

March 24, 2003

ETS Members and Others

To Whom It May Concern:

Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Our beloved Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) is in a crisis. Two years ago in Colorado we gave extensive time to the discussion of "open theism." Presentations, pro and con, were given in plenary sessions and in many of the breakout groups. This was set up as a central program item partly because of the significant attention (and controversy) that had been occurring for several years previously. After extensive discussion in Colorado, the Society passed a resolution affirming God's complete foreknowledge. This past year in Toronto the issue came to a head as the legitimacy of the membership of Clark Pinnock and John Sanders was officially challenged [the charge was that their writings contained statements incompatible with the ETS doctrinal basis] and by majority vote the challenge was referred for action next year in Atlanta according to the ETS constitutional procedure. [Originally Greg Boyd was included in the challenge, but during the meeting it was discovered that Boyd's membership had lapsed during the previous year and had not been renewed.]

In the Colorado meeting and again in Toronto, I heard the argument that open theism is simply a version of free-will theism and that we should not be concerned about it. The point was made that this "open" view of God's knowledge of the future is only a matter of biblical interpretation and philosophical models, and that it should be a welcomed debate within ETS since the debate could be conducted within a nuanced definition of biblical inerrancy.

In other words, the argument has been regularly made that "open theism" grows directly out of a believing interpretation of certain biblical passages. Therefore, as much as one may disagree with this view, it is like a premillennialist disagreeing with an amillennialist, or like a complementarian disagreeing with an egalitarian, or like a charismatic disagreeing with a cessationist. Strong disagreements on significant issues already exist between committed ETS members, each of which simply interpret Scripture differently while holding to the full truthfulness and authority of the biblical text. ETS (supposedly being a "village green" for the open debate of ideas), should have no concern about Society membership in matters like this. We don't want young earth advocates to rule out old earthers as ETS members on the grounds that old earthers deny inerrancy simply by believing in an old earth. Isn't open theism a comparable issue?

I am writing to put before you a few of the reasons I don't find that set of arguments to be compelling, why I think this matter of open theism is different from those other kinds of differences (which don't concern me), why I think we must as a Society address this issue, and what I hope we can and should do between now and next November.

First, ETS clearly is a "village green" for the debate of ideas, but it is unlike the AAR/SBL in that we have a doctrinal basis. The purpose of ETS is not to deny the salvation of those who cannot affirm our doctrinal basis. Nor is it to deny the legitimacy of academic scholarship and debate by non-inerrantists. I am a member of AAR and SBL and ETS and EPS and SCP and other professional groups. Each professional society is legitimate as a forum for the exchange of ideas. Each has the right to define its membership.

If someone holds a view inconsistent with the ETS doctrinal basis, this simply means that they should not use our forum to propose, advocate, and defend their views. There are other legitimate forums available. The issue before us is whether "open theism" is incompatible with the doctrinal basis upon which ETS was founded.

ETS was formed to allow those who hold to biblical inerrancy to meet together to discuss and debate issues in a "friendly" environment. Our leading scholars have always set the standard for us, and ETS has been a wonderful place to hear the cream of the evangelical crop. This has been a great boon to evangelicalism. But also, prior to the existence of ETS many less well-known teachers in smaller seminaries and Bible schools had no adequate forum for professional academic discussion. One of the significant ministries of ETS has been the opportunities given to Ph.D. students and active but less well-known evangelical scholars to participate in a serious and significant academic forum. It was and is unlikely that an SBL session would be given to a discussion of the merits of a mid-tribulational interpretation of Revelation over a pre-tribulational reading [I do not mean to suggest that ETS in any way focuses on such specialized issues]; but if SBL were to permit such a paper, what would the session be like? Evangelicals have no sense of being welcomed into AAR/SBL to discuss such issues. ETS, however, would accept such a paper, and a lively and helpful academic exchange could occur. The audience would be in touch with the frame of reference such a paper presupposes, and the discussion would be of interest and value to those present. ETS has made a unique contribution to evangelical scholarship.

The doctrinal basis of ETS was established to be intentionally inclusive of various denominational emphases and other hermeneutical systems compatible with biblical inerrancy. Our original basis for forming ETS was our common belief that the Bible alone and the Bible in its entirety is the Word of God written and therefore inerrant in the original autographs. Those who denied biblical inerrancy or those who accepted some other source of revelation or divine authority, or who tried to define only some but not all of the teachings of the Bible as being the Word of God, these were welcome to promote their views in some other forum but not in ETS programs and publications.

