



March 13, 2023

It has been the honor of a lifetime to serve as president of Phoenix Seminary. In 2015, I left pastoral ministry to train pastors, and joined the faculty here. After eight years at the seminary, the last four of which I have served as president, it is time for me to return to the pastorate. Through months of prayer and consideration, I have accepted God's call to serve as senior pastor at First Baptist Church in Paducah, Kentucky. I have loved my time at Phoenix Seminary. Theological education is the single most strategic ministry for building up the broader kingdom. The return on investment is high as we have an impact on hundreds of churches and ministries, and by extension, tens of thousands of lives.

I am hopeful for the future of Phoenix Seminary. God's hand of blessing has been on us for 35 years, and I believe the best is yet to come. Just in the last four years, we have paid off all our debt, increased new student enrollment by 75 percent (bringing us into the top 11 percent of seminaries in North America), developed a first-rate online program, hired world-renowned faculty, developed a top-tier staff, and graduated world-changing ministers of the Gospel. The mission of the seminary will continue uninterrupted because of the theological foundation upon which it has been built. I am confident the next president will build on the seminary's growing reputation as a faithful institution that trains men and women for Christ-centered ministry.

While I realize the impact of training up leaders is significant, my heart yearns to join you again on the front lines of ministry. Like any good soldier, I want to get back to the fray of pastoral ministry and watch the gospel work week in and week out through the preaching of the Word, evangelizing the lost, and discipling the saints. What a thrill ministry is! And what a thrill it has been to build up the next generation of soldiers for Christ.

My heart will forever beat to the motto of Phoenix Seminary—scholarship with a shepherd's heart. This motto is what first drew me to the seminary, and I believe it encapsulates my life's mission. I will continue to pursue Christian scholarship even as I serve in my new role with the heart of a shepherd.

The southwest needs the gospel. It needs strong churches, and it needs a faithful seminary. I have every confidence that Phoenix Seminary will continue to be that oasis of hope in the desert. I remain your biggest cheerleader.

With gratitude and eager joy,

Brian J. Arnold, Ph.D.
President