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### Gardner-Webb Basketball Alumnus Finds Joy in Ministry

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# Gardner-Webb Basketball Alumnus Finds Joy in Ministry

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Office of University  
Communications

August 24, 2018

## *Joshua Chiles '05 Stays Close to Athletics and Preaches the Gospel*

Before he became a minister, Joshua Chiles '05 thought making a basketball shot was the best feeling in the world. Now, nothing brings the Gardner-Webb University alumnus more joy than proclaiming God's word and serving people.

Joshua Chiles

"Even when things were bad, I couldn't picture my life without ministry," Chiles observed. "I knew it was something that I had to do, something I had been called and chosen to do. The ministry of my family, church, and work has been my lifeline."

Recruited to play at GWU in 2001, Chiles accepted the athletic scholarship, because he liked the campus atmosphere. "After my official visit, I knew that GWU was home," he affirmed. "I loved the brotherhood that I saw, and the coaches served as mentors and father figures away from home. I wanted to be a part of a Christ-centered community of brothers. That made all the difference."

He majored in sport management, hoping to stay close to the game he loved. After graduating, he worked as a graduate assistant for the men's basketball team at Furman University (Greenville, S.C.) and then at the Greenwood (S.C.) Family YMCA. For a couple of years, he and former college teammate Chris Gash managed an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) team in California.

During his time away, Chiles began to realize that ministry was to be first in his life. He returned to South Carolina to pursue his Master of Divinity. As he worked on the degree, he taught and coached at area schools.

In 2017, Chiles became senior pastor at The Life Center in Abbeville, S.C. He's also working on his Doctor of Divinity. He's employed as the athletic director for recruiting and the athletic chaplain at Erskine College in Due West, S.C.

His GWU undergraduate experience prepared him for the rigors of graduate school. "Two classes outside my major that I benefitted from were Old Testament and World Civilization," he reflected. "Old Testament showed me who I was inside of scripture, and

World Civ. forced me to relearn how to study efficiently. The Gardner-Webb professors pushed me to think outside the norm—to rethink those things that I thought I knew and to continue to learn every day.”