This doctrinal basis served well to bring into being a scholarly forum in which respect for the integrity and the trustworthiness of the Bible was the common ground. There would be no ridicule directed at an ETS paper presenter based on his or her commitment to the traditional critical views (as opposed to the dominant modern higher critical approach to the text). Dispensationalists as well as amillennialists could affirm the inerrancy of the biblical teachings and debate the issues within our forum. Many other

issues were debated as well. ETS, as an interdenominational Society, uniquely met a need for the professors at theologically conservative seminaries and Bible schools.

ETS has every right to have a doctrinal basis. In my view it is the doctrinal basis that has attracted so large a membership in recent years. Nevertheless, any doctrinally guided body will eventually face a boundary issue. At what point does a member cross the line that divides a doctrinally based group from other differently defined groups?

I know of only one previous time that a member has by vote of our Society been asked to resign from membership. That individual was Robert Gundry. He had published a commentary on Matthew saying that the story of the Wise Men was a midrashic version of the shepherd story in Luke. This was, he said, two tellings of the same event. He denied that his interpretation was inconsistent with inerrancy or with the doctrinal basis of the Society. In other words, he said he believed that he was simply offering another legitimate interpretation of Matthew's account. He never admitted that his published view was in violation of the basis for membership in ETS. Some agreed with him (that he had not violated the doctrinal boundary of biblical inerrancy), but the majority clearly understood that the Society was not formed as a forum for advocating such views. Gundry's view was a denial of a common sense notion of inerrancy.

Robert Gundry was (and is) a good scholar. His work in New Testament Introduction and in eschatology was and is much appreciated by many of us; but to affirm that the two nativity records, with different characters, different contexts, different issues, different timings and structures, different results, etc., were accounts of the same event told (by Luke) in a simple and (by Matthew) in an elaborate version, this to many of us was in fact a denial of inerrancy. Gundry was free to publish the book. I have a copy in my library. ETS never voted to censure the publisher nor to condemn the book. We simply asked Gundry to recant those views or resign from membership. After resignation he would continue to be free to discuss his theory in a variety of forums. Most of us, however, felt he should not represent himself as a member of ETS since his published views seemed clearly to be a denial of the historical accuracy and authenticity of Matthew's account. He could promote his view in SBL or in some other forum, but we asked him to resign from ETS. He refused to recant or change his views, believing I suppose that the Society would accept his view as a legitimate option within ETS. We had no choice, however. Without joy or celebration, a motion was made and a vote was taken, and Robert Gundry was asked by a large majority to resign his membership in ETS. He graciously agreed to resign rather than to force other motions that might have been more divisive. The Society lost some members over this. One my colleagues at Southwestern never renewed his membership in protest. The Society continued to grow, however. Large blocks of members had threatened to resign if the Gundry issue was not addressed. Something had to be done, but I am well aware that it was a difficult decision for many Society members.

To avoid facing a similar issue with non-Trinitarians (who nevertheless supposedly affirm "inerrancy," the so-called "oneness" pentecostals), the Society took preemptive action by voting to add a Trinitarian statement to our doctrinal basis. Many of us fear that advocates of homosexuality who claim to hold to

biblical inerrancy may try to use membership in ETS as a way to legitimate themselves and their views within evangelicalism. Inerrancy at one time was understood to be inconsistent with certain higher critical views, but this is not so clear today. ETS members surely consider the salvific necessity of repentance and faith in Christ's atonement to be a central point of common agreement, and we generally deny that there are other means of salvation, but that is not stated in our founding documents. Generally this is an evangelical protestant Society, and it has not been open to Roman Catholics. Some don't agree with that stance. Do we need to spell out our position on these matters? We already began that process in the case of Trinitarianism. Where should we stop? What else should be formally included in our doctrinal basis?

This letter is not being written to advocate positions on each of these issues, but it seems to me that we have at least established that the majority of us do not want someone who denies the trinity to be accepted in a society established on the basis of biblical inerrancy. By adding to our stated doctrinal basis, we in effect asked any and all non-trinitarians to resign from our Society (or at least not to renew their membership or not to apply for membership). There are at least some issues that we believe should exclude someone from ETS membership.

