orders. The word Leader is good in English, but not Serbian. I would change to servant if given the opportunity.*

*The students must memorize this, as well as the Scripture Focus, in their first class. If they memorize it, and it's a statement heard in the halls of the school all the time, it keeps us as leaders focused on what we're about – Christ Focused Leaders. It drives our thinking behind decisions about school strategy, curriculum, teachers and students.*

## Scriptural Focus

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**2 Peter 1: 5-8** - For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

## Mission

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- BTS teaches, challenges, encourages, and discipless, so that our students will be instrumental in evangelizing and making careful and discerning disciples of Christ, and advancing sound understanding of God's Word.

## BTS is for:

1. Adult Christians who desire to obey the Scriptures in knowing God more and being transformed to His image, following with Romans 12:1-3;
2. Elders, pastors, and church leaders who want to better prepare for the ministry that God has entrusted to them;
3. Men and women who seek biblically faithful, rigorous, and spiritually demanding studies;
4. People who desire to earn a bachelor's degree in order to progress to master's and doctoral studies;
5. Christians who seek an edifying community in which they may learn from fellow believers.

## Goals – The elements for the BTS vision

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- **Leadership** – The school will be lead in a way that is emotionally and spiritually healthy, with a clear understanding of where all team members fit within the vision, with understandable, realistic, and gracious goals communicated.
- **Biblical and Thorough Teaching** – through teachers, faculty and staff. All members of the staff, regardless of teaching position, communicates the truth of God's Word in their roles at BTS. Through thoughtful and contextual curriculum, BTS will provide a well-rounded theological education.
- **Team Cohesion** – BTS will function in the spirit of care and support that is characterized by a family.
- **Viability and health as a school** – through active promotion and initiatives of the school throughout the Balkans, extending into Europe, as well as diligent and intentional recruitment of students.
- **Quality and adequate facilities** – by maintaining a pleasing and ordered environment in which students can study and staff can work, in the spirit of the virtue of decency, and with the knowledge that God is a God of beauty. Also, by providing an increasingly more stocked library for the assistance of students and staff in their studies.
- **Church plants** – not by direct action from BTS, but indirectly through the education and inspiration of students to drive them to fulfill the ultimate goal of BTS – churches which glorify God and enjoy Him.
- **Church edification** – through building healthy relationships with churches by preaching, teaching, visiting, and partnering with local pastors and leaders.
- **Discipleship and mentoring** – through personal, individual relationships between modules, and providing safe and confidential Christian counseling and spiritual guidance which will motivate the student to develop character indicative of future leaders in the Balkans.
- **Community** – by students and staff showing Christian love and compassion
- **National writers** – by developing and assisting students and staff to write theological works

- **Masters' program** – by leading and partnering with organizations which can enable BTS to have an accredited Masters' program which is solid, grounded, and respectable.
- **Internships and apprenticeships** – by working with leaders to provide a program wherein students and potential students can learn practical skills and character in a local church environment

## 10 Commitments as a School

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- 1) Our teachers are born-again Evangelical believers who understand and promote the biblical gospel;
- 2) Our teachers hold at least a Masters' degree, as well as experience in teaching;
- 3) We seek to give students the highest level of theological education possible because we believe the Scriptures demand it and they deserve it;
- 4) We are open to students from any denomination, not just Baptists;
- 5) We respect both men and women in Christian work, while recognizing the special roles of each in ministry;
- 6) We do not validate in our behavior or attitude that idea that the school "finds and creates pastors". This is the work of the church guided by the Holy Spirit.
- 7) We will not "give away" degrees;
- 8) We will adhere to a credible statement of faith;
- 9) We will not falsely build people up in their expectation or ability for ministry;
- 10) We will express joyfulness in our work environment.

## The BTS Ideal Ethos

### 2 Peter 1:5-8

**Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.**

*Qualities: Diligence, faithfulness, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, kindness, love.*

I. Students and faculty should reflect Christlikeness ***in their personal walk, with godliness, diligence, faithfulness, virtue, and self-control.***

- They should have a heart for prayer, reading God's Word, and holiness in life
- They will love Christ more, and want to more filled with His Spirit.
- They will strive to work with a biblical work ethic, in whatever work the Lord has called them to do
- They will live in an understanding way with their wives / honoring and respecting their husbands
- They will not be enslaved to doubt or despair but will believe that God is sovereign and brings all things to the fulfillment of our good and His glory.
- They will conduct their behavior in accordance with the precepts of Scripture as becoming of a Christian.
- They will consider the impact their behavior has on the body of Christ in society
- They will bring into submission their thoughts, desires, temptations, and words, holding them captive to the dominion of Christ.

II. Students and faculty should reflect Christlikeness *in serving the body of Christ by being kind and loving.*

- They should be compassionate toward others without excusing sin.
- They will be seeking to be a peacemaker in the church,
- They will be active in dissuading reviling and slander
- They will have developed a natural graciousness to be able to hear opposing views on secondary issues without feeling confrontational, angry or offended

III. Students and faculty should reflect Christlikeness *in knowledge*

- They will display a readiness to proclaim the gospel and the ability to articulate it well.
- They will understand that the study of theology is an aspect of every Christian life, and not simply prep work for Christian ministry
- They will show initiative in setting goals and visions for life
- They will be able to handle theological and ethical issues by using Scriptural principles as guidelines for answers.
- They will understand how all the aspects of theology fit together to form a unified message of God so that they can teach others.
- They will possess the training and ability to write well, so that they can add to the theological library of Serbia.