

REPORTS RELATING TO THE FIFTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

The 50th annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society was held in Orlando, Florida, November 19–21, 1998. It was the largest meeting the society has ever held. The total registration was 1297. The spacious Radisson Twin Towers, each nineteen stories tall, was our headquarters. The exhibition hall was more than adequate to house nearly fifty booths in six unique diamond shaped settings. The participating publishers are to be thanked for the generous discounts they offered while making their books and other products available.

Over three hundred twenty papers were presented as participants from around the world came to fellowship, exchange ideas, critique one another and to keep up with the most recent scholarship in their disciplines. Fourteen study groups also met as part of the overall program.

President-Elect, Wayne Grudem, served as program chairman and put together a superb array of speakers on the conference theme, "Teaching Them All Things." There were five plenary sessions. Roger Nicole, a charter member who was in attendance at the very first annual meeting of the society, gave an historical overview of the society, touching on its beginnings, growth in membership, papers and productions of all kinds, as well as its crises, with an exhortation to guard that which has been committed unto us. A question and answer time followed, including remarks by Sam Schultz, another charter member.

The fellowship banquet featured a delicious meal served to 545 in the grand ballroom, followed by Norm Geisler's presidential address. He spoke on "Beware of Philosophy," citing numerous philosophies this world offers. The full text of his message appears at the front of this issue.

On Friday afternoon, two plenary sessions were held. In Don Carson's message, "Training the Next Generation of Evangelical Scholars," he painted the landscape of the future for Christian higher academics. John Piper then addressed the subject of "Training the Next Generation of Evangelical Pastors and Missionaries." He pointed out that one may learn much, but if the main thing is ignored or missing, all is lost. That one thing is to know God and to delight in him above everything else. Several questions succeeded Carson's speech, but a holy hush of meditation followed Piper's challenge before the large audience began to sing "Fairest Lord Jesus," a capella.

A panel discussion attended by some nine hundred conferees on Friday evening finished out the plenary sessions. Luder Whitlock moderated the panel of Father Francis Martin, an invited guest, and J. I. Packer, who favored, and Robert Godfrey, who opposed, the Roman Catholic-Evangelical Document, "the Gift of Salvation." A spirited and informative question and answer time followed.

Parallel sessions were conducted on the conference theme as well as other disciplines such as Old and New Testament, theology, philosophy, missions, archaeology, and much more. Parallel programs were conducted by the Evangelical Philosophical Society, the Evangelical Missiological Society, the Near East Archaeological Society and the Adventist Theological Society.

During the first business session, held on Thursday at 1 p.m., president Norm Geisler welcomed the conferees, and Wayne Grudem, president-elect, gave a brief devotional. Following the adoption of the agenda, James Borland, secretary-treasurer, presented the membership and financial reports:

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

	Total	Full	Assoc.	Student
Active Membership 11-20-97	2380	1428	550	402
New Members	380	140	86	154
Members Reactivated	21	19	0	2
Members Dropped	(242)	(75)	(59)	(108)
Failed to pay 1997	217	64	52	101
Dropped per request	8	3	4	1
Bad addresses	10	1	2	6
Deceased	7	7	0	0
Total Membership 11-1-97	2539	1512	577	450

FINANCIAL REPORT

EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
 STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENSES
 AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE
 YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1998 AND
 ELEVEN MONTHS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1997

	1998	1997
REVENUES		
Dues and Subs	\$ 64,496.98	\$ 62,399.83
Annual Meeting	78,447.00	44,111.00
Interest on Savings	11,895.99	12,613.16
Miscellaneous Income	5,111.18	7,097.96
	<u>\$159,951.15</u>	<u>\$126,221.95</u>
EXPENSES		
Journal (<i>JETS</i>)	\$ 52,478.67	\$ 53,670.96
Accounting	600.00	550.00
Annual Meeting	20,698.28	13,507.95
Newsletter	910.00	910.00
Office and General	6,679.83	4,757.91
Office Equipment	2,339.58	0.00
Postage	7,595.56	5,861.03
Regional	3,000.00	2,500.00
Secretarial Help	7,336.79	6,784.35
Stipends	28,500.00	25,050.00
	<u>\$130,138.71</u>	<u>\$113,592.20</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	\$ 29,812.44	\$ 12,629.75
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	<u>\$197,580.34</u>	<u>\$184,950.59</u>
NET ASSETS, end of year	<u>\$227,392.78</u>	<u>\$197,580.34</u>

It was moved, seconded and carried (MSC) to accept these reports and to commend the secretary-treasurer for his work.