Is open theism one of those issues that should be a cause for denial of membership in ETS? Is it incompatible with the doctrinal basis of our Society, or is it one of the many interpretive differences that we legitimately should have within our membership? If we were to say that open theists are not inerrantists, then where would this lead? Would someone come to the floor and challenge an old earther's membership, or would an egalitarian be challenged, or would an Arminian be challenged? Even if such challenges never mustered the vote even for constitutional referral, would challenges of this kind not destroy the free and friendly intellectual exchange of ideas we have come to enjoy at ETS meetings? Would we not put an intolerable burden on the ETS Executive Committee to attempt to process such challenges?

Let me be very clear about this. I would support a revision to the constitutional process that would enable us to avoid frivolous challenges. I would prefer not to amend the doctrinal basis to cover every issue (though if we are going beyond inerrancy, it seems that stating our belief in salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone is as necessary as a Trinitarian statement). The Society will eventually have to address these issues, but with equal certainty we must address open theism, and this is the issue that faces us immediately.

Why do I think open theism must be addressed (apart from the fact that a constitutional process has been started)? In my view, open theism is incompatible with biblical inerrancy. Let me state the case as briefly as possible.

Inerrancy is a doctrinal implication. As I understand it, God's Word is true because God knows all things and speaks only the truth. In many cases we can verify that the biblical claims and teachings correspond to reality. Herod was the King of Judea at the time of the birth of Christ. We could know of Herod even if the Bible did not mention him, but the biblical claim clearly corresponds to the facts

in this case. We have no similar facts to study regarding the visit of the Magi, however. We cannot independently verify that biblical claim. We nevertheless believe that we have the truth, because we believe the Spirit of God inspired the writing of that story. Because we believe the story is authenticated by God, we believe it is true. Even for those biblical affirmations where we are fortunate enough to have some independent verification, we consider that to be confirming evidence rather than an essential foundational basis for affirming biblical inerrancy. The basis for affirming inerrancy is and must be our belief that the Bible is the Word of God. We could never independently confirm all biblical affirmations. Inerrancy is an implication of a strong view of inspiration.

Jesus in His teaching always assumed and affirmed the truthfulness of the Scripture. As disciples of Christ, we should learn from His teaching and always affirm the same thing about Scripture. The apostles spoke of the Scriptures as being the law of God or the prophecy of God or the Word of God. Paul said the Scriptures were given by the spiritual breath of God and thus were useful for correcting our actions and viewpoints. Peter claimed that the prophecy of Scripture was never given as human opinions and private interpretations but was given by God through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament prophets regularly claimed that the Word of the Lord came to them, and the prophets then report what this Word revealed to them about the past, the present, and/or the future. John tells us that the Word became flesh in Jesus Christ, and Paul speaks of Christ as the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, the second Adam, the incarnation of God. Thus the teachings of Jesus are the affirmations of God.

Therefore inerrancy, as we properly define it, means that the objective and contextual meaning of Scripture is always truthful, because it is alone and in its entirety the Word of God written. The ETS doctrinal basis correctly states the pre-condition (the affirmation of what we believe the Bible alone and in its entirety to be: the Word of God written) and therefore (note the stress that this is an implication of the original affirmation) it is inerrant. The only qualification is that the inerrancy claim is made only when we are referring to the original content and meaning of the authentic canonical text, i.e., the verbalized affirmations of the prophets and apostles as originally certified by them. This is the common sense understanding of the term "the original autographs." (By the way, in our existing manuscripts, we do have the very words that were written and certified by the prophets and apostles, and thus the supposed loss of the original paper and ink is no argument against the doctrine of inerrancy.) Inerrancy would not apply to every potential or actual scribal variation or human emendation that might occur as the text was copied over the years; and there are a known set of phrases where we still have some significant problem discerning which of the readings we have was the original. These minor matters do not destroy our confidence in the authenticity of our text, however; and we affirm that we have and know what God has revealed to us.

The Bible is the Word of God. The text as originally produced and certified by the prophet or apostle under the Spirit's guidance is our definition of "the Bible." Inerrancy is the necessary conclusion unless one thinks that God in some ways did not effectively guide the Scripture writing process or that He did not intend to provide a fully truthful revelation (neither of these proposals would be accepted by traditional evangelical theologians) or (and this is the point I have been trying to get to) unless there

were some things that God simply didn't know or about which He was mistaken at the time the revealed message was given.

