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Reports Relating to the Fifty-Third Annual Meeting of the Society

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JETS 45/1 (March 2002) 183–88

REPORTS RELATING TO THE FIFTY-THIRD ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

The 53rd annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society was held in Colorado Springs, Colorado, November 14–16, 2001, with a record-breaking registration of 1850, nearly 200 more than the previous year's record. The beautiful Broadmoor Hotel provided the setting. Participating publishers offered generous discounts on their books and other products from more than sixty booths in a large exhibit hall.

The program theme, "Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries," was explored in six plenary sessions and by many of the several hundred individual papers. Participants came from as far away as Israel, Jordan, Singapore, Korea, Canada, and Europe to fellowship, exchange ideas, critique one another, and to keep abreast of the most recent scholarship in their disciplines. Nearly twenty study groups also met as part of the overall program.

President-elect Millard Erickson served as program chairman and put together a superb array of plenary speakers. On Wednesday afternoon, William Travis of Bethel Theological Seminary began with an address on "Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries Historically." He argued that evangelicals have always held to the inerrancy of the Bible, that personal salvation was necessary, and that a holy life was to be emphasized. That evening, a record 903 persons gathered in the presidential ballroom for the fellowship banquet. After a delicious meal, President Bock presented Robert Newman with a plaque for his service as Vice-President, President-Elect, and President from 1994–96, and for his service on the Executive Committee from 1994–2001. We next heard ETS president Darrell Bock of Dallas Theological Seminary deliver a challenging, insightful, and almost prophetic message titled "The Purpose-Driven ETS: Where Do We Propose to Go? A Look at Jesus Studies and Other Example Cases." His address appears in this issue of *JETS*.

On Thursday afternoon attendees heard back-to-back hour-long lectures presenting the cases for and against open theism. John Sanders of Huntington College answered the question "Is Open Theism Evangelical?" in the affirmative, while Bruce Ware of Southern Seminary argued, among other things, that divine exhaustive foreknowledge is essential to upholding God's character and even the inerrancy of Scripture itself. Thus he concluded that open theism is indeed outside the boundaries that define evangelicalism.

The fourth and fifth plenary sessions were held on Thursday evening featuring David Dockery of Union University and Douglas Groothuis of Denver Seminary. "Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries Biblically" was Dockery's topic, while Groothuis delivered an impassioned lecture on "Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries Culturally."

The sixth and final plenary address was delivered by James Sweeney of Western Seminary in Portland on Friday morning. His topic, "Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries in Ministry," was informed by his many years of service to Christ both in the academy and in the church. Tapes of these and other presentations are available from Audio Mission International, 800-874-8730, for just $5.00 each.

As many as twenty parallel sessions ran concurrently on such disciplines as Old Testament, New Testament, biblical, historical and systematic theology, archaeology, philosophy, hermeneutics, missions, evangelism and world religions, as well as on the conference theme. About thirty papers were delivered on the openness of God topic, but only three or four favored the view. Parallel programs were also conducted by the Evangelical Philosophical Society, the Near East Archaeological Society, and the Adventist Theological Society. Tables and a display board were provided for members to display resumes and for institutions to advertise available positions.

On Wednesday at 1:00 p.m., the first business session was called to order by ETS president Darrell Bock. He then introduced president-elect Millard Erickson, who gave a brief devotional and led in prayer. It was moved, seconded, and carried (MSC) to adopt the dockett, that is the program for the meeting which had been printed and distributed to all members previously. The secretary-treasurer, James Borland, then presented both the membership and financial reports.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

	Total	Full	Assoc.	Student
Active Membership 11-20-00	3148	1686	678	784
New Members (2001)	622	146	96	380
Members Reactivated	94	58	18	18
Members Dropped	(390)	(139)	(104)	(147)
Failed to pay 2001	343	123	96	124
Dropped per request	8	2	3	3
Bad addresses	38	13	5	20
Deceased	1	1	0	0
Total Membership 11-15-01	3474	1751	688	1035

FINANCIAL REPORT
EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE
YEARS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2001 AND SEPTEMBER 30, 2000

REVENUES	2001	2000
Dues and Subs	$ 112,064	$ 103,318
Annual Meeting	113,149	106,330
Interest on Savings	14,394	15,412
Miscellaneous Income	29,026	6,606
	$ 268,633	$ 233,668
EXPENSES		
Journal (*JETS*)	$ 54,917	$ 54,485
Monograph	0	0
Accounting	675	625
Annual Meeting	51,552	41,132
Newsletter	1,450	1,250
Office and General	9,914	11,866
Office Equipment	1,263	1,469
Postage	15,246	14,263
Regional	5,000	4,000
Secretarial Help	8,365	9,418
Web Site	3,449	1,155
Stipends	55,465	51,700
	$ 213,011	$ 197,365
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	$ 55,622	$ 36,302
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	$ 285,178	$ 248,875
NET ASSETS, end of year	$ 340,800	$ 285,177

It was MSC to accept these reports. The financial report had previously been audited by Geoffrey R. Mather, CPA.

Three members, Gerry Breshears, Gregg Allison, and Rick Taylor were then nominated for the three slots to serve on the nominating committee along with the two most recent past presidents. It was MSC to close the nominations and to receive these three by acclamation.

Elected to serve by acclamation on the resolutions committee were George Knight, Doug Kennard, and George Joseph Gatis.

