

*Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,
who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases. . .
Psalm 103:2.3*

THE HEIDELBRIEF

News from Heidelberg Theological Seminary

February-March, 2020

Making a Statement During Affliction

Rev. Chuck Muether, HTS Class of 2006

When I make visits as a chaplain for Mariaska Ministries in south central Iowa, I often recall these words given to me by a professor at HTS: “Don’t make a visit. Make a statement.” In other words, don’t go into a hospital room or a hospice setting, and make the obligatory ten minute visit that comes with a quick prayer, perhaps a short psalm-reading accompanied by a platitude or two, a promise to return, and then the awkward exit. No, you go and make a determined call out of genuine compassion and love, and you stay—that’s your statement. You are not going anywhere unless emergency protocol or patient fatigue dictates otherwise. And why? Because you are the standing epistle, representing Christ, the object and comfort of the gospel, before the presence of the afflicted.



Now, in this present season of trial and tribulation, a virus, that cannot be seen but has been felt, physically, mentally, and psychologically, the spiritual doctor obviously cannot heal like the Great Physician, but he can boldly impart the comfort of the Triune God that only the Word delivers. The minister who keeps faithful company with the sick shows that a true bond of fellowship in Christ is not conditioned on some permanent standing in society. Charles H. Spurgeon had preached on 1 Corinthians 15:6 and noted, “Oh! let us not live in this world as if we thought of staying here for ever; but let us try to be like a pious Scotch minister, who was very ill, and, being asked by a friend whether he thought himself dying, answered, ‘Really, friend, I care not whether I am or not; for if I die, I shall be with God; and if I live, he will be with me.’”

And that’s the glorious comfort. Despite trial and tribulation in this world, our sovereign and covenant God promises His chosen children, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5).

The world, however, wants nothing to do with this comfort and instead looks to find relief from any present affliction through human initiative. Only science can save humanity, and faith in God is only useful so far as it keeps the masses calm while the true champions of human preservation are either busy

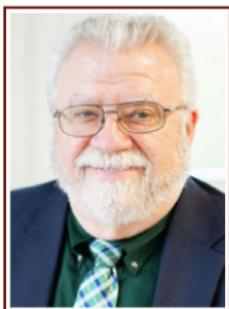


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perfecting test kits and discovering vaccines or writing legislation to keep order and stabilize financial markets. Indeed, we need brilliant medical minds and levelheaded magistrates for a time like this. But our ultimate hope and security does not arise from human inventiveness. We don't simply give this viral monster a name, COVID-19, try to domesticate the horror in memes, and hope the lab coats will soon find a way to kill it, and then peace and happiness will arrive until the next leviathan appears. The 1918 Spanish flu came, the 2009 H1N1 virus came, and now the Coronavirus is upon us. Should this beast be contained, what will come next?

We who are His elect are a dying people, sojourners on an earthly pilgrimage that will end unless the King returns during our lifetime. When I make my calls on the afflicted, I remind them that names have significance. We can name the evil, the pestilence, the disease, the catastrophe, but there is naming that is beyond naming, and we find that in Isaiah 43– “But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: ‘Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.’”

And so when my HTS professor had taught us, don't make a visit, make a statement, he was essentially echoing Paul's words: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God” (2 Cor. 1:3, 4).



Introducing The Reverend J.P. Mosley, Jr.

Dr. Maynard A. Koerner, HTS President and Professor of Ministerial Studies

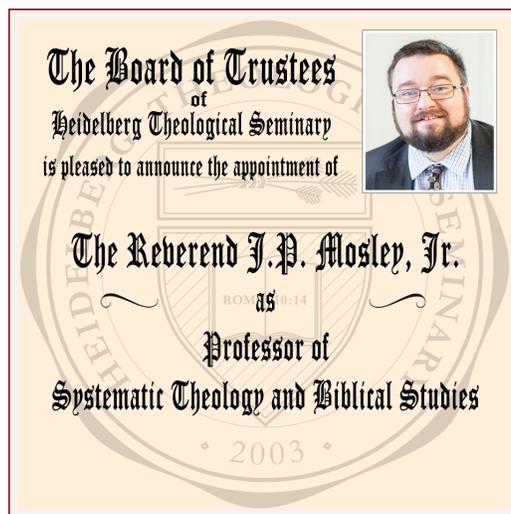
Heidelberg Theological Seminary is very pleased and excited to announce that Rev. J.P. Mosley will be joining me as a full time professor. Rev. Mosley and family will be relocating to Sioux Falls this summer and he will be teaching a full load of courses this fall. We believe that he will be a strong addition to the faculty and tremendously enhance the opportunity for students to receive training for ministry.

From the beginning, Heidelberg Seminary has been committed to training men for the ministry with an emphasis upon a high standard of academic excellence along with a strong emphasis upon training men to be prepared to meet the pastoral needs of God's people.

One of the elements of this commitment is to use as many professors in the classroom who remain engaged in full time ministry. Since 2009 the seminary has only employed me as the full time professor. In addition, up to twelve different faithful active ministers have been used to meet all of the teaching needs. While remaining committed to this model, it has become increasingly obviously that the time has come to appoint a second professor to join me on a full time basis.

The Lord has truly blessed the seminary, which is evident in a number of areas. We continue to see modest growth in the M.Div program. This past January the D.Min program began a second round of classes. Additional students are expected by the time the next class will be taught in August. The Philippines program has also experienced significant growth. Along with blessing the seminary with the opportunity to train men, the Lord has also blessed the seminary with an increasing supportive constituency. We are very grateful to our supporters and to God that as we have expanded we have been able to meet the demands which it places on the budget, including adding a full time professor.