What do open theists believe? I will summarize my understanding of it. If I state their view incorrectly, perhaps I can be better educated in this matter, and I will certainly be open to my need to be thus educated; but in essence, this is what I think they are saying.

First, God knows everything about the past and present. He knows everything that has ever happened. These are actualities. God is not mistaken about any actual fact. He knows every actual truth. He is complete in that knowledge.

Moreover, God knows everything about the future, but this knowledge is not the same as His knowledge of the past since the future is not yet an actuality. Open theists would say that God knows every future possibility. Since future events have not yet happened, they are not actualities. Open theists say that God knows all actualities as actualities and all possibilities as possibilities. As possibilities become actualities (as things happen) God's knowledge changes in the sense that what was known before only as a possibility now becomes known as an actuality. This is not seen as a limitation for God but rather as a result of the kind of world God made. He knows the world as He made it: a world of past and present actualities which do not change, and a world of future possibilities which by nature may only be known as possibilities.

For open theists the future is "open" because in each case there supposedly are multiple possibilities. The actual future cannot be known because the future does not yet actually exist. Some future events depend upon our free choices, and since they are "truly free" choices, even God cannot know ahead of time what these choices will be (except He knows these choices as one of the many possibilities). Open theists argue that if God knew what our choices would be, our choices would not be truly free. [This, of course, is a highly disputed point.] Open theists acknowledge that all of the possibilities will not actually happen. Some possibilities are more likely than others. Some alternatives may have an equal chance of becoming actual, but in essence the future is open and not predetermined nor in any actual sense fully foreknown. Open theists say that God knows everything "as it is." Thus God only knows the future as a broad set of possibilities. God knows all the "what ifs" even of those things that never actually happen, but He knows possibilities as possibilities only. He does not know which of the possibilities will become actual until they become actual in some present moment. He can, of course, overrule human free will and cause something to happen by His power; but for those things He has chosen not thus to predetermine, God does not know which possibility will become actual (even though He knows all the options and all the consequences of each option).

This is a fascinating philosophical option regarding the nature of God's knowledge. Since the future is not determined by God or by anything else, it is said to be "open," and though God knows all the options, the actual future is "open" for God too. He does not know which of the many options will become actualities. This is why open theism is said to be a version of free-will theism, because the claim is made that free-will is the central element of human history and that free will is only free if it is not

determined and not foreknown. So the freedom of the will supposedly requires that even God cannot foreknow which choices a "free-will" will make. According to this theory, the future actions of people with "free wills" can only be a set of possibilities, and God could only know them as possibilities.

Therefore, God knows all the future possibilities, but He knows them only as possibilities. Thus He does not know ahead of time which of the many possibilities will be selected by the free choices of people. The future is thus open-ended even for God. It is a great adventure in which God is acting and responding to bring about good. Evil happens, not by God's doing, but because God left open real choices for humans. God cannot prevent all evil, because He does not overrule our free choices, and in any case He may not know that an evil action will be the "possibility" that actually will occur in a given instance until it happens. God wants only good, but evil happens because God does not control human free-will. Evil cannot be eliminated because God does not know exactly what will happen in every case. God simply does not know what will actually happen in the future.

I heard one open theist say at ETS that God may well have led a couple to get married, knowing that it was possible (and perhaps likely) that they would be happy, but that God was surprised and distressed to learn in time that this man would later choose to abuse his wife. God's original support for the marriage turned out to be a mistake on His part, for He never wanted the girl to be abused, and He never knew it would happen until it was too late.

Now to the essential point. How could the Bible be inerrant if, at the time of the original revelation, God only knew some of the things He revealed (the future prophecies, for example) as possibilities (about which He might be wrong)? Does God simply accomplish all that He reveals to the prophets by His providential power, forcing the Bible to be true? The Bible does not speak only of things that might happen (the possibilities). It speaks of what will happen (the certainties). The death of Christ was by God's set purpose and foreknowledge, and yet it was also the result of choices made by wicked men (for which they are morally responsible). It is true that open theists allow for God's power to act and overrule free will if God needs to do so to accomplish some determined purpose, but does this really apply here? What if Pilate had set Jesus free? We know he found Jesus innocent. Did God providentially overrule and force Pilate to issue the order of execution? If Pilate did not act freely, what moral responsibility would he have? What of Judas? What of the soldiers? Is messianic prophecy exclusively a matter of fulfillment by divine providence, or were truthful prophecies due to infallible foreknowledge of free and morally responsible acts?

