Alumni
GORDON CONWELL

Alumni Spotlight: Jared Alcántara (MDiv ’04)

Current title: Professor of Preaching, Paul W. Powell Endowed Chair in Preaching, Director, Kyle Lake Center for Effective Preaching at Baylor’s Truett Theological Seminary

Family: Wife: Jen, Children: Maya, Liliana, & Evelyn

Favorite professor: Dr. Haddon Robinson

Favorite class: Introduction to Preaching

Favorite memory: In my first full week of classes at Gordon-Conwell, on 09/11/01, we found out about the attack on the Twin Towers in chapel. We cancelled classes, prayed for people, supported each other, and some of the students who served as chaplains met and ministered to those who had lost loved ones at Boston’s Logan Airport.

Please tell us about your area of expertise and what courses you teach.

I teach preaching at the Masters and PhD level. For master’s students, I teach the Introduction to Preaching course. For PhD students, I teach history of preaching, hermeneutics, preaching and culture, minoritized preaching, and Psalms and Proverbs.

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

I had no plans to pursue a PhD to become a professor. I thought I was going to be a pastor for the rest of my life. However, as the old saying goes, “The surest way to make God laugh is to tell him about our plans.” At graduation, I had a choice to answer a call from a church or to receive the Parish Pulpit award and study homiletics overseas for one year in Edinburgh, Scotland. I chose the latter and, even when I was there, I had no plans to be a professor. Over several years, the Lord prompted and pulled me toward a different call than I expected: continuing my strong call to preach while also training the next generation of preachers through teaching, research, writing, and leadership.

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What are some things you love about your roles as a faculty member, professor, and/or researcher?

I love the opportunities I get to invest in the lives of master's students and PhD students. I get to train a generation of preachers and a generation of those who train preachers. It feels like a great way to steward my calling and my gifts. I love seeing transformation happen in the classroom. I also love talking to alumni who took my classes in the past, finding out what they are doing and seeing how they have grown as preachers and pastors since their time in seminary.

What are the current challenges of teaching in higher education, being a faculty member in general, and in your context specifically?

One of the biggest challenges I face as a teacher is helping people preach clearly and winsomely in a society that is so fractured, polarized, and tribal. Unfortunately, a single sentence poorly written or spoken can be weaponized. I want the next generation of preachers to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves in how they communicate, and I also want the next generation to pull people away from their false allegiances and alliances toward Christ, the gospel of Christ, each other, and the world.

How has your Gordon-Conwell education served you in your academic work?

I developed a deeper love for the Scriptures in Bible classes, a deeper commitment to preaching and teaching from the Scriptures in a manner that was clear, contextual, and compelling through my preaching classes, and a bigger heart for Christian mission and global Christianity in all my classes.

Do you have any publications or links you would like to share?

My latest book is called *The Challenge of Joseph H. Jackson*, which came out in October 2024. A comprehensive homiletical biography, it is by far the longest and most demanding project I have ever done. It took eight years to complete it.