With expansion there is also an increased amount of responsibility in the area of administration to be carried out by the President of the seminary. Keeping up with the students in the Philippines involves considerable time.



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Given the just mentioned growth to the seminary the Board determined in 2019 to seek a second full time professor and assigned the responsibility to identify a candidate to the Academic Committee.

The process of seeking and finding a highly qualified individual to fill this position has been taking place for some time now. In total four individuals were interviewed. At the January meeting of the seminary Board, Rev. Mosley was presented as the recommended candidate for the position of full time faculty. He was interviewed and approved with full agreement by the Menno Consistory under whose authority the Board operates.

Professor Mosley is well prepared for this position both in the area of academics and in pastoral experience. In 2007 he received the Bachelor of Science degree in the Pre-Seminary program with a Minor in Biblical Languages from Rochester College, Rochester, MI. He received the Master of Divinity in 2010 from Mid-America Seminary in Dyer, IN and is scheduled to receive the Doctor of Ministry Degree in May of 2020 from Heidelberg Theological Seminary, Sioux Falls, SD.

Missions and Evangelism Pt. 1

Rev. J.P. Mosley, Professor of Systematic Theology and Biblical Studies



The church was given a mandate to make disciples of all the nations. This mandate is found in Matthew 28:18-20.

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”



They are the closing words of Matthew’s Gospel account. They are the last words of Jesus that Matthew gives to us. It is with this focus that HTS must take up the study of Evangelism and Missions.

Missions is that broader category of taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth. There are still tribes and people groups that have not heard the Gospel. Missions as a study is the organized, strategic, planning, and establishing of a church or faith communities in those unreached or hard to reach areas. The unreached people groups are not the only ones we need to be training for and sending men to serve. There are entire civilizations that have moved backward in their societies. They are moving away from the Christian faith of their past to a more progressively pagan lifestyle. These countries and places once again need the light of the Gospel.

When one is preparing for the mission field, he must be prepared to immerse himself into their culture. He must learn their language, dialect, and religious beliefs before Christianity that may still have a strong hold in their community. He must learn the demographics of the land. He must learn where people gather for public meetings, how they gather their food, and so much more. He must also learn that he will always be considered an outsider. This is what makes the mission field such a challenging endeavor, not to mention the potential of death. Within these studies, the missionary needs to be aware of their history and social norms. He must engage in cross-cultural studies.

The missionary needs support. This takes churches being willing to give within their annual budgets for support of such missionary projects. This takes churches praying for God’s blessing to go with the missionary. This takes God’s blessing to be upon them as the missionaries focus to make disciples of the nations.

However, there does come a moment for the missionary to leave and allow the work there to flourish without his ministry. This is when the mission work becomes a mature church. Three things are required for the work to become a mature church. First, they must be self-governing. This means they have men who have the biblical qualifications for the offices of elders and ministers. For a time they may still need a missionary pastor, but the moment they have elders and a minister from their own people, they have become self-governing.

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Secondly, they must become self-supporting. This means they can afford to pay their pastor or pastors, pay for all the expenses of maintaining a church, and even begin to help support local ministry efforts such as feeding the sick and taking care of the needy. This is when the ministry of the deacons becomes a helpful resource.

The third may be the one that takes the longest; they must be self-propagating. It is at this moment they begin to see men raised up for the ministry, for the mission field, for the sake of planting other churches in their area, and for so much more ministry work in their community and country. The original missionary's goal is to work himself out of a job by training and equipping these disciples to function without him present. This gives the missionary the opportunity to move on to the next town, village, or city.

Evangelism then is the means of getting those from the progressive pagan culture into the mission work. This is not just the responsibility of mission works in foreign countries, but this is also the responsibility of every established congregation. This becomes the responsibility of those who are in Christ to shine the Gospel light of Christ with all we meet because we simply do not know who God is calling. [Rev. Mosley's article continues in the March-April edition of HB.]



Winter has settled into the plains and spring is not too far behind. We had been experiencing periods of cold air sweeping in from the North. Thankfully the number of days that the thermometer has dipped down into negative temperatures has been minimal. The funding of HTS also steps into a period of winter this time of year. Many have answered the end of year call and have given generously to close 2019 on a positive financial note. With the new calendar year we ask that you continue to consider the financial needs of Heidelberg Seminary during these lean months.

We are grateful for the decision by the Board of Trustees to expand the full time faculty with the addition of Rev. J.P. Mosley, Jr. This addition to the faculty will allow the seminary to meet the challenge, which we have experienced in our growth. Obviously, this will add to the financial burden of the seminary. Necessary commitments to meet this additional need have already been received. There will be some savings in the need for less part professors. Please do consider an additional gift to assure quality teaching in the classroom. The Board of Trustees sets the direction and implementation of activities for the seminary. We wish to acknowledge the faithful work of Mr. Paul Maassen as a member of the board and in his duties as the Treasurer. Paul will be stepping away from the board this spring. We are grateful for his many years of service to HTS. Mr. Scott Velgersdyk was elected as his replacement on the Board and to fulfill the position of Treasurer. Please remember HTS in your prayers. We are dependent on the Lord's blessing to continue in the training of pastors for His church. –Kevin Te Slaa, Executive Administrator

Support can be made online at:
<https://heidelbergseminary.org/support-hts/>

or by mailing:
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