

Alumni Spotlight: Jeremiah Morris (MDiv '10)



Current title: Pastor of Preaching and Vision at Seven Mile Road Houston

Family: Wife: Ashley (married 19 years), Children: Finn (14), Caleb (12), Judah (7), and Kruse (1.5)

Favorite professor: Richard Lints, Haddon Robinson, and Gordon Hugenberger

Favorite class: Too challenging to pick just one!

Favorite memory: The deep community I shared with seven other students that entered at the same time as me was a tremendous and life-altering gift—we studied together, ate together, prayed for each other, confessed sin to each other, and were

prepared by God for future ministry alongside each other.

Would you tell us about the church you are currently serving?

I planted Seven Mile Road Houston eight years ago with thirty-four others in my living room. It is in the heart of the city and is made up of the finest men and women that I have had the privilege of knowing and loving in my life. The people of 7MR Houston really do believe that the church is the people of God on the mission of God by the power of God and live like it. I am amazed by the work that God is doing in and through our people and consider it a privilege to be a part of this church.

How has God woven together your Gordon-Conwell education with other life events to bring you to where you are now?

While at Gordon-Conwell, my interest in church planting was developed and deepened inside and outside of the classroom. I spent time working out my dreams and desires for a local body under the direction of excellent professors and frequently found myself dreaming and praying about what God may have in store during long quiet hours in the library in South Hamilton. After graduation, I was invited to move to Houston to partner with First Presbyterian Church of Houston to plant churches. My passion and education helped shape a vision at First Presbyterian Church of Houston for church planting; then, after five years, they commissioned and sent me to start working where I currently serve.

What do you love about the ministry work you are doing now?

So many things! I love the team that I work with—the staff at 7MR Houston is a group of people with genuine passion for the glory of Jesus. I love the people that I serve, a community of young, eager, educated culture-makers that are impacting the shape of the city. I love the work that I do—preaching, leading vision, investing in young leaders

and those that do not yet know Jesus, all while helping to serve a city movement with other leaders across Houston. I have my dream job and am grateful daily to get to do it.

What are the particular challenges of serving in a large church in general, and in your specific context?

I wish I knew everyone. In the early days, I stood to preach and was looking in the eyes of people that I knew deeply. I had been in their homes and knew their stories. As our ministry has continued to grow, I have had to admit and embrace my limits. I spend time with staff, elders, young leaders, and not-yet followers of Jesus, but sadly I am unable to spend meaningful time with hundreds of people that do not fit into these categories. This is hard. Also, communication within and the leading of an organization that has grown exponentially in its complexity can feel cumbersome and clunky, especially for a church planter that loves to be nimble and charge the next hill.

How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in ministry?

I often say that I went to seminary to learn how to read. Being at Gordon-Conwell taught me to slow down and stare at the fish, to adore God's word because I adore God. I will forever be grateful for this lesson. It daily informs the way I order my steps in the quiet moments alone with God, leading my staff and elders, as well as standing at the pulpit on a Sunday morning heralding the gospel to our people. I love God's Word and believe that all of my authority is derived from it; for that reason, I always want to lead and preach as one who trembles before it.



What piece of advice would you give to young alumni who are beginning in ministry?

Your unhurried time adoring Jesus in the secret place is the greatest gift that you will give your people. There is no substitute for it. They do not need your theological precision or excellent strategy or perfectly crafted sermon—they need your heart fully alive in Jesus. Pre-decide that you will be found in the secret place with him daily and allow all else to flow from this place.