

## Jordan Doles Background and Story

### Spiritual Journey

My story may be familiar for some. It is similar to the stories of many of those who have also grown up in the Church all of their lives and then struggled to take ownership of their own faith. Growing up I was always active in the life and community of my church, I was never forced to attend worship on Sunday mornings or youth group on Wednesday and Sunday nights. It was always something I wanted and chose to do, which is why I can't recall a singular time I dedicated my life to Christ, but rather multiple times. But I think as each and every one of us grows and matures we are at some point confronted with the question of "Do I actually believe the things I say I believe in?" When that moment comes, it can be a significant turning point.



For me, that point came while I was in college. Although I was still an active member of my church and spent time chaperoning youth trips and mentoring some of the guys in the youth group, it all felt very shallow for me. What felt worse was that I felt fake. Granted, I may have been more preoccupied at the time with all of the things that come with living on a college campus (for better or for worse), but I still had my own theological questions, issues, and doubts which I wanted answering. More than anything, I had a longing for more authenticity. I made a decision—I wouldn't say a re-commitment to Christ—but a decision to be a more authentic person and a more authentic follower of Christ.

This has shaped who I am and what I want to do in ministry. My desire is not just for everyone to come to know the transforming love of Jesus Christ, but to also discover what it means to authentically live that in ways that are true to who you are as an individual and who God created you as.

### Call to Ministry

While all of this was happening I was attending Franklin College in my home town of Franklin, Indiana where I majored in History and Secondary Education. I graduated in 2013, but that summer proved to be very frustrating and confusing. I felt very lost and was in a moment of crisis. I went to college to become a teacher, but experienced some real struggles during my time student teaching. I loved being in the classroom and forming relationships with my students, but I lacked discipline and what I truly lacked was a passion for teaching that I kept hearing all of my colleagues talk about. I remained hopeful that passion would kick in once I found a paid teaching position. However, the summer came and went with no such luck, which left me feeling without a sense of purpose or direction.

What that also left me with was a lot more free time. So while I worked part time as a Special Education Classroom Assistant at Franklin Community High School, I simply found myself gravitating to my church with the more time I had on my hands and began doing more of the things that I was already doing there: worship teams, teaching Sunday School, leading Sunday Night youth group, mentorships, etc. Eventually, it dawned on me that while I am very limited as an educational teacher, the areas where I

showed strength and where I found the most joy in teaching were things that a pastor does: walking, learning, and growing with people. After much praying and reflecting, I approached my friends, family, and pastor with this revelation and they all recognized these gifts in me and encouraged me to pursue seminary and this call to ministry. I soon began attending North Park Theological Seminary in 2014 and have since come to call the Evangelical Covenant Church “home.”

**What else should you know about me?**

- I’m a Hoosier, born and raised in Franklin, Indiana where I attended Franklin Community High School (’09) and then Franklin College (’13)
- My parents “retired” and moved to Bradenton, Florida where they have been living now for three years. My only sibling and younger brother, Matthew (22 y.o.) followed and is a senior at University of South Florida.
- I met my smart and beautiful girlfriend, Meztli Gonzalez, while at North Park Theological Seminary where she will be finishing her dual-degree M.Div. and M.B.A. Please pray for us during this season as we look forward to the ways in which God will grow us and discover what ministry together will look like.

**I may not be “The Most Interesting Man in the World,” but I am a man of many interests.**

- Die Hard Chicago sports fan. I’m a third generation Cubs fan in the Doles family, but also have unwavering support for all of the city’s teams (except for that team on the South Side).
- I love Star Wars. Enough said.
- Aficionado of all kinds of music, but mainly metal and punk.
- Kung fu movies are life-giving (anything with Donnie Yen in it).
- Reading: books on my shelf are either theology or fantasy fiction/sci-fi
- Comic book collector
- Board games and Role Playing Games (RPGs) are also my jam.
- No exaggeration, I will beat anyone in Mario Kart.