Jesus, at the last supper, spoke of the free actions that Peter would choose to do before the rooster crowed. Peter did not intend to deny Christ. He never later excused himself by claiming that he was providentially "forced" to deny Christ. Peter felt guilty when he realized what he had done. Clearly his denials were "free-will" acts, not manipulated or forced acts, and yet Jesus knew what would (not what might only possibly) happen. This is how much biblical prophecy should be understood. God's knowledge of the future is not coercive, but it is certain and complete. Sometimes God in the Bible tells us ahead of time what He purposefully plans to do; but surely in many cases God simply tells us what will happen to show us that He knows (for He is God). That God knows these events ahead of time does not in any relevant sense remove our responsibility for our actions. The claim, however, that

God did not foreknow these events leaves us with a limited God who essentially responds to the initiatives of men.

Open theists say that Scripture teaches that God sometimes changes His mind. This for them is evidence that the future is open. Even if we take these passages in the simplest and most literal way, they only mean that God for good reason based on His unchanging character chose to alter and/or revise some aspect of His original plan. That hardly leads to the conclusion that God did not and does not and can not know the future. God is free to act in any way He chooses, and He could choose to act differently from some previously announced plan, but His knowledge of future events is not thereby denied. Many theologians do not read these passages as the open theists do, because we cannot easily trust a God who might change His mind about some determinative matter, such as what one must do to be saved.

How could we have an inerrant Bible if the God who revealed its message simply did not know for sure what He was talking about. Does God reveal only His "best guess" but not the foreknown truth about the future events in salvation history. Biblical prophecy is not a statement of future possibilities but rather a statement of future certainties, and yet without divine coercion. These truths are revealed by the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 21:6). Jesus says that the Father has unique knowledge (Matt. 24:36), but Jesus could and did speak extensively about the future.

It seems to be a tough call for some to make, but to me a God who is not infallible is not capable of revealing a message about the future that can be known to be inerrant. The issue is that basic. Open theism, as interesting as it is philosophically, is not a viewpoint that can successfully affirm that biblical inerrancy flows directly from the belief that the Bible is God's word, because the God of open theism cannot actually know all things. Thus God might be wrong about anything related to the future if human choices and intellectual freedom are involved. We might say we believe in inerrancy, but the doctrinal basis for this belief is no longer viable if even God Himself might be wrong in His thinking about the actual moral and other choices that will be made by human beings in the future.

Maybe God really thought that Tyre (or Jerusalem, or any other city) had a prophetic destiny, but since human choices were involved, God's word about that prophetic destiny might not be absolutely trustworthy. Maybe He didn't know everything, or perhaps He revealed a prophetic destiny to a prophet (who then wrote it in his canonical book), but then God later changed His mind. "Everlasting covenants" would rest on a tenuous basis. Perhaps the man of lawlessness will choose not to set himself up as if he were a god. Maybe the Book of Revelation is hard to interpret because God Himself doesn't know for sure what will happen. Maybe Babylon will not suffer an everlasting judgment. Maybe Egypt will never become God's people after all. Maybe Israel will never be saved (surely that must involve personal choices by the people of Israel). Maybe the Bible is true in its history, but maybe it is only God's best prophetic guess in future matters involving the human will.

For these and other reasons, I believe "open theism" by definition undercuts our ETS affirmation of inerrancy. A great deal of the Bible cannot be independently verified. Its truthfulness depends upon its content having come to us by a process of inspiration by the Spirit of God working through the very

human minds and wills of the human authors. How can the open theist, with his or her peculiar view of divine foreknowledge, ever say that the Bible is inerrant as a direct and exclusive result of it being God's word written. For open theists the future (even for God) remains only a set of possibilities. It is not really a question of providential power (of course God has that). It is a question of God's knowledge. Does God reveal what He knows, or does God reveal only what He hopes and/or coerces?

