

Alumni Spotlight: Paul Borthwick (M.Div. '80, D.Min. '07)



Current Title: Senior Consultant with Development Associates International

Family: married to Christie

Favorite professors: Dr. J Christy Wilson, Dr. Gordon Fee

Favorite class: Interpreting the New Testament

Favorite memory: Memorizing the countries of the world in Dr. Wilson's Intro to Missions class.

Where are you currently serving as a missionary and what is your work there?

I am currently (and since 1998) serving with [Development Associates International](#) (DAI), a ministry dedicated to leadership development in the under-resourced world. My title is officially "Senior Consultant"—which means my calling is to serve the vision and impact of our global leaders.



Have you always been a missionary, or did you serve in other positions before becoming a missionary?

When I started in my M.Div. program at GCTS, I was also called as youth pastor at Grace Chapel in Lexington, MA, and one of my main thrusts was getting students involved in cross-cultural outreach. As a result, the church appointed me as Minister of Youth & Missions in 1983 and then Minister of Missions (i.e., minister of

global outreach) in 1986. I continued in that position until early 1998.

The church gave me a lot of freedom, so during this tenure, I also started serving as an adjunct professor at GCTS and Gordon College as well as a consultant to the InterVarsity Urbana Student Mission Conference. My wife Christie (MACO, '07) and I were also able to travel widely to visit people working cross-culturally, which fostered the development of a wide network of colleagues.

When I joined DAI, these other ministries of travel and teaching continued, and in 2001, I returned to GCTS to study cross-cultural ministry in greater depth under the leadership

of Dr. Timothy Tennent and Dr. Peter Kuzmic, completing my D.Min. in cross-cultural studies in 2007.

How has God woven together your time at Gordon-Conwell with other life events to lead you to where you are now?

The professors (especially Dr. J Christy Wilson, and Drs. Tennent and Kuzmic) and fellow students fostered my vision for mission. This vision was greatly enhanced by the noontime global ministry prayer meetings during my M.Div. days, and it has continued through being connected with classmates. A couple of great examples include M.Div. classmate Dr. Douglas Birdsall who helped connect me to the Lausanne network and D.Min. classmate Dr. Yacov Sarah, who connected me to ministry to Palestinian believers and Bethlehem Bible College.

What do you love about your work? What are some of the hard things about life as a missionary in your context?

Without a doubt my greatest joy in my work emerges from the amazing men and women I get to serve with around the world. My wife and I have been grown widely by experiencing Nigerian enthusiasm for missions, Kenyan hospitality in their homes, Chinese courage in the face of opposition, Cuban courage to live for Jesus in their context, and lessons from many, many more faithful brothers and sisters.

By far the most difficult part of our ministry is knowing the hardships that many members of our Christian family experience in their own contexts. When we read of a disaster in Haiti, it's not just a generic picture of unnamed faces we see in our hearts—it's Pastor Enel or Pastor Wawa and their families we see. When we read of the actions of Boko Haram, we don't stop and pray blanket prayers for the nations affected; instead, we pause to pray for Abraham, Reuben, and Raheem and their families and co-workers in Nigeria or Eme and Benvictor and their families and co-workers in Cameroon.

How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in your past and current work?

I see three striking influences in myself and my work now many years removed from my M.Div. days: 1) Dr. J Christy Wilson's imparting to all of his students his prayerful love of the world's people; 2) Dr. Gordon Fee's impassioned appeal to be spiritually vibrant and academically sound as "scholars on fire"; and 3) the school's ongoing pursuit of excellence in seeking to produce "reflective practitioners."

What piece of advice would you give to alumni who are considering the mission field?

If you are going to serve in a country where the church is already established, go as a servant of the vision of the people from that place. Do a lot of listening and let them tell you what you have to offer that they need.



Publications and Links:

Learn more about DAI: www.daintl.org, and if you are interested in being a facilitator in our Master of Organizational Leadership, check out our Master's program—what we teach and where we work.

Learn more about our specific ministry: www.borthwicks.org/bio

To see the books I've authored on global missions as well as youth ministry (long ago!), visit my [author profile page](#).

And regarding my advice in Question 6, check out [*Western Christians in Global Mission: What's the Role of the North American Church?*](#)