



Full-Time Ministry and Part-Time Theological Education

ABTS is blessed to be able to serve those who are involved in local full-time ministry with course flexibility so they can remain engaged in their ministries while receiving theological education. For the 2013-2014 academic year, in addition to our full-time students, we have five part-time students working towards a degree and more than 15 auditors. Recently, Chaden Hani, who had been enrolled as a part-timer, was approved to continue her theological education at ABTS this year as a full-time student. We interviewed Chaden, along with two part-time students, Elie Karam and Fadia Karam, asking them about the impact of studying at ABTS, acknowledging that these students have both career and family responsibilities in addition to their respective ministries.



Elie Karam | In 1993, I finished my studies to become a professional hairstylist, which included taking intensive courses in Italy and France. In 1996, I came to Christ driven by the passion to serve Him and invest my whole life in

father, I also run my own hairdressing shop. Unlike most of the hairdressers in Lebanon who close their shops on Mondays, I close the shop on Sundays and Wednesdays, to give time for my family, take time to prepare for my pastoral duties, and to finish my ABTS assignments. I decided to start studying theology in 2012 since I needed to develop my pastoral skills and biblical knowledge. Although I had many online

God's Kingdom. For 10 years, I continued working as a hairstylist and alongside as an assistant pastor at my former church. I got married to Nadine in 2007, and now we have two boys, Jeffery 5 and Jaden 3. In 2012, we planted a new church, "Nations' Desire," in Dekweneh, Beirut, of which I became the senior pastor.



My ministry involves pastoral care, sermon delivery, discipleship, and following up on people. Praise God, we formed a leadership team which took the administrative load off my shoulders. Our regular church meetings are on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday. In addition to being a senior pastor, a full-time student at ABTS, a husband and a

options for seminaries outside Lebanon, I believe God's will is for me to study at ABTS.

Even though it is my heart's desire to give all my time to serving God and His church, I believe this is a training period in which I am developing organizational and time management skills. I used to start a ministry without doing

proper planning and research, but Studying at ABTS has given me a passion for becoming organized. In class, I take every single piece of information to heart and I start applying it directly to my ministry and think of ways to share it with our church leaders and members.



Fadia Karam | I decided to pursue theological training and education in 2012. ABTS was my number one choice. I enrolled as a part-time student because I am a full-time worker. I run my own business, a nursery home for children who are under school age. I consider my work as my ministry, because through the nursery I get to build relationships with the children’s parents. Most of the families are Lebanese from a wide array of social and religious backgrounds. Part of my ministry at the nursery involves organizing events at which parents take part. On special occasions, such as Valentine’s day, I ask my brother Elie Karam (pastor of the “Nations’ Desire”

church) to share a message from the Bible at the event, and I also invite couples from our church with the hope that God uses these relationships for His glory. In addition to the events, I also have a heart for counselling couples, whether they are from our church or from the nursery’s families. We have been very encouraged to see some of the nursery families starting to attend the church with us on Sundays.

I chose to study theology because God is using me among families and in counselling, so I wanted my ministry to be based on sound biblical foundations. People around me are noticing that my approach to ministry has become more strategic since I started my theological training at ABTS. The most beneficial modules for me were the “Communication” and the “Church and the Community” modules. They made me appreciate people from different countries and social backgrounds, and I also learned to respect the background of others in how I deliver the gospel to them.

Chaden Hani | My husband and I planted a home church in a non-Christian Lebanese community. Our church is made up of 30 to 35 non-Christian background believers. We have meetings with Bible study, prayer and worship. My ministry is focused mainly on families and couples. I am always faced with many situations where I need deeper Biblical knowledge to answer questions and to stand firm



against community persecution. I have always waited for the opportunity to study theology. I was looking for a seminary when several pastors that we know well recommended ABTS. I am now a full-time theology student, a full-time mother for 3 children and a full-time servant.

Save the Date: ABTS’ Graduation Ceremony

This year, we will be celebrating ABTS’ graduation ceremony on the 22nd of June. It will be the end of the journey yet the beginning of another, for 18 of our students, who will graduate with either a Certificate of Theology, Bachelor of Theology or Master of Divinity. Graduating students are from Egypt, Syria, Sudan, Yemen, Lebanon, Morocco, and Algeria. The guest speaker this year will be the pastor of Kasr el Dohara Church in Cairo, Dr. Sameh Maurice.

IMES Blog: A Voice of Transformation

The Institute of Middle East Studies (IMES) addresses a variety of topics significant to the Middle East and North African (MENA) region on its blog site IMESLebanon.wordpress.com. A variety of Arab and Western voices write on topics that serve to fulfill IMES's mandate *to bring about positive transformation in thinking and practice between Christians and Muslims in the Middle East and beyond*. The weekly posts are published every Thursday. Occasionally the IMES blog publishes posts by guest bloggers. Please find below a sampling of our most recent topics discussed, including those of new writers who have recently joined our team.

Jesse Wheeler | IMES Project Manager



Bad Theology Kills: How We Justify Killing Arabs For many, the subject of "theology" invokes the image of old white men with impressive beards...

Seeking a 'Final Solution' to the Palestinian Question: John Kerry, Nelson Mandela, and the Problem of Palestine On 7 December 2013, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry eulogized South African President...

Rupen Das | Master of Religion in MENA Studies (MRel) Director, and Director of LSESD Relief and Development Program



Can Theological Education Influence Society? It has often been assumed that seminaries train pastors to preach, teach...

Is there a limit to hospitality? The Lebanese Interior Minister stated last week that at the current rate of Syrian refugees crossing the border...

Sara Obeid | ABTS Communication Officer



Revisiting the Church's Mission: Standing against Domestic Violence! While the world was celebrating the manifold achievements...

Being a Female in the Kingdom: Women Drivers in Saudi Arabia To most, having a chauffeur is a luxury. But to a Saudi woman, it is an obligation...

Martin Accad | IMES Director



My Inner Journey to Hell and Back Earlier this month, during a conference I was attending in Ghana, I joined a group on a visit to one of the "Slave Castles"...

My Allah Is More Authentic Than Your Allah! The

Malaysian Supreme Court finally confirmed last week what many in the Evangelical community have been suspecting in recent years...

Arthur Brown | IMES Assistant Director



Survival Sex: When Living Becomes the Ultimate Sacrifice The ongoing crisis in Syria and the resultant humanitarian catastrophe for millions...

Whose Side Is God On? Sitting on the fence is not always the most comfortable place to be...

Wissam al-Saliby | ABTS Partnerships Manager



Advocating Human Rights as Christian Witness Despite the significant role of evangelical churches and organizations in Lebanon in providing relief and aid to Syrian refugees...

Children Participating in Syria's Armed Conflict The Syrian war has become one of the widest scale challenges to children's rights...

Mike Kuhn | MRel Faculty



Unity, a Sore Spot... I grew up in a place where my family drove past three or four churches to get to the one we attended...

Not Your Normal, Everyday Conference It was like every other Christian conference I've ever attended. It was like no other Christian conference...

Our blog will equally keep you updated with IMES projects and events, including with this June's [Middle East Consultation 2014 - Discipleship Today: Following Jesus in the Middle East and North Africa](#)