I am sure there is much more that needs to be discussed. Some will not follow or agree with my argument. Some may say the issue should not be raised unless an ETS member explicitly denies biblical inerrancy in print. Some but not all believe that Pinnock and perhaps others have denied inerrancy (both implicitly and explicitly) in their writings. However, the citation of specific problematic references in published sources will need to be done by others. That method is certainly effective and perhaps necessary, but it has not been my intent. If appropriate citations are brought to the membership of ETS, the case against open theism would become certain. It is likely that open theists would attempt to defend themselves against such citations; nevertheless, I believe the open-theist has no right to claim biblical inerrancy (as ETS defines it in the doctrinal basis statement) as his or her theological base. Pinnock, Sanders, and Boyd all have personal evangelical roots, and all claim to hold to a form of biblical inerrancy, and I think they are honest in making this claim, and I am grateful for their faithful witness to Christ. However, I do not believe they can successfully claim that they fully embrace the original intent of the language of the ETS Doctrinal Basis. The "therefore" in that doctrinal statement directly contradicts the view they are proposing. They may perhaps claim that the ETS statement is not the best statement of the biblical view, but that is not the issue before us. Open theists seemingly want us to affirm open theism as compatible with the intent and meaning of the ETS statement. Open theists have never offered an amendment to the ETS statement, even though in my view open theism is in conflict with the statement as it now reads. ETS must either change its statement to include open theists, or we must ask open theists to resign from the Society. Failing to do this means that the doctrinal basis as presently set forth is no longer valid.

Since I don't think they will change their minds about open theism, my prayer is that John Sanders and Clark Pinnock will (for the good of the Society) resign their memberships. I hope Greg Boyd will not attempt to renew his membership. I don't know how they feel about this, but clearly it would be better than forcing a vote. This vote will obviously divide ETS. If they choose not to resign, the issue must be brought to a vote. None of the other differences among us carries the implication that there are things that even God does not know. This to me clearly undercuts inerrancy as set forth in the wording of the ETS Doctrinal Basis. I recognize that all will not see the issue as I do, but I think all can see that a largely divided vote will seriously damage the ETS. I don't believe open theists really want that result.

An important resource on this issue is the new book edited by John Piper, Justin Taylor, and Paul Kjoss Helseth, *Beyond the Bounds: Open Theism and the Undermining of Biblical Christianity* (Weaton: Crossway Books, 2003). See also the volume edited by Douglas S. Huffman and Eric L. Johnson, *God Under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003). The *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (June 2002) provides a helpful collection of essential documents from

the historic meeting in Colorado. The December 2002 issue of *JETS* contains a further article by Jason Nicholls that argues for the compatibility of open theism and inerrancy. Nicholls, however, seems to think the issue is really Calvinism and the reformed view of divine providence. That is not my concern. I consider Nicholls' position to be a misguided attempt to confuse the issue by appealing to an old Calvinistic/Arminian debate (as if open theism is actually part of an established position in the history of theology, which it is not). The issue is not "providence" (as Nicholls contends) but "foreknowledge," and (contrary to Nicholls) inerrancy cannot be supported by constant appeals to intervening providence to overcome potential if not inevitable errors in God's foreknowledge of actual events.

The issue of open theism and ETS membership will come up at an ETS business session in Atlanta (November 2003). My understanding is that this vote will come on Wednesday evening.

My prayer is that Pinnock, and Boyd, and Sanders would resign their memberships for the sake of the Society. If they force the issue to a vote, they will be famous, but at what cost. If there is not a two-thirds vote to dismiss, the Society will still be split no less than 50/50. We are going to lose some members either way, but as I see it, no good can come to the Society from the continued presence of advocates of open theism in ETS. Open theism is a view that deserves discussion, but other forums exist for that discussion. ETS is bounded by a doctrinal statement that to me clearly is not compatible with open theism.

We know (from last year's vote in Toronto) that a majority of ETS members (present and voting) did want this matter addressed. The Society is split on the issue, however. To me open theism clearly is beyond acceptable boundaries, but others disagree. The only real solution is Pinnock's resignation (followed by Sanders and if necessary Boyd). Failing that, ETS is faced with a great challenge.

Pray for the ETS Executive Committee that must investigate and appropriately bring the matter to our November meeting in Atlanta. Pray for the ETS leadership and for David Howard in particular.

These are difficult days, but God will be with us because He promised to be. He alone will always know what is right.

Sincerely,

L. Russ Bush

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Southeastern Seminary
Academic Dean