

Alumni Spotlight: Philip Chulwon Jeon (MDiv '95)



Current Title & Military Branch: US Army, LTC (Lieutenant Colonel)

Family: Spouse: Jade, and 2 children: Christian and Faith

Favorite professors: Dr. J Christy Wilson and Dr. Haddon Robinson

Favorite class: World Missions and Preaching

Favorite memory: I really enjoyed multiple fellowship and fostering relationship opportunities with fellow students by playing late night basketball/volleyball in the gym, visiting local beaches such as Singing Beach, and feeding the poor and praying for them in Boston. Chapel services were also awesome. I only regret that I did not attend as much as I would like to have.

What have you been doing since you left Gordon-Conwell and what are you doing now?

Upon leaving Gordon-Conwell in 1995 I have been involved in various local church ministries until 2006. This included ministry time in Baltimore, MD, Seoul, South Korea, and Houston, TX. It was in June 2006 that I entered the US Army Chaplain Corps. But the calling into the chaplaincy was a result of 2001, 9/11 attack and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The day after the 9/11, an Army chaplain came out on the local radio station in Houston and simply said, "During times like this we need more chaplains in the Army." This moved my heart to start my application process. But I never followed through with it because of the ministry promise I had made to the church I was serving at the time, and also because I was in the process of getting married. When Katrina happened in 2005 and I saw the US Army (National Guard but I did not know that at the time) marching right into New Orleans, I told my wife that that was something I wanted to be a part of. After prayer and seeking God's guidance, I completed my application process and began my Army Chaplaincy career on June 11, 2006. I am currently the Command Chaplain for the US Army Cadet Command in Fort Knox, KY. Basically my job is to care for the spiritual and religious needs of *all* ROTC Cadets who are enrolled in the ROTC programs in the US and its territories. As part of this responsibility, we care for the over 6,500 Cadets who come to Fort Knox for their required annual Cadet Summer Training. And it is during this time that we conduct worship services and Bible studies with hundreds of Cadets, go on 12-mile ruck marches, provide baptisms, and do other cool Army stuff through what we call Ministry of Presence.

What do you love about your work as a military chaplain?

Too many to list them all. In short, my family and I love the opportunity to travel the world as we move from one location to another almost every two years. And as part of this move, we love meeting new people and making lifelong friends with whom we know we will meet again in the most unexpected places. As a Chaplain family, we love the opportunity to share Christ with both our words and actions with whomever we may interact. We have often provided Christmas morning breakfast at our designated chapel for single soldiers in our unit. As a chaplain, I love the opportunity to baptize service members and their family into faith in various locations. I have baptized Cadets in the chapel baptismal, baptized chapel congregations on the beaches of Hawaii, and baptized my commanding officers and other soldiers in the deserts of Iraq. I love the opportunity to make a positive impact in the lives of people whom I meet every day as I try to live my life in a manner worthy of the calling I have received (Ephesians 4).

Pictured Right: Lt. Col. Phillip Jeon receives the Order of Titus, an award that highlights the importance of realistic, doctrinally-guided combat ministry training in ensuring the delivery of prevailing religious support to Soldiers. The award was presented May 26, 2022 at Fort Knox, KY, by Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Ramirez, the Sergeant Major of 4th Cavalry Brigade. Chaplain Jeon's wife Jade was also awarded the Meritorious Public Service Medal for her outstanding commitment to the Brigade.



What are the particular challenges of serving as a military chaplain in general and/or in your specific context?

This depends on what your strengths and “perceived” weaknesses are. For me, I am a night owl. As a result, I have a very difficult time waking up very early in the morning. But in the Army, early wake ups are a requirement as we have daily 6:30 a.m. physical training sessions. Waking up early is still a challenge for me.

How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now? How did you come to be doing your current work?

Too much to mention. In a personal note, if it wasn't for Gordon-Conwell itself, I never would have met my wife. It was through Gordon-Conwell that I met a dear friend who happened to marry my wife's college roommate, and because of their marriage that they brought us together. If not for Gordon-Conwell, my life trajectory would be totally different. No matter how I may be able to envision it, it cannot be better or more blessed than the life I have now with my family and ministry opportunity.

Alumni

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

My Gordon-Conwell education has taught me how to study for myself versus just soaking in what others have to say. In other words, Gordon-Conwell has taught me how to think critically. This is a much-needed skill in the Army because the Army is always making mission decisions based on the principles of MDMP (Military Decision-Making Process).



What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are considering serving as a military chaplain?

One needs to be a team player. This is especially true as a chaplain/officer rises in rank because they will be required to work with more people for more mission tasks at hand. They must also have an unquenchable passion for loving others (Soldiers and family) and for their well-being. Much like the Fruit of the Spirit of Galatians 5, the Army has what are called Army Values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. One must always be mindful of their character.

Do you have any publications or links to share?

[Asian-Pacific Heritage: 1/15 Inf Regt Chaplain Shares Heritage With Soldiers | Article | The United States Army](#)