



THE HEIDELBRIEF

News from Heidelberg Theological Seminary

Fall Issue, 2020

A Celebratory Evening

Rev. Chuck Muether, Director of Advancement



On the evening of September 4, Heidelberg Theological Seminary held commencement exercises and its annual fall Convocation. Degrees of Doctor of Ministry and Master of Divinity were conferred upon Rev. J.P. Mosley, Jr. and Rev. J. Mark Bertrand respectively.



Rev. Michael McGee opened with prayer and Seminary President Dr. Maynard Koerner welcomed the seminary community in attendance as well as those watching the live-streaming. I had the honor of giving the commencement and convocation address in which the theme was meditating on God's Word as our starting point, devotionally feasting on Christ before, during and after our continual engagement in teaching, preaching, training, and learning.

Dr. Koerner and Board Chairman Ted Griess presented the graduates their diplomas followed by Adjunct Professor Rev. Kyle Sorensen praying for the graduates. Board member Dr. Lee Johnson gave the charge to the students, and Mr. Griess officiated the inauguration of Professor J.P. Mosley, Jr.

In the seminary's seventeen years of existence growth has been slow and steady, but God's provision has always been constant. We thank Him for His faithfulness, and we thank our seminary community for its prayers and support.



We Are Just Getting Started

Dr. Lee Johnson, Board Member and Chairman of the Academic Committee

This year, 2020, has been a strange one. A lot has changed. But in the case of HTS, a lot of the change has been for the better. The Board is very excited to begin this year, as it stands as a new beginning, a new phase in the life of the seminary.



This past May we had our first graduate from our D.Min. program, Dr. J.P. Mosley, Jr.. We are expecting more, and we continue to be excited about our doctorate program, as it fits our vision as a seminary that trains servants for the church.



The program provides development for men who are already in the pastorate with classes designed for pastors. Our wish is to aid their ministry, further their education, and give them opportunity to explore more about their calling as pastors. We are excited about seeing the first graduate, and we are excited that the program continues to gain new students. We invite anyone who is a pastor to join the D.Min. program. Lord willing, it will enrich your church, ministry, and life.

HTS has also taken a huge step forward in our plans on preparing men to go into the ministry as well. For many years we have labored with only one full time teacher, Dr. Koerner. We have planned and prayed for the ability to add another teacher. This academic year we have two full time professors. Dr. J.P. Mosley has joined Dr. Koerner as a full time teacher. Dr. Mosley is teaching four classes this semester, and we are delighted that he is on the HTS staff. Dr. Mosley comes straight from the pulpit of a church in Colorado Springs. We still believe in pastors training other men to be pastors. In addition, Dr. Mosley brings his love and knowledge of the Scriptures along with his calling to teach men to be pastors to the classroom of HTS. As a board, we are thoroughly convinced that our seminary is in a better place this year than we have been in many years. Lord willing, this will not be the last full time hire. We continue to pray that the Lord would provide the resources and bring the right men before us to continue to improve the education and pastoral nature of HTS.

I cannot close without sharing the excitement of the Board for the teaching going on in the Philippines. We have around sixty students taking classes from HTS spread across several locations in the Philippines. Dr. Koerner has worked tirelessly to get this program up and running and spent many hours with our brethren overseas. We do ask for your prayers as COVID-19 has temporarily halted our travel to the Philippines and given the students there some obstacles to overcome, but Dr. Koerner is staying up late on Friday nights to teach live classes to the students in the Philippines, who are gathering early on their Saturday morning to receive the instruction. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and his church truly has no borders. We give thanks to God for our ability to serve Him in the Philippines.

