



Southwestern

JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY



Christian Higher Education
in the Baptist Tradition





Southwestern

JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY



Christian Higher Education
in the Baptist Tradition

Spring 2020 Issue
Vol. 62 No. 2

EDITORIAL

In his important institutional history of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Robert A. Baker, the esteemed Baptist historian, with a reference to the psalmist, encouraged Southwesterners to “tell the generations following.” One perspective on this amazing story of God’s providence at Southwestern Seminary through the years can be seen through the window of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology*.

Initial efforts to launch the *Journal* can be traced to 1917, less than a decade after the birth of the seminary. The biblical scholar Charles Williams, who initiated one of the very first modern language translations of Scripture, served as the founding editor of the *Journal*. He was succeeded in 1919 by the legendary W. T. Conner. The Greek grammar specialist H. E. Dana next assumed the editorial role in 1923.

The *Journal* was not published for almost three decades before being reinstated during the years of the Robert Naylor presidency. The *SWJT* has been published consecutively, two issues per year, since 1958. James Leo Garrett Jr., Southern Baptists’ most significant theologian during the second half of the 20th century, served as editor in 1958. Others who have served in this role have left their stamp on Southwestern Seminary in visible and memorable ways, including W. R. Estep Jr. (1963), William Hendricks (1967), H. Leon McBeth (1971), F. B. Huey (1975), and several others. Al Fasol (1998) and Malcolm B. Yarnell III (2006) ushered the *Journal* into the 21st century. I am grateful for the efforts of Terry Wilder and Madison Grace in recent years to guide this project.

As an aspect of the overall vision for renewal and revitalization at Southwestern Seminary, President Adam W. Greenway has communicated his dream for serious scholarship, applied theology, engaging teaching, and service to the churches to be combined with a heart for ministry, evangelism, and global missions, seeing these emphases as partners together on a shared mission. He sees these shared commitments coming together as “One Southwestern,” reclaiming the best of the seminary’s heritage while

advancing the distinctive Southwestern mission.

The new editorial team of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* sees the continuation of the publication of this resource as one way of participating in that vision. We pray that the efforts to re-energize the *Journal* will be used of God to serve the Southwestern community and its various constituencies to help bring revitalization to the seminary we all love in the days and decades to come.

The issue that you hold in your hands has been shaped around the theme of “Christian Higher Education in the Baptist Tradition.” Contributors explore this theme from a variety of perspectives. Nathan Finn, provost and dean of the university faculty at North Greenville University, addresses the important theme of academic or intellectual discipleship. Two capable thinkers, Keith Whitfield, of Southeastern Seminary, and Rhyne Putman, of Williams Baptist University, help us understand the important roles that Christian Scripture and Christian worldview formation play in offering distinctive Christian education.

Gene Fant, president at North Greenville, takes a look at the place of empathy in the general education curriculum. Hunter Baker, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Union University, explores the implications of secularism for the future of Christian higher education. The COVID-19 issues have raised new questions related to virtual learning and online education. Kristen Ferguson, who guides the work of online learning at Gateway Seminary, seeks to interact with these important questions. Finally, with students in mind, our theme is examined by C. Ben Mitchell, Graves Professor of Moral Philosophy at Union.

This issue marks the first efforts of the *Journal*'s new editorial team. The names of those who serve on the editorial council are listed on page two of this issue. I am truly thankful for the experience and wisdom that this group brings to this project. We salute Adam Covington and his team for the redesign of the cover and the overall look of the *Southwestern Journal*. I am grateful for the skills and editorial experience that Sarah Spring, James A. Smith, Sr., and Alex Sibley have offered in their roles as consulting editors. I am particularly thankful for the dedicated efforts of Katie McCoy and Andrew Streett. Their work as associate editors has been commendable in every way. We are all thankful to President Greenway for the privilege to serve the Southwestern Seminary community and the Southwestern constituencies through the work of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology*.

We ask for your ongoing prayers for this work in the days to come. We trust that you will find the articles and the book reviews in this issue to be illuminating, instructive, and helpful.

Soli Deo Gloria
David S. Dockery