President Bock then introduced a motion that came out of the ETS executive committee in their meeting on Tuesday evening, November 13, 2001. A printed sheet containing the motion and accompanying stipulations was distributed to all members present. The text of this printed sheet follows:

Business Item for Friday Morning's ETS Business Session

The ETS Executive Committee proposes the following motion to be voted upon by the society at this 53rd Annual Meeting.

"Whereas several charter members and others have asked the Evangelical Theological Society to address the compatibility of the view commonly referred to as 'Open Theism' with biblical inerrancy, Be it resolved that: We believe the Bible clearly teaches that God has complete, accurate and infallible knowledge of all events past, present and future including all future decisions and actions of free moral agents."

"The Executive Committee therefore moves at this first business session that the society discuss the above resolution at a meeting to be held after the close of the second plenary session Thursday evening, but that no vote be taken on Thursday evening; but that the resolution be voted on as the first item on the agenda at the Friday business session without discussion of this or any related motion prior to the vote on the resolution."

This motion was passed by an overwhelming voice vote. In accord with this vote, a discussion of the primary motion took place for several hours on Thursday evening. This was followed by a separate convening of the executive committee to assess the results of the discussion.

At Friday's business session, Vice-President David Howard, Jr. gave devotions on Psalm 113 and led in prayer. President Darrell Bock then introduced the previous motion from the executive committee, but asked, in accordance with an Executive Committee agreement, that the words "Whereas . . . inerrancy" be deleted from that motion, the idea being to separate the vote on God's omniscience from a connection with the idea of inerrancy. That motion passed by a nearly unanimous voice vote.

David Howard then offerred the following: "Whereas the resolution from last year's Executive Committee indicated that 'in order to insure fairness to members of the society who differ with this view'—namely that the Bible clearly teaches that God has complete, accurate and infallible foreknowledge of all events past, present, and future, including all future decisions and actions of free moral agents—'we propose the issue of such incompatibility [with inerrancy] be taken up as part of our discussion in next year's conference "Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries."' And whereas this conference

and that stipulated discussion have not yet concluded—and, indeed, one of the major proponents of Open Theism has not yet presented his paper on the topic—I move that the society postpone the vote on the resolution before us [this year's resolution] until next year's annual meeting of the society."

David Howard's motion was defeated by a vote of 176 to 126.

The main amended motion, "Be it resolved that: We believe the Bible clearly teaches that God has complete, accurate and infallible knowledge of all events past, present and future including all future decisions and actions of free moral agents" was then approved by a ballot vote of 253 YES; 66 NO; and 41 ABSTAIN.

Secretary-Treasurer, James Borland, then gave brief section reports, followed by the memorials for Loyal Ringenberg and Sam Pittman. He also read Scripture and led in prayer.

Doug Kennard, chair of the resolutions committee, presented the following:

"Having convened on Thursday, November 15, 2001, the resolutions committee unanimously aapproves and proposes the following resolution:

On this day, November 16, 2001, the Evangelical Theological Society resolves:

First, to thank the Broadmoor Hotel of Colorado Springs for the fine facilities, hospitality, and support of our program;

Second, to thank the overseeing committee of this national conference, especially the leadership of Darrell Bock and Millard Erickson for the stimulating program, Jim Borland for service as Secretary-Treasurer, and the editor of *JETS*, Andreas Köstenberger; and

Third, to thank our membership for their thoughtful contributions in the papers and responses.

In the spirit of the theme of this year's conference, "Defining Evangelicalism's Boundaries," we, as the Evangelical Theological Society, resolve to maintain with good conscience our clear evangelical heritage and continue with significant contribution toward demonstrating the unifying love in Christ and His Gospel transformation unto kingdom."

This resolution was passed unanimously.

Gerry Breshears then presented the report of the nominations committee. During this second business session the following officers were elected for 2002:

President—Millard J. Erickson
President-Elect—David M. Howard, Jr.
Vice-President—Greg Beale
Secretary-Treasurer—James A. Borland
Journal Editor—Andreas Köstenberger
Vacancy on Executive Committee—Darrell Bock
Vacancies on Membership Committee—Wayne Strickland and Ardel Caneday
Vacancies on the Editorial Committee—Gary Habermas and Greg Beale

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:15 a.m.

The places and themes for future annual meetings are:

2002 "EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER RELIGIONS" Nov. 20–22 (Wed.–Fri.) The Regal Constellation (Toronto, ON)

2003 "JESUS" Nov. 19–21 (Wed.–Fri.) Atlanta Hilton (Atlanta, GA)

2004 "WHAT IS TRUTH?"

2005 "PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ETHICS"

During 2001, our Society added a record 622 new members and reactivated 94 other members. We anticipate continued growth and effectiveness in our scholarly presentations and discussions in the years ahead. I encourage each member to join us next November 20–22 (Wed.–Fri.) at the Regal Constellation Hotel, Toronto, ON, Canada, as we consider the theme, "Evangelical Christianity and Other Religions." Hotel rooms range from $109 (CDN) per night for economy to $159 (CDN) per night for Club. In USD that is approximately from $77 to $113. Rooms at these rates may be secured until October 20 at 800-268-4838. We contracted for 568 rooms for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday nights, 350 for Friday evening, and 100 for Saturday.

JAMES A. BORLAND