



## THE ANNUAL NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

Most members are familiar with our doctrinal basis. This is wonderful, because the basis narrowly defines who we are as a Society. I say narrowly, not because it admits only a few, but because it addresses only two doctrines: inerrancy, and the Trinity. This means that the Society, by definition, is actually quite broad, inviting members with a wide array of theological positions to come together for academic discussion.

Just as the basis guides who we are, our purpose statement, guides what we do. Our purpose is to “*foster conservative biblical scholarship by providing a medium for the oral exchange and written expression of thought and research in the general field of the theological disciplines as centered in the Scriptures.*”

Over these last seven years, three key elements of the statement have guided me. First, the Society *fosters* conservative biblical scholarship. The Society—the legal entity, the staff, the Executive Committee, and the many volunteers who help shape the meetings and the publications—the Society, does not actually produce scholarship. The Society *fosters* the scholarship of its members, by providing a medium for scholarly exchanges—the annual national and regional meetings—and by providing a medium for the written expression of theological research, *JETS*. This perspective is why perhaps some members and interviewers have found me quite frustrating! When asked what the Society’s position is on a wide variety of issues, I regularly reply “the position is as varied as our members.” The Society aggregates the good work of our members and facilitates conversations about that work in person at meetings, and in print through the *Journal*.

Second, the meetings should be opportunities for the *exchange* of thought and research. As we prepare for each meeting we always strive to encourage conversations. This means providing ample time for Q&A after papers are read, leaving space for panel discussions and audience interaction,

facilitating special events, and regularly inviting non-member participants so that we might learn from them, and they might also learn from us. It means encouraging members to take time to catch up with friends and mentors, to engage with students, to work with publishers on new ventures, and to discuss issues with colleagues. One piece of advice I regularly give first-time attendees, is “don’t judge the value of the meeting by the number of papers you attend, but by the quality and depth of the conversations you have that flow out of the sessions you attend.” Whether prompted by an excellent paper, an exhilarating panel discussion, a book in the hall, or a providential encounter at the coffee cart, the conversations that take place at our meetings are at the very heart of the Society’s purpose.

Third, conservative biblical scholarship is robustly understood as being “centered in the Scriptures,” but including thought and research in *all the related fields of inquiry*. I have been immensely pleased to see the recent growth in the diversity and integrative nature of our program units and special sessions. The academy tends to be a siloed environment, but the complex questions our students and churches are facing require broad interdisciplinary insights.

As we continue to pursue our purpose, I’m excited to announce a new medium for written expression, the *ETS Dissertation Series*. The *ETS*SDS will provide a place for robustly evangelical and theologically rich dissertations to be published. The series will have a general editor and five field editors (OT, NT, Systematic Theology, Church History, and Practical Theology.) If you are interested in being considered for an editorial position, please send your C.V. and a cover letter indicating your interest, by email, to [director@etsjets.org](mailto:director@etsjets.org), by **October 15**.

*J. Michael Thigpen*  
Executive Director

## 2016 Society Leadership

### **President**

*Daniel B. Wallace*  
Dallas Theological Seminary  
Center for the Study of NT Manuscripts

### **President Elect & Program Chair**

*Sam Storms*  
Bridgeway Church / Enjoying God  
Ministries

### **Vice President**

*David S. Dockery*  
Trinity International University

### **Secretary**

*Gregg R. Allison*  
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

### **Past Presidents**

*Paul R. House* (2012)  
Beeson Divinity School

*Robert W. Yarbrough* (2013)  
Covenant Theological Seminary

*Thomas R. Schreiner* (2014)  
The Southern Baptist Theological  
Seminary

*Scott B. Rae* (2015)  
Talbot School of Theology

### **Executive Director**

*J. Michael Thigpen*  
Talbot School of Theology

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