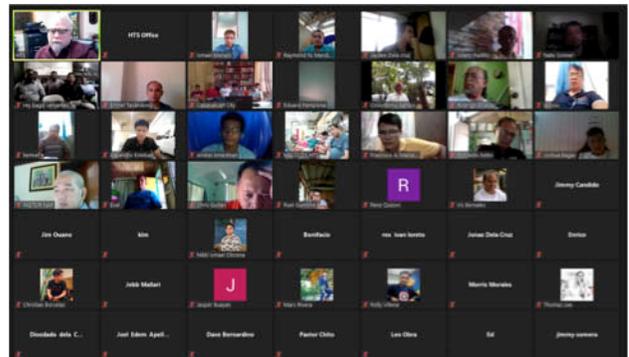


HTS as a seminary is growing—growing our faculty and growing the number of students in the classroom, over Zoom, and in the Philippines. And thanks to God’s grace, we are growing in our impact. So, we ask you to keep the Board and staff in prayer that we would be able to work through any growing pains and stay faithful to the work of preparing men to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. We ask that you would pray for the teachers (old and new) that they would boldly proclaim the truth in class and patiently shepherd the students in the material. We desire your prayers for the students as well. Pray that they would retain what they learn and that God would mold their hearts so that they might be pastors who glorify His holy name.

The Doctrine of the Church

Dr. Maynard Koerner, Seminary President

Many plans were disrupted and changed this summer due to Covid-19. Including the fact that I along with Dr. Kevin Carroll were unable able to travel to the Philippines to teach some courses there. Since we were not able to teach in the Philippines this past summer it was decided to attempt teaching a live class to students there through Zoom telecommunications. The course being taught is



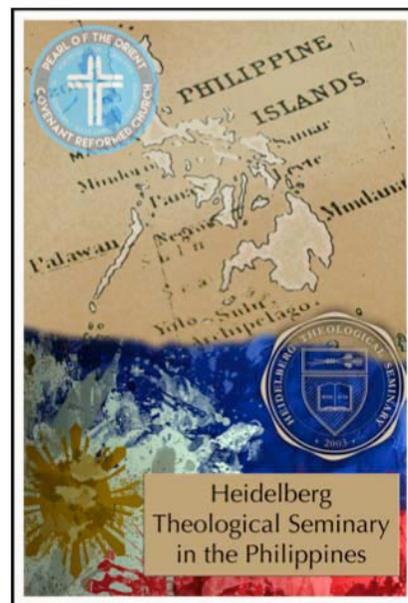
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Ecclesiology, the doctrine of the Church. The Philippines are 13 hours ahead of US central daylight savings time. Providing the men in the Philippines with a class on Saturday mornings requires us to actually teach it on Friday evenings. There was considerable interest and assurances that the men would be able to access the class through the internet.

Students were provided with syllabi and outlines along with reading assignments in preparation for the class. Given the amount of students who indicated an interest in the class it was decided that the method I would use is to allow all of the students to dial in, but to keep their mic's muted. It would be impossible to have a back and forth discussion with questions and comments. The students were encouraged to use a feature on Zoom called "Chat," whereby they could write out their questions and comments which would immediately be seen on the computer screen. The approach in teaching the class then is to take several breaks from the lecture during the course of the class for the purpose of responding to questions.

Also, the practice is to open the Zoom window about 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the class. This gives time for students from throughout the Philippines to dial in as they are able, allowing for some time to visit with each other. It was very exciting as I have gotten to know many of these men through this direct connection. With this plan in place the first class was held on Friday, September 11 with a total of 56 students from the Philippines in attendance. This exceeded our expectations by a considerable amount. The class went very smoothly, the men were able to see and hear me lecture, they had detailed notes with them. Several questions came to me as I lectured which were then answered during the designated time.

I cannot express to you how excited I am to be able to teach this class directly to 56 men in the Philippines. We plan a full semester set of lectures. The students will also be taking exams and writing research papers. This is truly Heidelberg Seminary in the Philippines.



A Challenge to the 21st Century Reformation in the Philippines

Edmund M. Delos Reyes, Minister of God is Faithful Covenant Reformed Church and the Pearl of the Orient Covenant Reformed church, Student of HTS

The Philippines is named as the only Christian nation in Asia with approximate percentage of 92%. This cliché is very deceiving because statistically the so called Christians are 80.6% Roman Catholic; 3.4% belongs to the local pseudo Christianity and Christian cult and only 8.2 percent belongs to protestant denominations and evangelicals and 5.6% Muslim minority and the remaining percentage to some kind of animism and tribal religion.

Spain introduced Christianity to the Philippines, but a mixture of animism was synthesized and adapted. For almost 400 years we were colonized by Spain and brought us this religion. Though in some sense, it is God's providence because at that time the Muslim community was already spreading over our country from Indonesia.

