

EDITORIAL

The year 2007 marks a major milestone in the life of our Society, the fiftieth year of the publication of the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*. Over the past half-century the *Journal* has been an integral part of the Society's purpose: "To foster conservative biblical scholarship by providing a medium for the exchange and written expression of thought and research in the general field of the theological disciplines as centered in the Scriptures." Through years of continued growth of the Society and through various theological debates and controversies, the *Journal* has served as a forum for constructive dialogue and vigorous discourse.

The earliest precursor of the *Journal* was an informal publication edited by John Walvoord from 1956–58. In 1958, a Bulletin Committee was formed, consisting of Warren C. Young, Merrill C. Tenney, Kenneth S. Kantzer, and J. Barton Payne. As a result, the *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* was launched, with Steven Barabas as "literary editor" (*BETS* 1/1 [1958] 2). The Editorial in *JETS* 12/1 (1969) sketches the beginnings of our *Journal* as follows: "During the early years of our society some of the papers presented at the annual meetings were made available in mimeographed form. The first volume of the *Bulletin* was published in 1958. Stephen Barabas and John E. Luchies of Wheaton College each served two years as editor." In addition, during the first three years of the publication of the *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* (as the *Journal* was called until Volume 11 in 1968), various individuals at Wheaton College are listed as Managing Editors: Neil A. Winegarden (1958–61), Arthur F. Holmes (last two issues of 1961), and John Mostert (1962).

Remarkably, apart from the first few fledgling years of the *Bulletin*, the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* has only had three editors in its 50-year existence: (1) Samuel J. Schultz, who served as Editor from 1962–75 (a 14-year tenure); (2) Ronald Youngblood, who was Editor from 1976–98 (23 years); and (3) the writer of the present editorial, who assumed his duties in 1999. When Ron Youngblood became Editor in 1976, the *Journal* was 72 pages long. By the end of his tenure in 1998 the size of the *Journal* had increased to 176 pages per issue. Today the length stands at a healthy 224 pages per issue, for a total of almost 900 pages per year. Editing the *Journal* has become the equivalent of editing several major books on an annual basis.

As a fitting tribute to the importance of the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* and its role in the rise of the evangelical movement over the past half-century, a celebratory volume is currently in preparation which is scheduled for publication at the upcoming Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in November 2007. Tentatively titled *Quo Vadis, Evangelicals?* and to be published by Crossway Books, the volume will

feature several past presidential addresses that programmatically address the present and future of evangelicalism at large and of the Evangelical Theological Society in particular. This compilation of presidential addresses will attest to the vision and shaping influence of the ETS and of its leaders on the evangelical movement.

As the *Journal* is poised to enter the second half-century of its existence, the evangelical movement is stronger and more vibrant than ever before. Challenges remain to resolve issues that divide, and most likely only eternity will see clarity on all fronts. “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. . . . For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known” (1 Cor 13:9–10, 12). If you will forgive a concluding personal note: not only the *Journal* turns 50 this year, but so will its Editor. What makes a publication such as *JETS* venerable and beloved at this ripe old age, however, is not quite as welcome when an individual such as the present writer reaches this milestone. In any case, please join me in wishing the *Journal ad multos annos*, and “Happy 50th Anniversary,” *JETS!*

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