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### Degree in Religious Studies and Philosophy Gave GWU Alumnus Foundation for Graduate School

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# Degree in Religious Studies and Philosophy Gave GWU Alumnus Foundation for Graduate School

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Office of University  
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## *Brian G. Chilton '11 Conquered Doubts to Serve in Christian Ministry*

Several years before he came to Gardner-Webb University, Brian G. Chilton experienced doubt about his Christian

photo of Brian Chilton

beliefs. Before he could continue serving as a pastor, he had to prove the Bible's reliability.

"I left the ministry for seven years during which time I became fascinated with Christian apologetics," shared the 2011 GWU alumnus. "My faith was greatly strengthened by studying the works of Josh McDowell, Lee Strobel, Gary Habermas, Ravi Zacharias, and William Lane Craig. In 2007, God called me back into the ministry in a vivid fashion by saving me from a horrible lightning storm. I knew God wasn't quite finished with me yet."

After renewing his commitment, Chilton was ready to complete his bachelor's degree. A resident of Yadkinville, N.C., he checked out Gardner-Webb's Degree Completion Program and its online offerings and satellite campus in Statesville, N.C. "I liked the undergraduate program offered at GWU, which focused both on philosophy and religion," he stated, "With apologetics playing such an important role in modern evangelism, it was important for me to have some training in philosophy."

The topics covered in class provided a foundation for graduate school and ministry.

"Knowing the various philosophical systems and archetypes is critical in maneuvering the differing worldviews that exist in our time," Chilton affirmed. "Theology plays a major role in one's worldview, as well. Dr. Perry Hildreth was my professor of philosophy and spiritual formation. I still use the information he gave us as I progress in my academic and ministerial careers."

Chilton also valued the interaction with his other professors, Dr. Kent Blevins, Dr. Don Berry, Dr. Joe Collins and Dr. Ron Williams, professor emeritus of religious studies and philosophy. "Dr. Blevins and I came to differing conclusions in some areas of systematic theology, but he challenged me to have a unified cohesive theological system," he said. "Dr. Williams inspired me to keep pressing onward academically. Dr. Berry provided great information on how to construct academic papers. Dr. Collins taught the four ministerial models to avoid: Dictator, showboat, monk, and doubter."

Additionally, Chilton was inspired and rejuvenated by friendships with classmates. “We had many wonderful conversations after class,” he observed.

“Sometimes, I am sure our families were wondering where we were as we burnt the midnight oil in deep conversations. I cherish those memories.”

After earning his bachelor’s degree in religious studies and philosophy from GWU, Chilton earned his Master of Divinity in Theological Studies and is also pursuing his doctorate. He writes for Christian Post, ([christianpost.com](http://christianpost.com)) a website that publishes news, information, and commentaries relevant to Christians across denominational lines.



The logo for Brian Chilton’s website, Bellator Christi ([bellatorchristi.com](http://bellatorchristi.com)) Bellator Christi is Latin for “warrior of Christ.”

Chilton pastors a church in Yadkin County and created a website ([bellatorchristi.com](http://bellatorchristi.com)) to provide a resource for those who may be struggling with certain issues of faith. “Bellator Christi is Latin for ‘warrior of Christ,’” Chilton said. “It features a free podcast at iTunes, TuneIn, Stitcher, and Google Play. Taking on the crusader theme, the website seeks to engage both theological and apologetic issues to show what Christianity teaches and why a person should believe in Christ.”