

Christian Apologetics / Counter Cult Ministry
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David M. Howard, Jr. Ph.D.
President, ETS
Bethel Theological Seminary
3949 Bethel Dr.
St. Paul, MN 55112

Dear Dr. Howard,

I am more than a little disconcerted by the retention of Clark Pinnock and John Sanders in ETS. As a recent member of ETS, I admit that I was under the impression that this was an organization that allowed and encouraged academic freedom *within the pale* of orthodoxy. While it is true that everyone has a right to believe what one chooses to believe, there is no corresponding right to call "evangelical" whatever one chooses to believe. And while I agree that genuine evangelicalism may be thought of as a "big tent" that can accommodate a reasonable amount of diversity, it is obvious to me and others that ETS is unaware of the tent's actual boundaries.

In joining ETS, I was under the apparently mistaken impression that it had definitions of such words as "inspiration" and "infallible" which were actually meaningful. It seems the founders and framers of the statements thought, and continue to think, that they are.

The commitment of Pinnock and Sanders to "Open Theism" really cuts at the heart of inspiration and infallibility, for according to them the future as outlined in Scripture is really only God's best guess of what *might* happen. The end, in fact, may work out very differently than the Scriptures indicate. This has wide-ranging, sobering, and even frightening ramifications in all areas of essential doctrine and belief.

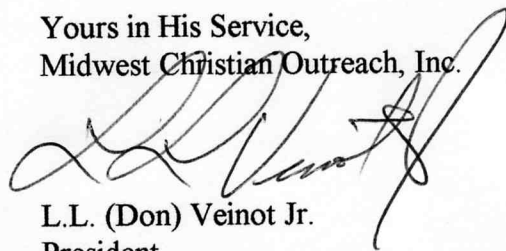
I have no doubt that Pinnock, Sanders, and the membership who voted to retain them are nice, sincere people. I have no doubt that they have excellent scholarly credentials and are dedicated to what they do. None of this is intended as a personal attack on any individual. Nevertheless, it seems that organizationally a choice was made to affirm academic

fraternity over biblical orthodoxy. It is of little wonder that, according to pollster George Barna, "only 9% of Christians have a biblical worldview" (WorldNetDaily, Dec. 3, 2003) when the perceived academic leadership themselves have abandoned such.

The irony here is that when theological terms cease to have stable meanings, Christianity not only becomes spiritually impotent but also academically suspect. ETS's watering down of the meaning of "evangelical" is thus costly not only in spiritual but also in intellectual terms, and results in an ethical dilemma. It may be the case that the Evangelical Theological Society, in an effort to be honest with the public, should consider changing the organizational name to the Elastic Theological Society, and thus avoid representing itself as an organization that continues to uphold to a biblical worldview.

In light of the foregoing, please remove my name from membership in ETS immediately.

Yours in His Service,
Midwest Christian Outreach, Inc.



L.L. (Don) Veinot Jr.
President

cc: Dr. James a Borland, Secretary-Treasurer, ETS
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