Dr. Geisler then expressed the great appreciation and thanks of the society to Dr. Ronald Youngblood for the many faithful years of service that he rendered as editor of the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. It was MSC to commend the editor for his twenty-three years of diligent and faithful service to the society. Dr. Geisler announced that Dr. Andreas Köstenberger had been chosen by the executive committee the night before as the new editor. From a group of eleven candidates, the committee selected Dr. Köstenberger on the basis of a long relationship with ETS, commitment to the doctrinal statement, scholarly standing, writing, editing, and proofreading ability, and the ability to meet deadlines. Three votes were taken to narrow the field to one, and the final vote was five to four, but Andreas was the top vote getter in each balloting.

A nominations committee was elected, composed of Larry Dixon (Chair), Boyd Luter, R. Philip Roberts, Gerry Breshears, and Wayne House. Dan Heimbach (Chair), Harold O. J. Brown, and George Knight were elected to the resolutions committee.

In the second business session, held on Friday, November 20, president-elect Grudem called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. James Borland delivered section reports on the spring meetings of the various ETS sections, noting the times and places of their meetings, themes, some of the speakers, the officers elected, and the time and place of their next meeting. He also gave a brief necrology for the seven members who had passed away since our last meeting, read scripture, and led in prayer. John Sailhamer, ETS vice-president, gave a devotional from Josh 1:8–9 about our heritage, then led in prayer.

Ronald Youngblood, retiring editor of *JETS*, gave his annual report on the journal. During Dr. Youngblood's tenure, the journal has increased from 72 to 176 pages per issue, and he has edited over 12,000 pages of text. The editor thanked various presidents and secretary-treasurers he has worked with, and the writers, book review editors and others who have had a part in the production of the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*.

Daniel Heimbach, chairman of the resolutions committee, read and then moved the adoption of the following four resolutions:

RESOLUTION ONE

Whereas Ronald Youngblood has faithfully edited the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* for twenty-three years, during which time he brought this publication to its present status as an outstanding and growing journal by his superb and steady editing and proofreading, we in this 50th annual meeting at Orlando, Florida do hereby express our appreciation to him for his sacrificial service and also wish for him God's gracious favor upon his own writing and publishing activities which now may, without interruption, spring forth from his hand.

RESOLUTION TWO

Whereas the Evangelical Theological Society has experienced the extraordinary blessings of God upon its work, membership, and fellowship, and

Whereas the Evangelical Theological Society has reached the milestone of its fiftieth annual meeting, with bright prospects for future ministry and service to the cause of Christ, and

Whereas the Evangelical Theological Society continues to find itself serving Christ within a cultural milieu in which the authority of Christ and his Word is challenged by theological skepticism and postmodern world views,

Now therefore *be it resolved* that the Evangelical Theological Society reaffirms its commitment to Christ's authority, recognizing the Bible, alone and in its entirety, to be the Word of God written, inerrant in its autographs, and the only infallible standard by which to direct Christian faith and practice.

RESOLUTION THREE

Whereas the City of Orlando has extended a warm welcome and gracious hospitality to Evangelical Theological Society delegates and their families and guests, and

Whereas the management of the Radisson Twin Towers Hotel has afforded exceptionally well designed and furnished meeting rooms, delegate accommodations, and support, and

Whereas the staff of the Radisson Twin Towers Hotel have consistently and courteously extended themselves to anticipate and to meet the needs of Evangelical Theological Society delegates and their families and guests, and

Whereas the Evangelical Theological Society here marked the occasion of its fiftieth annual meeting, which has been made the more enjoyable and productive by the hospitality and support received,

Now there *be it resolved* that the Evangelical Theological Society extends its appreciation and thanks to the City of Orlando and to the management and staff of the Radisson Twin Towers Hotel.

RESOLUTION FOUR

Whereas Norman L. Geisler has served the Evangelical Theological Society with distinction as President, and

Whereas Wayne A. Grudem has served the Evangelical Theological Society as President-Elect and Program Chairman, and

Whereas John H. Sailhamer has served the Evangelical Theological Society as Vice-President, and

Whereas James A. Borland has served the Evangelical Theological Society as Secretary-Treasurer, and

Whereas the members and guests of the Evangelical Theological Society have presented papers, have moderated seminars, and have participated in panel discussions,

Now therefore *be it resolved* that the Evangelical Theological Society at its fiftieth annual meeting extends its appreciation and thanks to Norman A. Geisler, Wayne A. Grudem, John H. Sailhamer, James A. Borland, and to those who have presented papers, participated in panel discussions, moderated seminars, and in other ways have contributed to making the annual meeting a success.