Today, we are facing the great challenges of our time, just like the days of our forefathers, the reformers of the middle ages. The works of the ministry still have a long way to go but we need to establish a deep foundation of knowledge, piety and practical experiences in the work of the ministry in spreading true faith. We have very small numbers of Reformed Churches in the Philippines though it has been appreciated that it is growing rapidly all this time. It is spreading in the Christian denominations, to the Roman Catholic, Pentecostals, Baptists, Methodists and other lines of Christianity. I still remember about a decade ago, you would hardly hear anything about the Reformed faith but this time it is spreading all throughout the social media and in our country as a consequence. Now, we as Filipino Reformed Church together with the Heidelberg Theological Seminary must work hand in hand to establish a strong foundation and looking forward to that near future, envisioning a strong reformed church in our country.

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We know that the very foundation of the church is the knowledge of God's revealed word. It comes from the teachings of Christ, the Apostles and the prophets (Eph 2:20). God also entrusted the church with all these revealed truths, being compounded and systematized by our forefathers and church councils to be a blessing for us today.

What is rare today in a Christian circle? It is Christ, because we cannot separate him from His words. There's a famine of word in the church of Christ. Just like Bethlehem which means "house of bread" in the days of Ruth there was no bread in the "house of bread". This rarity is a reality not only in our country but the rest of the world. There is lack of faithful preaching and interpretation of the word of God. Errors and heresy, sadly, are very rampant everywhere. The Bible tells that the time will come when people having an itching ear only want to hear what their sinful nature desires to hear (2 Tim 4:3). There is a challenge of going back to the Scripture, the reformation of the church. In my next installment, I will share my personal interaction with the Reformed faith.

Classroom Peek– Effective Hermeneutics: Seeing Christ in All of Scripture

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

Back in August, several ministers gathered for the purpose of sharpening their skills in interpreting the Word of God for the people of God and for their own studies. The class was titled "Effective Hermeneutics," and what is more effective than following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 24?

The purpose and intention of the course was to walk through the Old Testament, book by book, and ask ourselves, where do we see Christ? We spent Monday walking through the books of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy) with the hermeneutical question, where is Christ? The answer and study were rewarding and encouraging. We considered a look at Vern Poythress's work titled *The Shadow of Christ in the Law of Moses*. On Tuesday, we looked at O. Palmer Robertson's work *The Christ of the Prophets* as we considered the Old Testament prophets. Much like the Torah, so too in the prophets, Christ was not only seen, but His voice was clear and profound. To see Christ in the prophetic books and historical narratives of the Old Testament is extremely encouraging for days that seem to be remarkably like those of the book of Judges.

Later in the week, we looked at O. Palmer Robertson's book *The Christ of Wisdom*, which not only brought our attention to some incredibly beautiful books in the Old Testament, but we also came face to face with Wisdom Incarnate, Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of God. Robertson had us consider Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, and Song of Solomon. These chapters we walked through in class were refreshing and devotionally relevant for the circumstances the church faces today. We must learn the wisdom of mourning (Lamentations) and the wisdom of marriage (Song of Solomon). In doing so, we will find Christ sheds tears over the death of Lazarus, and the Christ who comes and proposes to His bride with His blood. Next we walked through the Psalms with the focus on finding Christ in the Holy Psalter. As we walked through this wonderful book, we considered the voice of the Psalms. We saw the voice being the author such as David or others, God, Christ, and even the congregation or the church. Reading the Psalms this way is to join with some of the great thinkers in the history of Church who would say, "for every emotion of the soul, one can find a Psalm."

The last day of class, each pastor needed to have prepared and be able to share their "Hooks for the Books." They had to prepare a hook for each book of the Bible. For example, one could say the hook for Genesis is "The Book of Beginnings." Everything finds its beginning in Genesis. This helps the interpreter explain the purpose or reason for which we have the book. The Elevator Test was set before the students, which is, you find yourself on an elevator and someone asks you about the book of Genesis and you only have 60 seconds to explain. What do you say? This is the hermeneutical exercise for developing short concise hooks for the books of the Bible.

Overall, the class seemed to be well received. All were encouraged by the course work, reading, and discussions in the classroom. It is our hope that we are equipped to rightly divide the Word of Truth for the people of God.

