

EDITORIAL:

Welcome to the Spring 2016 issue of the *Midwestern Journal of Theology*. Our theme for this issue is Biblical Studies, as we commemorate and reflect on several momentous historical events, such as Erasmus's Critical Greek New Testament of 1516. My prayer is that once again, each and every one who has given so sacrificially of their time and talents to this issue, are aware of my very sincere thanks for all they do.

This issue's Keynote Article is from Midwestern's own Dr. Thorvald Madsen, Dean of Graduate Studies, Director of PhD Programs and Professor of New Testament, Ethics and Philosophy. Dr. Madsen's, 'Of Coins and Crosses' is an excellent study of 'Matthew 17:24-27 in the Shadow of the Passion.' He expertly shows how in this passage we see both humility and grandeur, both compliance and anticipated victory in Christ's words and actions. He argues that what Jesus does in paying the tax compares to his being baptized by John: neither gesture is strictly necessary, however, their avoidance would invite questions that could not be immediately answered. Therefore, Jesus is baptized, and he gives the collectors what they ask, though by means that manifest his deity. Madsen concludes that the Messiah pays his dues, and soon enough he will pay ours.

In this issue, we are honored to include Articles by three dear friends of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary: the first is a very insightful piece from Dr. Timothy George, the Founding Dean of Beeson Divinity School. Dr. George shares his wise and challenging reflections, on the life and contribution of the Dutch scholar, Erasmus, to Christian history. The year before Luther's hammer blows were heard in Wittenberg, Erasmus' *Novum Instrumentum Omne* was published in Basel. George reminds us, that the significance of this first edition of Erasmus's critical Greek New Testament in the history of New Testament studies, can hardly be overstated.

This is followed by a very valuable piece from a previous colleague here at Midwestern, Dr. Terry Wilder, now the Wesley Harrison Chair and Professor of New Testament, and the Associate Dean of the PhD Program, at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Wilder applies his expertise to the question of whether the Bible contains forgeries. After meticulously examining the arguments both for and against, Wilder concludes that the evidence we possess points unquestionably to the trustworthiness of Scripture.

The third and final guest Article comes from Dr. Jason K. Lee, the Dean and Professor of Theological Studies at Cedarville University.

Dr. Lee very carefully examines the Reformers' interpretation of Jesus's teaching on divorce and marriage, especially as found in Matthew 19. Lee argues that while there is some colorful diversity in the reformers' comments, they would also clearly affirm the "biblical view" of marriage: namely that God has designed it for intentional union, the blessing of children, and permanent unity as husband and wife.

We then have three fine pieces of scholarship from some of Midwestern's own teachers. We have a very helpful analysis from Dr. Blake Hearson, Associate Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, and the Book Review Editor of this Journal. Dr. Hearson analyzes for us the question of, where exactly is the House of God? The penultimate article comes from Dr. John Lee, Assistant Professor of New Testament, who carefully walks us through how the early Christians were able to reconcile their monotheistic commitment with a high Christology, and he does this with Mark's Gospel as the background. Our concluding piece is from the pen of Dr. Todd Chipman, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, and which consists of a well-argued examination of 'Paul's Use of the Scriptures to Defend his Apostleship in Corinth.'

This issue of the *MJT* again concludes, with several relevant and thought provoking book reviews, edited by Dr. Blake Hearson.