These four resolutions were adopted by a unanimous voice vote. The resolutions chairman, Dr. Heimbach, next circulated to all voting members the text of a fifth resolution. He read this entire resolution concerning hate crimes, then moved its adoption. After a number of members spoke either for or against the resolution, it was MSC to delete nine words on the twelfth paragraph that made reference to this being the position of another Christian leader and ministry. The main motion then carried by an overwhelming voice vote. The text of the fifth resolution follows:

RESOLUTION FIVE

Whereas the heinous beating death of Matthew Shepard, a homosexual student in Laramie, Wyoming, earlier this year was allegedly motivated by hate, and

Whereas this heinous murder, although already subject to the most severe criminal sanctions, has energized a national movement calling for separate and additional sanctions when existing crimes are motivated by hate, and

Whereas advocates for the social normalization of homosexual behavior have laid the blame for hate crimes on the moral witness of the Church and God's gracious offer of forgiveness to repentant sinners, and

Whereas some in the national media covering reaction to the heinous death of Matthew Shepard have accepted and perpetuated homosexual attacks on the moral witness of the Church without any factual basis and have thereby failed in the fundamental journalistic responsibility to report truth and not false accusation, and

Whereas violent bodily harm and death by murder are terrible sins worthy of criminalization by human law, but are nevertheless no more sinful and no more worthy of criminal sanction because motivated by hate, than if by lust, greed or cruel indifference, and

Whereas all men and women are created equally in the image of God so that violence suffered by any victim is no less heinous if a perpetrator is motivated by lust, greed, or cruel indifference than if by hate, and

Whereas because "man looks on the outward appearance" and only "God looks on the heart," the idea of hate crime is about adding civil sanctions for something no human being can accurately or fairly discern in any other, and

Whereas accepting the idea of hate crime invites persecution of any moral belief of the Church that is at odds with the desires of sinful human nature,

Be it, therefore, resolved by the members of the Evangelical Theological Society attending the 50th annual meeting held at Orlando, Florida, that we

abhor the terrible sin of doing intentional physical harm to another human being for no reason other than hate, and

Be it further resolved that we equally abhor using rhetoric of hate to prejudice the power of civil government against the open and complete proclamation of moral standards revealed in God's Holy Word—including both God's love for sinners as well as his judgment of sin, and

Be it further resolved that we affirm that Scripture clearly teaches that homosexual conduct is always an abomination in the sight of God for all human beings, both men and women, in all circumstances, without exception (Lev 18:22; 20:13; Rom 1:26–27; 1 Cor 6:9), and

Be it further resolved that we affirm as biblical and do ourselves agree with the position that Christian moral opposition to homosexual behavior is not and can never be license for anyone to engage in any form of slander, harassment or violence against one with whom we disagree, and

Be it further resolved that we oppose any attempt by civil authority to judge the hearts of men and women for any purpose, much less for the purpose of creating a legal fiction that can only ensure unequal treatment for equally heinous criminal actions, and

Be it finally resolved that we call on the national media to refrain from and repudiate unsubstantiated, untruthful, and hateful accusations against evangelical Christians and to report truthfully concerning the Church's true message of the good news that God offers forgiveness for sins through faith in Jesus Christ.

During this second business session the following officers were elected for 1999:

President—Wayne A. Grudem
 President-Elect—John H. Sailhamer
 Vice-President—Darrell L. Bock
 Secretary-Treasurer—James A. Borland
 Journal Editor—Andreas J. Köstenberger
 Vacancy on Executive Committee—Norman L. Geisler
 Vacancies on Membership Committee—Larry Dixon and Boyd Luter
 Vacancy on Editorial Committee—Andreas J. Köstenberger

There being no other business to come before the society, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m.

The places and themes for future annual meetings are:

- 1999 “ESCHATOLOGY” November 17–19 (Wed.–Fri.) Sheraton Ferncroft Resort, Danvers, MA (978) 777-2500
- 2000 “ISRAEL: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE” November 15–17 (Wed.–Fri.) Opreyland Hotel, Nashville, TN
- 2001 “DEFINING EVANGELICALISM'S BOUNDARIES” (Denver—Tentative)
- 2002 “EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER RELIGIONS” (Toronto?)

Our Society anticipates continued growth and effectiveness in its scholarly presentations and discussions in the years ahead. I encourage each member to join us next November 17–19 (Wed.–Fri.) at the Sheraton Ferncroft Resort, 50 Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923 as we consider the theme, “Eschatology.” Hotel rooms are \$110 per night for one to four occupants. Rooms at this rate may be secured until October 17 at 978-777-2500, or FAX at 978-750-7959. We have only 300 rooms for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights.

JAMES A. BORLAND